

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Small Claims Online Dispute Resolution Pilot Program

The Small Claims Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Pilot Program is currently offered in the First Circuit (Oahu) and the Second Circuit (Maui County) District Courts only. Small Claims ODR is expected to be implemented in Third Circuit (Hawai'i island) and Fifth Circuit (Kauai'i County) in early 2022.

#### **What is Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)?**

ODR helps people resolve their legal dispute online, using a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone without having to meet in-person or go to court. The TurboCourt ODR program guides parties through each step: starting a court case, completing court forms, submitting documents to court, negotiating, working with a mediator and sending a settlement agreement to the court for online approval.

After both parties are registered on ODR, you and the other party will have two days to negotiate between yourselves and come to a settlement agreement. If you reach an agreement, TurboCourt ODR will generate your Settlement Agreement and submit it to the court.

If you do not come to an agreement, then your case will be referred to a mediator. You may also request a mediator at any time. The mediator will help you and the other party come to an agreement. If you reach an agreement, the mediator will prepare the Settlement Agreement and submit it the court.

If you and the other party do not reach a settlement agreement, you will both have to attend your court hearing date and a judge will decide how to resolve your dispute after a trial is held.

#### **What is TurboCourt?**

TurboCourt is an online program that provides individuals who do not have attorneys complete court forms and submit documents to the court. TurboCourt also provides an online program that enables parties in a Small Claims dispute reach an agreement and settle their case without having to go to court.

#### **What are the benefits of ODR?**

Since ODR is online, there is no need to travel anywhere to meet with the other party or with a mediator. For some people, this is a faster, less expensive way to settle a dispute. TurboCourt ODR is also available 24/7 so you can complete your court forms online whenever it is most convenient for you. The step-by-step process will also ensure that you complete your forms correctly and you will know what your next steps are.

## **What do I need to participate in ODR?**

You will need access to a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone that can connect to the internet. You will also need an email address to register for a TurboCourt account. If you need access to Wi-Fi, you may visit the Hawaii State Supreme Court Law Library Free Wi-Fi HotSpots map: <https://histatelawlibrary.com/>

## **What if I don't register for ODR?**

If you do not register or do not complete ODR in time, you and the other party will need to attend your court hearing.

## **How much time do I have to complete ODR?**

You have two days to complete negotiations before the dispute is referred to mediation. You may continue negotiating until a mediator is assigned. Once a mediator is assigned, you have up to three days prior to the court hearing date to complete ODR.

## **How will I know when to check my ODR case?**

There are several ways to get notified about activity in your ODR case. You may sign up for email and text message notifications. You may also log into your TurboCourt account and look at your messages. If you choose to receive text messages, your cell phone carrier may charge you.

## **How do I communicate with the other party?**

You and the other party will communicate using the TurboCourt ODR program. You will enter negotiation terms, send chat messages, and share documents using TurboCourt.

## **How do I get started?**

To start, you will need to register for a TurboCourt account. If you are a plaintiff (you want to sue someone/file a claim), TurboCourt will guide you step-by-step.

## **Where do I find my case number?**

You may find your case number on the court filed Statement of Claim. You may also search for your case by accessing the Hawaii State Judiciary eCourt Kokua system at [https://www.courts.state.hi.us/legal\\_references/records/jims\\_system\\_availability](https://www.courts.state.hi.us/legal_references/records/jims_system_availability).

Search eCourt Kokua using your name or the other party's name. Review the information in eCourt Kokua to make sure you have the correct case and case ID number.

## **What if I need legal assistance?**

If you need legal assistance, please visit the Hawaii State Judiciary Self-Help Centers to speak with a volunteer attorney. More information is available on the Judiciary website: [https://www.courts.state.hi.us/general\\_information/access\\_to\\_justice\\_rooms\\_self\\_help\\_centers](https://www.courts.state.hi.us/general_information/access_to_justice_rooms_self_help_centers)

## **Will this service be available for multi-party cases, if I have an attorney, and on the other islands?**

Small Claims ODR service is currently offered in the First Circuit (Oahu) and the Second Circuit (Maui County) District Courts only, in cases where self-represented litigants (SRL) are involved in a dispute with only one other person. Small Claims ODR is expected to be implemented in the Third Circuit (Hawai'i island) and Fifth Circuit (Kauai'i County) in early 2022.

## **What if I need a special accommodation or an interpreter?**

If you need an accommodation due to a disability, please contact the ADA Coordinator as far in advance as possible to allow time to provide an accommodation:

- Call (808) 539-4860; or send an email to [OEAC@courts.hawaii.gov](mailto:OEAC@courts.hawaii.gov)

The ADA Coordinator will work to provide, but cannot guarantee, the requested auxiliary aid, service or accommodation.

The TurboCourt program uses Google Translate. Not all languages are supported and the Judiciary cannot guarantee the accuracy of the Google translation program. If you need an interpreter, please click [here](#) for How to Request an Interpreter. You may also call (808) 539-4860.