

SMALL CLAIMS HEARING INFORMATION

We expect that a trial will take no more than one-half hour (with fifteen minutes for each side). If you think you will need more time to put on your case, you need to let the court know as soon as possible so that we can allow more time on the schedule.

You must appear at the date and time on your “notice to appear.” FAILURE TO APPEAR AT THE TIME SET WILL CAUSE YOUR CASE TO BE DISMISSED IF YOU ARE THE PLAINTIFF, OR A DEFAULT JUDGMENT TO BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU IF YOU ARE THE DEFENDANT.

Coos County has a program of pre-trial mediation conferences for small claims cases, which has proven to be very successful.

Mediation is a procedure that brings you and the other party together to discuss your dispute with a trained neutral person. The mediator can help you brainstorm ways to settle your differences, but lets the parties decide whether to settle the case or to go before the judge for a trial. Mediation offers you a final opportunity to maintain control over the outcome of your dispute before turning it over to the judge. The mediator will keep confidential all the information discussed during mediation and will not be allowed to give testimony at the trial.

If you wish to participate in mediation, you will need to contact Common Ground Mediation at 541-751-9666. Mediation must be complete, and the paperwork filed with the court no later than 24 hours prior to your scheduled hearing date. Please view the mediation video at www.court.oregon.gov/coos under the small claims section in self-help for detailed information on the mediation process.

If you do not wish to mediate, or do not reach an agreement during mediation, you will need to appear in person on the date, time and location on your hearing notice. You will also need to bring any evidence you want to present to the judge with you.

PLEASE BE PREPARED TO SPEND MOST OF THE AFTERNOON IN THE COURT HOUSE, IF NECESSARY. MANY CASES ARE SCHEDULED AT THE SAME TIME.

If you have any questions, please call the Small Claims Clerk (541-396-7500 ext. 4100).