



20 May 2024

Changes to small claims mediation

Dear colleague,

You will be aware that a practice direction comes into force on Wednesday 22 May, making mediation a requirement for most small claims cases up to the value of £10,000.

We are writing to remind you of these changes and to provide further information about the form you will need to use from this date.

From May 22, mediation with HMCTS' Small Claims Mediation Service (SCMS) will become a requirement for new claims made on paper and through HMCTS' 'legacy' systems, including Money Claims Online (MCOL) and for bulk customers who issue through Secure Data Transfer (SDT), which are allocated to the small claims track.

These cases represent more than 70% of money claims under £10,000 made in 2023.

Parties will attend a free, one-hour mediation session to provide the opportunity for a swifter and more consensual resolution.

The Directions Questionnaire (N180) has been updated to reflect the changes and will be available on gov.uk on 22 May for use with all claims issued on or after this date. You can find it by searching 'form N180 on gov.uk. For existing claims, which were issued before 22 May, the current N180 should continue to be used.

The requirement to mediate for cases submitted through HMCTS' digital service, Online Civil Money Claims (OCMC), will be introduced at a later date. Until then, cases issued in OCMC will continue to be opted-in to using the Small Claims Mediation Service, with the ability for parties to opt out.

Please contact civil_and_familybusinesssupport@justice.gov.uk if you have any questions regarding the mediation service or process.

Yours sincerely,

Rosemary Rand
Deputy Director and Service Owner, Civil