



NOTICE TO PARTIES IN CIVIL CASES OF ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Liberty County Justice of the Peace, Pct. 3 has implemented Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) for our debt claim and small claims cases. ODR is free to use and gives the parties of the cases an opportunity to solve their disputes outside of the court.

You will be sent an invitation to join the program once service has been completed and the information for both parties is gathered by the court.

How ODR Works:

ODR gives both parties in the case the chance to solve the dispute outside of the court and possibly avoid appearing in court. You will receive an invite to join the program, both parties can chat online (in a neutral space that is not visible to the court or the judge) to discuss the claim and try to reach an agreement.

If both parties can agree, ODR provides an Agreed Judgment for both parties to fill out and sign, at that point the plaintiff in the suit will file the agreement with the court. The judge will sign the Agreed Judgment after reviewing it and both parties will be mailed the signed Judgment. At this point, the Judgment is in place and the case is closed.

The ODR program is highly encouraged by the court but will not influence the court's decision in your case. If you and the other party participate and reach an agreement, you might be able to solve the dispute faster than with a traditional court hearing. It could be more convenient for you because the ODR system is available 24/7 so you can use it on your schedule.

Scenarios:

- If you owe money to the other party and you both agree on the amount owed you could then agree on a payment plan.
- If you owe money to the other party, but you disagree on the amount owed you could try to work out an amount acceptable to both parties and then agree on a payment plan.
- If you cannot come to an agreement on any terms, you will attend your hearing date.

If you and the other party cannot come to an agreement using ODR (or one party does not participate) the case moves forward to a hearing with the Judge. The hearing letter will be mailed to the address on file with the court.

This is just procedural information, if you need legal advice, you must seek help from an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may contact Lone Star Legal Aid at lonestarlegal.org