

Making a Claim with the CRT – Small Claims

Learn about making a claim with the CRT, for “small claims” up to \$5,000.



What you need to know

If you have a small claims dispute that you can't resolve on your own, the Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) may be able to help. The CRT is an independent and neutral decision-maker.

The CRT is designed to be easier, faster and cheaper than court. But it is still a legal process. A CRT decision can include binding and enforceable orders.

Before you make a claim, consider trying one of the Solution Explorer's self-resolution options. Our free tools, like letter templates, might help you resolve your issue quickly.

How much time do I have to make a claim?

If you have a legal claim that can go to a court or a tribunal, the claim almost always has to be started within a set period of time. After this time runs out, a court or tribunal can refuse your claim, no matter how strong your case would have been.

The time limit is called a “limitation period.” It's like a countdown. Under the *Limitation Act*, the limitation period is usually 2 years.

The limitation period doesn't stop until you submit your application for dispute resolution and pay the application fee.

How much does it cost to make a claim with the CRT?

The application fee depends on the value of your claim, and what type of claim it is. See the [fee listing](#) on our website.

If you can't afford it, the CRT has an easy fee waiver process.



Can I have a lawyer?

When using the CRT, it's important to speak for yourself if you're able to. If you want somebody to support you during the CRT process, we encourage you to find a helper.

For small claims disputes, in some cases you can have a lawyer or other representative speak for you when you use the CRT. You may need to ask the CRT for permission.

Do I need evidence?

Yes. Tribunal members make decisions based on facts and evidence. Just giving your side of the story may not be enough to prove your claim. [Learn more about evidence.](#)



How to make a claim with the CRT

The CRT is a legal process. A CRT decision can include binding and enforceable orders.

Once you make a CRT claim, it won't always be up to you to stop the process if you change your mind. Before you start, make sure you're ready to commit to the process.

1. Fill out and submit the CRT online application form and pay the application fee. Continue in the Solution Explorer and the CRT will give you the right application form for your situation.
2. The CRT will usually serve the Dispute Notice to the people, companies or organizations you're claiming against. They have a time limit to reply to the claim. You may choose to serve the Dispute Notice yourself.
3. Follow any and all directions of a CRT case manager.
4. Give evidence and arguments to support your claims, when the CRT asks you to.
5. Follow any and all orders made by a tribunal member.

