

A GUIDE TO THE NEW JERSEY CIVIL COURTS

NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY



Independence • Integrity
Fairness • Quality Service

JULY 2005

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WELCOME TO THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY – CIVIL COURTS

Purpose of this Booklet

This booklet is a guide to services in the Civil Division.

Judiciary Mission Statement

We are an independent branch of government constitutionally entrusted with the fair and just resolution of disputes in order to preserve the rule of law and to protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States and this State.

Statement of Core Values of the New Jersey Court System

Required to accomplish our mission are four paramount values representing the core of what we stand for as an organization:

- Independence
- Fairness
- Integrity
- Quality Service

CIVIL DIVISION OVERVIEW

The Civil Division consists of three operational parts: Civil Part, Special Civil Part, and Chancery, which includes the General Equity and Probate Parts.

The following are parties in civil actions:

- **Plaintiff** - person who sues.
- **Defendant** - person who is sued.
- **Guardian** - person appointed by the court to represent the interests of another with a disability (*e.g.*, minor, incapacitated person).
- **Executor** - person named in a will to carry out the terms of the will, suing or defending on behalf of the estate of a decedent.
- **Administrator** - person suing or defending on behalf of an estate when the decedent died without a will.
- **John or Jane Doe** - fictitious defendant designation used when the true identity of the defendant or potential defendant is unknown.
- **ABC Corporation** - fictitious defendant designation used when the true identity of a corporate defendant or potential corporate defendant is unknown.
- **Crossclaimant** - defendant suing another defendant on a crossclaim.
- **Counterclaimant** - defendant suing a plaintiff on a counterclaim.
- **Intervenor** - a third party who voluntarily requests to participate in a lawsuit and is permitted by the court.
- **Interpleader** - party suing two or more persons claiming the same thing or fund and requesting that the court determine between or among them which is entitled to recover it.
- **Third Party Plaintiff** - party suing a non-party to the original suit on a third party complaint (complaint brought by a defendant against a party not sued by the plaintiff in the complaint).
- **Third Party Defendant** - party being sued in a third party complaint.

It is recommended that litigants seek the advice of an attorney if they have questions about their civil case. However, forms and instructions for filing a complaint are available on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/pscivcomp.pdf or can be obtained from court staff. A list of the telephone numbers and addresses appears on pages 21-23. Legal Services can help people who cannot afford an attorney, and the County Bar Association Lawyer

Referral Programs can provide a referral to an attorney. A list of these offices appears on pages 16-20.

Civil Part

In the Civil Part, there is no monetary limit on the value of cases that may be filed. Either party in a Civil Part case may request a jury trial. A jury in a civil case typically consists of six persons. There are approximately 95,000 cases filed in the Civil Part each year. A case gets started in the Civil Part by the filing of a complaint and case information statement with the court. The following types of cases are filed in the Civil Part and the numbers preceding them refer to the case type numbers that must be used when filling out the case information statement.

151 - name change - action to change an individual's or family's name.

175 - forfeiture - action by the government seeking ownership of personal property either used as an instrumentality of a crime or the fruits of criminal activity

302 - tenancy - action arising from any dispute between a landlord and tenant other than summary dispossess action and actions to recover a security deposit under \$15,000.

399 - real property (other than Tenancy, Contract, Condemnation, Complex Commercial or Construction) - suit based upon a dispute over real property and **not** involving a landlord/tenant relationship, contract, condemnation, complex commercial or construction.

502 - book account - action for the collection of an unpaid bill for goods or services provided.

505 - other insurance claim (including declaratory judgment actions) - suit involving differing interpretations of an insurance policy or a dispute over insurance coverage.

506 - PIP coverage - suit brought by an insured or a healthcare provider on behalf of the insured against the insured's automobile insurance company for unpaid medical bills or other insurance benefits.

510 - UM or UIM claim - action by an insured against the insured's automobile insurance company seeking damages from the insurance company under either the uninsured motorist or underinsured motorist coverage provision of an insurance policy. Under such a provision, if the insured sustains injuries or damages due to an automobile accident caused by the fault of a third person but the third person either is uninsured or is underinsured (*i.e.*, does not have adequate coverage to cover the value of the insured's damages or injuries), the insurance carrier must pay the amount needed to fully compensate the insured.

511 - action on a negotiable instrument - suit seeking damages for the defendant's failure to honor obligations pursuant to a written instrument such as a check. These actions usually involve a dishonored check.

512 - lemon law - suit pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 56:12-29 to -49*, commonly known as the New Jersey Lemon Law, brought by the purchaser or leaser of a new motor vehicle against the car dealer who sold the vehicle seeking damages because the vehicle was faulty. The law seeks to ensure that the manufacturer of the vehicle fixes any problems or defects that were originally covered under the manufacturers' warranty and which were reported by the owner within 2 years or 18,000 miles whichever comes first.

599 – contract/commercial transaction - action based upon the failure to honor the terms of an oral or written agreement/or arising from a business dispute.

801 - summary action - action seeking an expeditious judicial determination rather than a full-blown trial. Summary actions should be filed via verified complaint and order to show cause. If these matters are not resolved on the return date of the order to show cause, they must be actively case managed by a judge.

802 - Open Public Records Act (OPRA) - summary action brought pursuant to a statute which provides that certain government records shall be accessible for inspection, copying or examination by New Jersey citizens, with certain exceptions, and provides the process for requesting access and appealing any denial of access.

305 - construction - dispute arising out of a construction agreement or arrangement.

509 - employment - dispute arising out of an agreement between an employer and employee.

602 - assault and battery - action seeking damages for having been unlawfully touched.

603 - auto negligence - personal injury action seeking damages for bodily injuries arising out of the negligent ownership and/or use of a motor vehicle.

604 – medical malpractice – action against a healthcare provider for injuries arising from negligence in acting or failing to act.

605 - personal injury - action seeking damages for bodily injuries caused by the negligence of another in a context other than in the ownership and/or use of a motor vehicle, usually as a result of negligence in the ownership, use or control of premises.

610 - auto negligence - property damage - action seeking damages for injuries to property arising out of the negligent ownership and/or use of a motor vehicle.

699 - tort - other - action seeking damages for injuries to a person or property due to negligent or deliberate conduct other than in the use and/or ownership of a motor vehicle or in the ownership or control of premises, such as intentional infliction of emotional distress, tortious interference with contract, trespass or malicious prosecution.

005 - civil rights - action brought pursuant to the Federal Civil Rights Act, 42 *U.S.C.* 1983, which establishes a civil action for the deprivation of constitutionally protected rights.

301 - condemnation - action also known as eminent domain, brought by a governmental entity seeking to take private real property for a public use and after payment of just compensation.

606 - products liability - action against a manufacturer, distributor or seller of goods including pharmaceuticals, seeking damages for injuries suffered as a result of the use of the good.

607 - professional malpractice - action against a provider of professional services, other than a healthcare provider, for injuries or damages arising from a negligent act or failure to act.

608 - toxic tort - action seeking damages due to the emission of a harmful substance into the environment.

609 - defamation - action seeking damages due to the publication, either orally (slander) or in writing (libel), of false information concerning another.

616 - Whistleblower/Conscientious Employee Protection Act (CEPA) - action filed pursuant to a statute seeking damages due to retaliation against an employee by the employer for 1) disclosing or threatening to disclose to a supervisor or public body an activity, policy or practice of an employer that the employee believes violates a law or regulation, or 2) providing information or testimony to a public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any violation of law, rule or regulation by the employer, or 3) objecting to or refusing to participate in any activity, policy or practice which the employee reasonably believes is in violation of the law, is fraudulent or criminal, or is incompatible with a clear mandate of public policy.

617 - inverse condemnation - action brought by owner of real property seeking damages compensating the owner for a taking of the owner's private real property for a public use.

618 - Law Against Discrimination (LAD) - action seeking damages pursuant to a statute, commonly known as the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, which makes it unlawful to subject people to differential treatment based on race, creed, color, national origin, nationality, ancestry, age, sex, familial status, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, mental or physical disability, perceived disability, and AIDS and HIV status. The LAD prohibits unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, places of public accommodation, credit and business contracts.

156 - environmental coverage litigation - action against an insurance company by an insured seeking coverage pursuant to an insurance contract or policy to remediate or compensate the insured for damage to the environment.

303 - Mt. Laurel - actions brought pursuant to the New Jersey Fair Housing Act, relating to the allocation of a fair share of affordable housing to lower and moderate income families.

508 - complex commercial - commercial matters involving unusually complex factual or legal issues.

701 - Actions in Lieu of Prerogative Writs - appeal from a decision of or failure to act on the part of local governmental body, such as a Zoning Board of Adjustment or Planning Board; limited to an appeal on the record below. These matters are governed by R. 4:69-4.

The cases currently designated as mass torts are:

240 - diet drug - actions against manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and others for damages due to the use of the diet drugs Redux or Phen-Fen.

241 – tobacco – actions against manufacturers and others of tobacco products for damages arising from use and exposure to them.

248 - Ciba Geigy - actions for damages or medical monitoring arising out of the environmental contamination of the byproducts of chemical manufacturing in Toms River, New Jersey.

264 - PPA - (Phenylpropanolamine) - actions against the manufacturers, sellers, distributors or others for damages arising from the use of PPA, an ingredient in over-the-counter cold and weight-loss medications.

266 – HRT – (Hormone Replacement Therapy) – actions against manufacturers, sellers, distributors or others for damages arising from the use of hormone replacement therapy.

268 – manufactured gas plant litigation – actions arising from the emission of chemicals into the environment by manufactured gas plants over numerous years.

601 - asbestos - actions against the manufacturers, suppliers, distributors or others for damages arising from the exposure to asbestos.

619 - Vioxx - actions against the manufacturers, suppliers, distributors or others for damages arising from the use of the drug Vioxx, an anti-inflammatory medication used to treat arthritis and menstrual pain.

For purposes of managing the civil caseload, the Civil Part caseload is broken down into discrete categories called “tracks.” Cases are assigned to a track upon the filing of the complaint. The track assignment is based on the case type as noted on side 2 of the Civil Case Information Statement and each track provides a specific discovery period. The tracks for each case type and the applicable discovery periods are as follows:

Track I – 150 days’ discovery

151	Name Change
175	Forfeiture
302	Tenancy
399	Real Property (other than Tenancy, Contract, Condemnation, Complex Commercial or Construction)
502	Book Account
505	Other Insurance Claim (including declaratory judgment actions)

- 506 PIP Coverage
- 510 UM or UIM Claim
- 511 Action on a Negotiable Instrument
- 512 Lemon Law
- 599 Contract/Commercial Transaction
- 801 Summary Action
- 802 Open Public Records Act (Summary Action)

Track II – 300 days’ discovery

- 305 Construction
- 509 Employment (other than CEPA or LAD)
- 602 Assault and Battery
- 603 Auto Negligence - Personal Injury
- 605 Personal Injury
- 610 Auto Negligence - Property Damage
- 699 Tort – Other

Track III – 450 days’ discovery

- 005 Civil Rights
- 301 Condemnation
- 604 Medical Malpractice
- 606 Product Liability
- 607 Professional Malpractice
- 608 Toxic Tort
- 609 Defamation
- 616 Whistleblower/Conscientious Employee Protection Act (CEPA) Cases
- 617 Inverse Condemnation
- 618 Law Against Discrimination (LAD) Cases

Track IV – Active Case Management by Individual Judge/450 days’ discovery

- 156 Environmental Coverage Litigation
- 303 Mt. Laurel
- 508 Complex Commercial
- 701 Action in Lieu of Prerogative Writs

Mass Tort (Track IV)

- 240 Diet Drug
- 241 Tobacco
- 248 Ciba Geigy
- 264 PPA
- 266 HRT
- 267 PPA Coverage
- 268 Manufactured Gas Plant Litigation
- 601 Asbestos
- 619 Vioxx

The discovery process is a mechanism for allowing each side the opportunity to learn about the other side's case. The purpose of the pretrial discovery rules is to ensure that there are no surprises at the time of trial and that the end result of a case is based upon the actual merits of a case. During pretrial discovery, each side learns the evidence that will be used at trial to support either side's case.

Special Civil Part

The Special Civil Part is the civil court of limited jurisdiction. The Special Civil Part is a high volume court that deals with three case types: landlord/tenant matters, small claims lawsuits up to \$3,000 and special civil lawsuits up to \$15,000.

Typical small claims and Special Civil lawsuits include breach of a written or oral contract, return of money used as a down payment, loss or damage of property caused by a motor vehicle accident, back rent, bad checks, return of a tenant's security deposit, payment for work performed, or defective merchandise.

Landlord/tenant matters involve disputes between landlords and tenants. A landlord may file a complaint against a tenant for failure to pay rent, continued disorderly conduct, willful destruction of property, habitual lateness in the payment of rent, violation of the rules and regulations after a written notice to comply as outlines in a lease or document, or a tenant's conviction of a drug offense or other offenses.

General Equity Part

Complaints filed in the Chancery Division General Equity part seek what is known as equitable relief rather than monetary compensation. This usually involves the court's compelling or restricting the actions of one of the parties (such as labor injunctions, foreclosures, and dissolution of a partnership or corporation). General Equity judges have jurisdiction to grant relief in the following areas:

- Enforcing the performance of contracts, trusts and fiduciary obligations;
- Re-executing or correcting documents lost or erroneously drafted;
- Setting aside transactions that were illegal, fraudulent, etc.;
- Executing writs of attachment;
- Stopping actions that will cause irreparable harm; and
- Granting the reacquisition of property upon default of mortgage or tax payments in foreclosure actions.

Probate Part

Judges in the Chancery Division Probate Part hear cases seeking equitable remedies such as execution of a will, appointment of guardians, and distribution of estates. The probate court's jurisdiction is generally over the following areas:

- Resolving will contests;
- Distributing estates;
- Establishing guardianships to protect persons who are mentally incapacitated and children; and
- Completing gifts of money or property according to the donor's intent.

For additional information regarding the above case types, please call the Chancery Division, General Equity part in the particular county. A list of addresses and telephone numbers appears on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com.

NOTE: Until a contesting answer is filed, all foreclosure matters are handled by the Foreclosure Unit in Trenton, N.J. and all filings should be sent directly there. The Foreclosure Unit forwards all cases in which contested answers are filed (and all subsequent papers involving the contested foreclosure) to the vicinage's General Equity judge

Filing Special Civil Part Complaints

Special Civil Part complaints must be filed in the county where at least one defendant lives, or where the defendant's business is located. If there is more than one defendant, the complaint can be filed in the county where any one of the defendants lives. If the defendants do not live in New Jersey, the complaint must be filed in the county where the action originated. Complaint forms are available on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com.

Special Civil complaints may be filed by mail or in person. The court will process the documents filed, assign a docket number and serve the defendant(s) with the summons. It is very important that the plaintiff provide the court with the defendant's correct address and that reference is made to the docket number whenever inquiries are made about the case.

Filing Probate Matters

All pleadings involving probate matters should be filed with the Surrogate. A list of the county Surrogates can be found on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com. Fee and other information, as well as sample forms, may be available in the county Surrogate's office.

Filing Complaints in the Civil Part

Forms and instructions for filing a complaint in the Civil Part are available on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com.

LAW DIVISION	
<i>Special Civil Part Fees*</i>	
Small Claims - \$3,000 Limit	
Summons & Complaint	\$15 + postage
Each additional defendant	\$ 2 + postage
Complaint w/counterclaim, cross-claim or third party complaint <i>(maximum demand \$3,000)</i>	\$32
Each additional defendant	\$ 2
Landlord / Tenant	
Summons & Complaint	\$25 + mileage**
Each additional defendant	\$ 2
Warrant of Removal	\$15 + mileage**
Special Civil Part - \$15,000 Limit	
Complaint w/ or w/o counterclaim, cross-claim or third-party complaint <i>(up to \$3000)</i>	\$32 plus service by mail fee
Complaint w/ or w/o counterclaim, cross-claim or third-party complaint <i>(\$3001 - \$15,000)</i>	\$50 plus service by mail fee
Each additional defendant	\$ 2
Filing of appearance or answer to complaint <i>(other than tenancy or small claims)</i>	\$15
Motion	No fee
Order to Show Cause	No fee
Service of Process by Mail (each defendant)	\$ 4
Writ of Execution	\$ 5
Advertising property under execution	\$10
Selling property under execution	\$10

* *Fees are subject to change.*

** *Mileage rates can be located on the Judiciary Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com.*

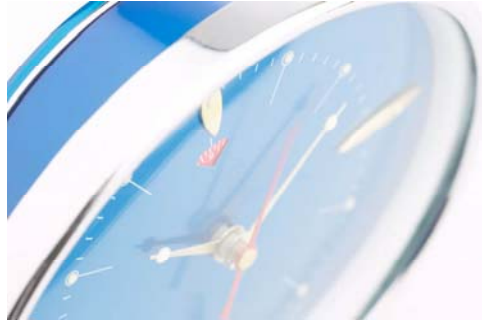
LAW DIVISION <i>Civil Part Fees*</i>	
Complaint	\$200
Order to Show Cause	\$ 30
Answer, Answer w/cross-claim, Motion (if first paper), Amended Answer adding new defendant	\$135
Answer w/counterclaim or 3 rd party complaint	\$200
Third Party Complaint or Counterclaims (<i>after answer filed</i>)	\$ 65
Motion (Pre and Post Judgment)	\$ 30
Transfer Case from Civil Part to Special Civil Part	\$ 15

CHANCERY DIVISION (GENERAL EQUITY AND PROBATE) <i>Fees</i>	
Complaint (General Equity, Foreclosure)	\$200
Order to Show Cause	\$ 30
Answer, Answer and Counterclaim	\$135
Motion (Pre and Post Judgment)	\$ 30
Other Fees	
Filing of Notice of Appeal (<i>Supreme Court and Appellate Division</i>)	\$200
Notice of Appeal (<i>Trial Court</i>)	\$ 10
Warrant of Satisfaction of Judgment	\$ 35
Notice of Application for Wage Execution	\$ 30
Discharging Lien	\$ 5
Jury of six persons	\$ 50

**Fees are subject to change.*

COURT HOURS

The courthouses are generally open
Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



COURT HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Lincoln's Birthday
Presidents' Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day

Labor Day
Columbus Day
Election Day
Veterans' Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day



EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Information regarding emergency closings or closings due to weather conditions can be obtained by tuning to your local radio station or visiting the Judiciary Web Site at: www.njcourtsonline.com.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Public Access Terminals, Information & Community Relations

Computers are available in some counties to the public to access civil case information. The computers are available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday and are used on a first-come, first-serve basis.

In order to obtain Civil Division case information, the researcher must have a case name or docket number.

Access for Persons with Disabilities

The Judiciary is committed to providing equal access to its services and programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Each courthouse has a coordinator responsible for implementing the ADA. Disabled individuals who need an accommodation are encouraged to contact the vicinage ADA coordinator.

The Judiciary will make reasonable accommodations for disabled persons in a way that integrates the individual into the mainstream of court activities to the fullest extent possible. The disabled person is responsible for requesting an accommodation and the Judiciary is responsible for providing a reasonable accommodation.

Advance notice to the court of the need for auxiliary aids or service is strongly encouraged. The ADA coordinator should be notified at least two weeks in advance of court sessions and hearings. For ongoing services and programs, the ADA coordinator should be notified at least 48 hours in advance. For emergencies or urgent requests, the ADA coordinator should be notified immediately.

Interpreting and Translating Services

If any of the parties or their witnesses do not speak English, the court should be promptly notified so that an approved interpreter can be provided. This service is provided at no cost to the parties. Please note that the court will not permit a non-approved individual, *e.g.*, a friend or relative of a party, to serve as an interpreter.



Judiciary Anti-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Judiciary not to permit discrimination against any individual on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, age, national origin, physical or mental disability or any other basis prohibited by law.

Preparing for Your Court Appearance

Whenever you contact or appear in court, it is important to have the information notifying you of your docket number, date to appear, and the location of the courtroom that you are scheduled to appear in. If you have an attorney, you should meet with him/her to discuss your case.

If you need an accommodation for a disability, you must notify the court as soon as possible. Information about the availability of special services and assistance can be obtained by calling the civil division in the county in which your case is pending.

You can learn more about the rules governing the practice, procedure and administration of the state's courts in the New Jersey Rules of Court, which can be found in public libraries, law libraries and on the Judiciary Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com in the "Legal Reference Desk" section.

On the day of your court appearance.....

- √ Arrive on time. If you are late, the judge may postpone, dismiss or decide your case in your absence.
- √ When entering the courtroom, remove your hat and turn off all cell phones and pagers.
- √ Bring your court notice with you; it contains your case information.
- √ Do not bring any food or beverages into the courtroom.
- √ If you need additional time to prepare your case, you may ask the judge to grant you an adjournment. An adjournment is the postponement of a session, hearing, trial or other proceeding to another day or time. It is within the judge's discretion to grant or deny an adjournment.
- √ While addressing the court, you must use appropriate language. Address the judge as "Your Honor" and speak directly to the judge and not to the other party.
- √ You should not interrupt the opposing party while he or she is speaking. After the other party has finished speaking, you or your lawyer may request an opportunity from the judge to respond. An opportunity to respond is left to the judge's discretion.
- √ After each party has presented his or her side, the judge or jury will make a decision.
- √ In some cases, the court may refer your case to a settlement program on the day scheduled for your trial. Although you will have to participate in such programs, you are not obligated to settle your case. If your case does not settle, a judge will hear your case on that day.



IMPORTANT

If the plaintiff does not appear, the case may be dismissed. If the defendant does not appear, the court may find him or her in default. If judgment is awarded and the defendant refuses to pay or cannot pay immediately after the court proceedings, the plaintiff should contact court staff, who can provide information on collecting the judgment.

LAWYER REFERRAL AND LEGAL SERVICES

Community Health Law Project
185 Valley Street
South Orange, NJ 07079
973-680-5599

(Legal representation and advocacy for people with disabilities and elderly people)

Education Law Center
60 Park Pl., Suite 300
Newark, NJ 07102
973-624-1815
(Education matters)

Fort Dix Legal Assistance Program
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
5418 Delaware Ave.
Fort Dix, NJ 08640-5054
609-562-3043

Fort Monmouth-Legal Services Program
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
Bldg. 677
Fort Monmouth, NJ 07703
732-532-4371
(Services military members, retirees and their dependents)

Legal Services of New Jersey
100 Metroplex Dr. at Plainfield Avenue
Suite 402
P.O. Box 1357
Edison, NJ 08818-1357
732-572-9100

N.J. Department of the Treasury/OMB
State Office of Legal Services
50 W. State Street
P.O. Box 211
Trenton, NJ 08625-0211

National Legal Aid & Defender Ass'n
(NLADA)
Washington Office
1140 Connecticut Ave., Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036
202-452-0620
(Civil and defender law)

New Jersey Protection and Advocacy, Inc.
210 S. Broad St., 3rd Floor
Trenton, NJ 08608
800-922-7233

(Legal advocacy for clients with disabilities)

Pro Bono Partnership
744 Broad St., Suite 1815
Newark, NJ 07102
973-273-0600

Rutgers University School of Law Newark
Center of Law and Justice
123 Washington St.
Newark, NJ 07102
973-353-3000
Legal clinics:

<i>Animal Rights</i>	<i>Constitutional Law</i>
<i>Urban Legal</i>	<i>Women's Rights</i>
<i>Environmental</i>	<i>Federal Tax</i>
<i>Special Education</i>	<i>Community Law</i>
<i>Women & AIDS</i>	<i>Pro Bono Program</i>

Seton Hall University School of Law
Center for Social Justice
833 McCarter Highway
Newark, NJ 07102
973-624-8700
Seven legal clinics:

<i>Appellate Litigation</i>	<i>Family Law</i>
<i>Civil Litigation</i>	<i>Fair Housing</i>
<i>Juvenile Justice</i>	<i>Immigration</i>
<i>Pro Bono Service</i>	<i>Homelessness</i>

Atlantic County

South Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
26 S. Pennsylvania Ave.
Atlantic City, NJ 08404
609-348-4200

Atlantic County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
Atlantic County Courthouse
1201 Bacharach Blvd.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401
609-345-3444

Bergen County

Bergen County Community Mental Health Law Project
327 E. Ridgewood Ave.
Paramus, NJ 07652-3761
201-634-2761

Legal Services of Northeast New Jersey
Bergen County Division
61 Kansas St.
Hackensack, NJ 07601
201-487-2166

Bergen County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
15 Bergen St.
Hackensack, NJ 07601
201-488-0044

Burlington County

South Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
107 High St.
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
609-261-1088

Burlington County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
45 Grant St.
Mt. Holly, NJ
609-261-4862

Camden County

Community Health Law Project
Station House Office Bldg.
900 Haddon Ave., Suite 400
Collingswood, NJ 08108
856-858-9500
*(Legal services for indigent
disabled persons)*

South Jersey Legal Services
Administrative Offices
745 Market St.
Camden, NJ 08102
856-964-2010
*(Also serves counties of Burlington,
Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem)*

Camden County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
800 Cooper St., Suite 103
Camden, NJ 08102
856-964-4520

Cape May County

South Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
1261 Route 9
Cape May Courthouse, NJ 08210
609-465-3001

Cape May County
Lawyer Referral Service
Route 9, Main St.
P.O. Box 425
Cape May Courthouse, NJ 08210
609-463-0313

Cumberland County

South Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
Neighborhood/Farmworker Division
22 Washington St.
Bridgeton, NJ 08302-1933
856-451-0003

Cumberland County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
P.O. Box 2031
Vineland, NJ 08362-2031
856-692-6207

Essex County

Community Health Law Project
185 Valley St.
South Orange, NJ 07079
973-275-1175

Essex County Legal Aid Association
Hall of Records, Room 118
465 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102
973-622-0063

Essex-Newark Legal Services
5 Commerce St., 2nd Floor
Newark, NJ 07102
973-824-3000
*(Family, Consumer, Government Benefits,
Elder Law and Housing Law Units)*

Essex County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
One Riverfront Plaza, 7th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102-5497
973-622-7753

Gloucester County

South Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
47 Newton Ave.
Woodbury, NJ 08096
856-848-5360

Gloucester County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
Justice Complex
P.O. Box 338
Woodbury, NJ 08096
856-848-4589

Hudson County

Legal Services of Northeast New Jersey
Hudson County Division
574 Summit Ave.
Jersey City, NJ 07306
201-792-6363

Hudson County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
583 Newark Ave.
Jersey City, NJ 07306
201-798-2727

Hunterdon County

Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey
Hunterdon County Division
82 Park Ave.
Flemington, NJ 08822-1168
908-782-7979

Hunterdon County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
P.O. Box 573
Annandale, NJ 08801
908-735-2611

Mercer County

Central New Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
Mercer County Division
198 W. State St.
Trenton, NJ 08608-1103
609-695-6249

Community Health Law Project
225 E. State St.
Trenton, NJ 08608
609-392-5553

Mercer County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
1245 Whitehorse Mercerville Rd., Suite 420
Mercerville, NJ 08619-3894
609-585-6200

Middlesex County

Central New Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
Middlesex County Division
78 New St., 3rd Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-2584
732-249-7600

Middlesex County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
87 Bayard St.
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
732-828-0053

Monmouth County

Legal Aid Society of Monmouth County
P.O. Box 86
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
732-776-7733

Community Health Law Project
601 Grand Ave., Suite 505
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
732-502-0059

Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services, Inc.
Boro Plaza, Suite 13
25 Broad St.
Freehold, NJ 07728
732-866-0020

Monmouth County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
Courthouse
Freehold, NJ 07728
732-431-5544

Morris County

Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey
Morris County Division
30 Schuyler Pl., 2nd Fl., P.O. Box 900
Morristown, NJ 07963-0900
973-285-6911

Morris/Sussex Co. Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
28 Schuyler Place
Morristown, NJ 07960
973-267-5882

Ocean County

Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services, Inc.
9 Robbins St., Suite 2-A
Toms River, NJ 08753
732-341-2727

Ocean County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
Courthouse, P.O. Box 381
Toms River, NJ 08753
732-240-3666

Passaic County

Legal Services of Northeast New Jersey
Passaic County Division
152 Market St.
Paterson, NJ 07505
973-523-2900

Passaic County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
Courthouse, 77 Hamilton St.
Paterson, NJ 07505
973-278-9223

Salem County

Salem County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
856-935-5629

Somerset County

Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey
Somerset County Division
34 W. Main St., Suite 301
Somerville, NJ 08876
908-231-0840

Somerset County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
10 N. Bridge St., P.O. Box 1095
Somerville, NJ 08876
908-685-2323

Sussex County

Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey
Sussex County Division
18 Church St.
Newton, NJ 07860
973-333-7400

Union County

Central New Jersey Legal Services, Inc.
60 Prince St.
Elizabeth, NJ 07208
908-354-4340

Union County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
Courthouse, 1st Floor
Elizabeth, NJ 07207
908-353-4715

Warren County

Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey
Warren County Division
91 Front St., P.O. Box 65
Belvidere, NJ 07823
908-475-2010

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS FOR COURT OFFICES

Civil Division Addresses & Telephone Numbers

Atlantic/Cape May

Civil Division Management Office
Atlantic County Civil Courthouse
1201 Bacharach Blvd.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401
609-345-6700 x 3579

Special Civil Part Information
Atlantic County Civil Courthouse
1201 Bacharach Blvd.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401
Landlord/Tenant: 609-343-2382
Small Claims: 609-343-2355

Bergen

Civil Division Management Office
Justice Center
10 Main St.
Hackensack, NJ 07601
201-527-2601

Special Civil Part Information
Justice Center
10 Main St., Room 430
Hackensack, NJ 07601
201-527-2734

Burlington

Civil Division Management Office
Burlington County Courts Facility
49 Rancocas Rd.
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
609-518-2815

Special Civil Part Information
County Administration Building
49 Rancocas Rd., 3rd Floor
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
609-518-2865

Camden

Civil Division Management Office
Hall of Justice
101 S. 5th St., Suite 150
Camden, NJ 08103-4001
856-379-2202 x2234

Special Civil Part Information
Hall of Justice
101 S. 5th St.
Camden, NJ 08103-4001
856-379-2000 x3033

Cape May

Civil Division Management Office
Cape May Courthouse
9 N. Main St.
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-463-6515

Special Civil Part Information
Cape May Courthouse
9 N. Main St.
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-463-6509

Cumberland

Civil Division Management Office
Cumberland County Courthouse
Broad & Fayette Sts.
Bridgeton, NJ 08302
856-453-4331

Special Civil Part Information
Cumberland County Courthouse
1st Floor, P.O. Box 10
Bridgeton, NJ 08302
856-453-4350

Essex

Civil Division Management Office
Essex County Hall of Records
470 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102
973-693-6521

Special Civil Part Information
Essex County Hall of Records
470 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102
973-693-6864

Gloucester/Cumberland/Salem

Civil Division Management Office
Gloucester County Courthouse
1 N. Broad St., 1st Floor
Woodbury, NJ 08069
856-853-3375

Special Civil Part Information
Gloucester County Courthouse
1 N. Broad St., 1st Floor, P.O. Box 881
Woodbury, NJ 08069
856-853-3392

Hudson

Civil Division Management Office
Brennan Courthouse
583 Newark Ave.
Jersey City, NJ 07306
201-795-6398

Special Civil Part Information
595 Newark Ave., Room 711
Jersey City, NJ 07306
201-795-6682

Hunterdon

Civil Division Management Office
Hunterdon County Justice Center
65 Park Ave.
Flemington, NJ 08822
908-231-7605

Special Civil Part Information
Hunterdon County Justice Center
65 Park Ave.
Flemington, NJ 08822
908-237-5820

Mercer

Civil Division Management Office
Mercer County Civil Courts Building
175 S. Broad St., P.O. Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650-6111
609-571-4490

Special Civil Part Information
Mercer County Civil Courts Building
175 S. Broad St., P.O. Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650-6111
609-571-4453

Middlesex

Civil Division Management Office
Middlesex County Courthouse
1 JFK Square, P.O. Box 964
New Brunswick, NJ 08903-0964
Phone: 732-981-3055

Special Civil Part Information
Middlesex County Courthouse
Tower, 3rd Floor, P.O. Box 1146
New Brunswick, NJ 08903-1146
Civil Actions: 732-981-2072
Small Claims: 732-981-2047
Landlord/Tenant: 732-981-2075

Monmouth

Civil Division Management Office
Monmouth County Courthouse
P.O. Box 1269
Freehold, NJ 07728-1269
732-677-4298

Special Civil Part Information
Monmouth County Courthouse
P.O. Box 1270
Freehold, NJ 07728
Civil Actions: 732-677-4270
Small Claims: 732-677-4292
Landlord Tenancy: 732-677-4285

Morris/Sussex

Civil Division Management Office
Morris County Courthouse
Washington & Court Sts., P.O. Box 910
Morristown, NJ 07963-0910
973-656-4110

Special Civil Part Information
Morris County Courthouse
Washington & Court Sts.
Morristown, NJ 07963
973-656-4125

Sussex County Judicial Center
43-47 High St.
Newton, NJ 07860
973-579-0918

Special Civil Part Information
43-47 High St.
Newton, NJ 07860
973-579-0918

Ocean

Civil Division Management Office
120 Hooper Ave., P.O. Box 2191
Toms River, NJ 08754
732-929-2042

Special Civil Part Information
Ocean County Courthouse
118 Washington St., Room 121
Toms River, NJ 08754
732-929-2016

Passaic

Civil Division Management Office
Passaic County Courthouse
77 Hamilton St.
Paterson, NJ 07505
973-247-8176

Special Civil Part Information
Passaic County Courthouse
77 Hamilton St.
Paterson, NJ 07505
973-247-8268

Salem

Civil Division Management Office
Salem County Courthouse
82 Market St.
Salem, NJ 08079
856-935-7510 x8213

Special Civil Part Information
Salem County Courthouse
82 Market St.
Salem, NJ 08079
856-935-7510 x8207

Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren

Civil Division Management Office
Somerset County Courthouse
20 N. Bridge St., P.O. Box 3000
Somerville, NJ 08876-1262
908-203-6130

Special Civil Part Information
Somerset County Courthouse
20 N. Bridge St., P.O. Box 3000
Somerville, NJ 08876-1262
908-231-7055

Union

Civil Division Management Office
Union County Courthouse
2 Broad St., 1st Floor
Elizabeth, NJ 07207
908-659-3844

Special Civil Part Information
Union County Courthouse
2 Broad St., 3rd Floor
Elizabeth, NJ 07207
908-659-3638

Warren

Civil Division Management Office
Warren County Courthouse
413 2nd St., P.O. Box 900
Belvidere, NJ 07823
908-475-6143

Special Civil Part Information
Warren County Courthouse
413 2nd St., P.O. Box 900
Belvidere, NJ 07823
908-475-6140

WHAT COURT STAFF MAY AND MAY NOT DO

We will be happy to help you if we can. However, we are allowed to help you only in certain ways. This is a list of some things the court staff CAN and CANNOT do for you. Please read it carefully before asking the court staff for help.

- WE CAN explain and answer questions about how the court works.
- WE CAN tell you what the requirements are to have your case considered by the court.
- WE CAN give you some information from your case file.
- WE CAN provide you with samples of court forms that are available.
- WE CAN provide you with guidance on how to fill out forms.
- WE CAN usually answer questions about court deadlines.
- WE CANNOT give you legal advice. Only your lawyer can give you legal advice.
- WE CANNOT tell you whether or not you should bring your case to court.
- WE CANNOT give you an opinion about what will happen if you bring your case to court.
- WE CANNOT recommend a lawyer, but we can provide you with the telephone number of a local lawyer referral service.
- WE CANNOT talk to the judge for you about what will happen in your case.
- WE CANNOT let you talk to the judge outside of court.
- WE CANNOT change an order issued by the judge.

We look forward to helping you in accordance with these guidelines.

FORMS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

The following forms are available on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com or may be obtained in hard copy from the Civil Division manager of each county. A list of the county civil offices appears on page 21. A list of civil presiding judges is available on the Judiciary's Web Site at www.njcourtsonline.com. All mentions of appendices refer to the appendix to the New Jersey Rules of Court.

Materials for Individuals Who Wish to Represent Themselves in Court

Small Claims (under \$3000)

- Small Claims: A Guide to the Court
- How to Sue in Small Claims Court -- Non-Auto (English and Spanish)
- How to Sue for an Amount of Money Under \$3,000 -- Auto
- Complaint – Appendix XI-C (non-motor vehicle)
- Complaint – Motor Vehicle – Appendix XI-D
- Summons and Return of Service – Appendix XI-A(1) (English and Spanish)

Special Civil Part (under \$15,000)

- Special Civil: A Guide to the Court
- How to Sue for an Amount of Money Under \$15,000
- How to Answer a Complaint in the Special Civil Part
- How to File a Motion in the Special Civil Part
- How to Request a Judgment or Dismissal Without a Trial (Summary Judgment)
- Friendly Settlement Judgment
- Notice to Debtor – Appendix VI
- Summons and Return of Service – Appendix XI-A(1) (English and Spanish)

Collecting after You Win in Small Claims or the Special Civil Part

- Collecting a Money Judgment
- How to Get Financial Information about Someone Who Owes You Money
- How to Ask the Court to Order a Bank to Turn Over Funds that Have Been Frozen
- How to Ask the Court to Order a Wage Execution in a Special Civil Part Case

Landlord/Tenant

- Information for Landlords
- Information for Tenants
- Certification by Landlord – Appendix XI-T
- Certification by Landlords Attorney – Appendix XI-U
- Consent to Enter Judgment (Tenant Remains) – Appendix XI-V
- Consent to Enter Judgment for Possession (Tenant Vacates) – Appendix XI-W

Civil – Law Division

- How to File a Complaint in the Superior Court of New Jersey – Law Division
- How to File an Answer to a Complaint in the Superior Court of New Jersey – Civil Division
- Affidavits of Service
- Civil Case Information Statement (CIS)
- Discovery in Aid of Foreign Litigation

- Docketing Foreign Judgments
- Friendly Settlement Judgment
- *Pro Hac Vice* Applications

Name Change

- How to ask the Court to Change Your Name (Adult)
- How to ask the Court to Change the Name of Your Minor Child (under age 18)

Chancery Division, Probate Part

- Annual Report of Guardian
- Limited Guardianship for September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001
- Model Incapacitated Person Guardianship Judgment

Arbitration

- Uniform Arbitration Statement of Facts – Appendix XXII-A
- Uniform Commercial Arbitration Memorandum – Appendix XXII-B

Mediation

- Application for Admission to Roster of Mediators for Civil, General Equity and Probate Cases
- Civil Statewide Attorney Mediation Questionnaire
- Civil Statewide Litigant Mediation Questionnaire
- Civil Statewide Mediation Case Information Form
- Mediator Report – Initial Status
- Mediator Report – Second Status
- Presumptive Mediation Attorney Questionnaire
- Presumptive Mediation Litigation Questionnaire
- Presumptive Mediation Case Information Form

Copies of any of the above forms can be obtained on request from court staff. A list of the court staff in each county appears on page 21-23.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO REMEMBER FOR YOUR CASE(S)

Docket Number(s): _____

Judge(s): _____

Arbitrator or Mediator: _____

Hearing Date(s): _____

Notes: _____

NEW JERSEY JUDICIARY
THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

Deborah T. Poritz
Chief Justice

Philip S. Carchman, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director