

Justice of the Peace Courts

Explanation Of Case Categories

CRIMINAL CASES

TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS

This category includes all non-jailable misdemeanor violations of the Texas traffic laws and other violations of laws relating to the operation or ownership of a motor vehicle (for example, Speeding, Stop Sign, Red Light, Inspection Sticker, Driver's License, Registration, etc.). Maximum punishment is by fine and such sanctions, if any, as authorized by statute not consisting of confinement in jail or imprisonment.

NON-TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS

This category includes all other Class C misdemeanor criminal violations found in the Texas Penal Code and other state laws (for example, Public Intoxication, Disorderly Conduct, Assault, Theft Under \$50, etc.). Maximum punishment is by fine and such sanctions, if any, as authorized by statute not consisting of confinement in jail or imprisonment.

CIVIL CASES

SMALL CLAIMS SUITS

This category includes all suits for the recovery of money (damages or debt up to \$5,000) brought to the justice of the peace as judge of the Small Claims Court in accordance with chapter 28 of the Texas Government Code.

FORCIBLE ENTRY AND DETAINER

This category includes all suits for forcible entry and detainer (recovery of possession of premises) brought under authority of section 27.031, Texas Government Code; Texas Property Code, section 24.001-24.008; and rules 738-755, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

OTHER CIVIL SUITS

This category includes all other suits within the civil jurisdiction of the justice of the peace court, including those for recovery of money (damages or debt up to \$5,000) and for foreclosure of mortgages and enforcement of liens on personal property in cases in which the amount in controversy is otherwise within the justice court's jurisdiction as provided by section 27.031 of the Texas Government Code.