

DEFENDANT'S INSTRUCTIONS

CASE NO. _____
State of Louisiana
Parish of East Baton Rouge
Ward 3 District 2

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT
5627 Superior Drive, Suite A-1
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816
(225) 751-8265

Plaintiff(s): _____ Phone No. _____
Address: _____

Defendant(s): _____
Address: _____

DO NOT IGNORE THESE PAPERS: If you do ignore these pleadings, the court may enter a default judgment against you. This means that the other party can legally garnish your wages or take your property.

1. First, decide if you wish to contest this claim. You should answer on the form provided for your answer, even if you feel you are the wrong defendant. The court costs for filing an answer is \$30. Your answer should contain every defense you have. Please file your answer in writing within ten (10) days after you received the citation, and mail a copy to the other party.
2. Decide if you wish to hire an attorney to represent you. You are allowed to represent yourself and if the other party decides to hire an attorney, you will be given an opportunity to secure an attorney if you desire to do do.
3. Possible Defenses include: No jurisdiction or improper venue, Contributory negligence (negligence on the part of the plaintiff), Discharge in bankruptcy, Error or mistake, Previous compromise or payment of an obligation, Excessive damages claimed.
4. If you believe you have a claim of your own against the party suing you, you may file a reconventional demand. The plaintiff must be served this reconventional demand before trial. The defendant (plaintiff in reconvention) must pay a basic filing fee of \$30.00 for one defendant, plus an additional \$25 for each additional defendant.
5. You will have the opportunity at trial to present your witnesses and evidence, and the opportunity to pose questions to your opponent. You may be asked to answer your opponent's questions. The procedure is more relaxed and informal than in an ordinary trial, with the Justice of the Peace asking questions himself in an effort to understand the case and ascertain the truth.
6. After all the testimony is taken, the judge may announce his decision, or he may take the matter under advisement and issue a ruling later. If he rules later, you will be notified by mail.
7. If you do not agree with the decision made by the court, you will have fifteen (15) days from the signing of the judgment, or from receipt of judgment if the case was taken under advisement, to appeal your case.