



Key Changes to Florida's Courts in 2023

Happy New Year! Your attorneys at Kaufman Dolowich hope you had an enjoyable holiday season. We write today to share that the 2023 New Year brings two significant changes to the Florida legal landscape that may impact your legal matters.

Jurisdictional Thresholds Have Increased.

Effective January 1, 2023, the jurisdictional threshold for a litigant to pursue a case in Circuit Court has increased from \$30,000.00 to \$50,000.00. See § 34.01(1)(c)(3), Fla. Stat. (2022). The impact of this change is not yet known. While it may result in more low-value cases being litigated in County Court, it may also result in litigants seeking to inflate their damages so that they may litigate in Circuit Court, which is the court of general jurisdiction over matters not assigned by statute to the County Courts.

Florida law also now provides that future jurisdictional thresholds will be directly correlated with the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for the preceding 10 calendar years. This increase will not occur until 2030. These changes will occur every 10 years and will be calculated by the legislature's Office of Economic & Demographic Research and the Office of the State Courts Administrator, who must publish the increased jurisdictional threshold on its websites. At no time, however, will the jurisdictional threshold for Circuit Court go below \$50,000.00.

Florida Has Added a Sixth District Court of Appeals

Also, effective January 1, 2023, Florida now has a Sixth District Court of Appeals. This creation of an additional district is the first since the creation of the Fifth District Court of Appeals in 1979. The District Court is the intermediate appellate courts within Florida's state court system. District Courts hear appeals from the Circuit Courts.

To facilitate the new Court, the geographic boundaries of the First, Second, and Fifth districts have been changed. The Sixth District Court of Appeals is now comprised of the Ninth (Orange and Osceola County), Tenth (Hardee, Highlands, and Polk County), and Twentieth Judicial Circuits (Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee County). This will, thus, include Naples, Fort Myers, and Orlando within the Sixth District.

The Sixth District Court of Appeals is made up of nine (9) judges: five (5) who previously served on the Fifth District Court; one (1) who previously served on the Second District Court; and three (3) who have been appointed by the Governor. These judges will then remain subject to merit retention election every six (6) years in the ten counties within the district.

Cases that originated in one of those ten Circuits are currently in the process of being transferred to the Sixth District.

As always if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us.

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