

**RCW 12.40.080 Hearing.** (1) No attorney-at-law, legal paraprofessional, nor any person other than the plaintiff and defendant, shall appear or participate with the prosecution or defense of litigation in the small claims department without the consent of the judicial officer hearing the case. A corporation may not be represented by an attorney-at-law or legal paraprofessional except as set forth in RCW 12.40.025.

(2) In the small claims department it shall not be necessary to summon witnesses, but the plaintiff and defendant in any claim shall have the privilege of offering evidence in their behalf by witnesses appearing at trial.

(3) The judge may informally consult witnesses or otherwise investigate the controversy between the parties and give judgment or make such orders as the judge may deem to be right, just, and equitable for the disposition of the controversy. [1997 c 352 s 3; 1991 c 71 s 2; 1984 c 258 s 65; 1981 c 331 s 12; 1919 c 187 s 8; RRS s 1777-8.]

**Court Improvement Act of 1984—Effective dates—Severability—Short title—1984 c 258:** See notes following RCW 3.30.010.

**Court Congestion Reduction Act of 1981—Purpose—Severability—1981 c 331:** See notes following RCW 2.32.070.