

Kirk A. Cullimore proposes the following substitute bill:

State Court Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Kirk A. Cullimore

House Sponsor:

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends statutory provisions related to state courts.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- allows the Judicial Council to establish a division in the district court;
- addresses resources for a division established by the Judicial Council;
- addresses the transfer of certain actions to a division of the district court; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

This bill provides a special effective date.

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

78A-5-103, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2008, Chapter 3

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **78A-5-103** is amended to read:

78A-5-103 . District court case management -- Establishment of a division of the district court.

(1) As used in this section, "debt collection or housing action" means a civil action in the district court:

- (a) for forcible entry and detainer as described in Title 78B, Chapter 6, Part 8, Forcible Entry and Detainer; or
- (b) that is eligible to be filed as a debt collection case on or after January 1, 2027.

- 29 ~~[(1)]~~ (2) The district court of each district shall develop systems of case management.
- 30 ~~[(2)]~~ (3) The case management systems developed by a district court shall:
 - 31 (a) ensure judicial accountability for the just and timely disposition of cases; and
 - 32 (b) provide for each judge a full judicial work load that accommodates differences in the
 - 33 subject matter or complexity of cases assigned to different judges.
- 34 ~~[(3)]~~ (4)(a) ~~[A district court]~~ The Judicial Council may establish divisions within the
- 35 district court for the efficient management of different types of cases[-] , including a
- 36 division to manage any debt collection or housing action.
- 37 (b) Upon establishing a division under Subsection (4)(a), the Judicial Council shall
- 38 allocate sufficient resources from appropriations made by the Legislature for the
- 39 division, including the appointment or hiring of commissioners or judicial assistants
- 40 to staff the division.
- 41 (c) The existence of divisions within the court may not:
 - 42 ~~[(a)]~~ (i) affect the jurisdiction of the court nor the validity of court orders; or
 - 43 ~~[(b)]~~ (ii) impede public access to the courts.
- 44 (5)(a) Notwithstanding the venue requirements in Title 78B, Chapter 3a, Venue for Civil
- 45 Actions, for a debt collection or housing action, the district court shall transfer any
- 46 debt collection or housing action to the division established under Subsection (4) for
- 47 centralized pretrial case processing.
- 48 (b) The division may transfer a debt collection or housing action to a venue for which a
- 49 district court determines is proper under Utah Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 42, if:
 - 50 (i) the debt collection or housing action is set for trial; or
 - 51 (ii) the debt collection or housing action requires an evidentiary hearing that is not an
 - 52 evidentiary hearing under Title 78B, Chapter 6, Part 8, Forcible Entry and
 - 53 Detainer.

Section 2. **Effective Date.**

55 This bill takes effect on January 1, 2027.