

TITLE 15 - COMMERCE AND TRADE
CHAPTER 92 - YEAR 2000 COMPUTER DATE CHANGE

§ 6606. Prelitigation notice

(a) In general

Before commencing a Y2K action, except an action that seeks only injunctive relief, a prospective plaintiff in a Y2K action shall send a written notice by certified mail (with either return receipt requested or other means of verification that the notice was sent) to each prospective defendant in that action. The notice shall provide specific and detailed information about—

- (1) the manifestations of any material defect alleged to have caused harm or loss;
- (2) the harm or loss allegedly suffered by the prospective plaintiff;
- (3) how the prospective plaintiff would like the prospective defendant to remedy the problem;
- (4) the basis upon which the prospective plaintiff seeks that remedy; and
- (5) the name, title, address, and telephone number of any individual who has authority to negotiate a resolution of the dispute on behalf of the prospective plaintiff.

(b) Person to whom notice to be sent

The notice required by subsection (a) of this section shall be sent—

- (1) to the registered agent of the prospective defendant for service of legal process;
- (2) if the prospective defendant does not have a registered agent, then to the chief executive officer if the prospective defendant is a corporation, to the managing partner if the prospective defendant is a partnership, to the proprietor if the prospective defendant is a sole proprietorship, or to a similarly-situated person if the prospective defendant is any other enterprise; or
- (3) if the prospective defendant has designated a person to receive prelitigation notices on a Year 2000 Internet Website (as defined in section 3(7) of the Year 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure Act), to the designated person, if the prospective plaintiff has reasonable access to the Internet.

(c) Response to notice

(1) In general

Within 30 days after receipt of the notice specified in subsection (a) of this section, each prospective defendant shall send by certified mail with return receipt requested to each prospective plaintiff a written statement acknowledging receipt of the notice, and describing the actions it has taken or will take to address the problem identified by the prospective plaintiff.

(2) Willingness to engage in ADR

The written statement shall state whether the prospective defendant is willing to engage in alternative dispute resolution.

(3) Inadmissibility

A written statement required by this subsection is not admissible in evidence, under Rule 408 of the Federal Rules of Evidence or any analogous rule of evidence in any State, in any proceeding to prove liability for, or the invalidity of, a claim or its amount, or otherwise as evidence of conduct or statements made in compromise negotiations.

(4) Presumptive time of receipt

For purposes of paragraph (1), a notice under subsection (a) of this section is presumed to be received 7 days after it was sent.

(5) Priority

A prospective defendant receiving more than one notice under this section may give priority to notices with respect to a product or service that involves a health or safety related Y2K failure.

(d) Failure to respond

If a prospective defendant—

- (1) fails to respond to a notice provided pursuant to subsection (a) of this section within the 30 days specified in subsection (c)(1) of this section; or
- (2) does not describe the action, if any, the prospective defendant has taken, or will take, to address the problem identified by the prospective plaintiff,

the prospective plaintiff may immediately commence a legal action against that prospective defendant.

(e) Remediation period

(1) In general

If the prospective defendant responds and proposes remedial action it will take, or offers to engage in alternative dispute resolution, then the prospective plaintiff shall allow the prospective defendant an additional 60 days from the end of the 30-day notice period to complete the proposed remedial action or alternative dispute resolution before commencing a legal action against that prospective defendant.

(2) Extension by agreement

The prospective plaintiff and prospective defendant may change the length of the 60-day remediation period by written agreement.

(3) Multiple extensions not allowed

Except as provided in paragraph (2), a defendant in a Y2K action is entitled to no more than one 30-day period and one 60-day remediation period under paragraph (1).

(4) Statutes of limitation, etc., tolled

Any applicable statute of limitations or doctrine of laches in a Y2K action to which paragraph (1) applies shall be tolled during the notice and remediation period under that paragraph.

(f) Failure to provide notice

If a defendant determines that a plaintiff has filed a Y2K action without providing the notice specified in subsection (a) of this section or without awaiting the expiration of the appropriate waiting period specified in subsection (c) of this section, the defendant may treat the plaintiff's complaint as such a notice by so informing the court and the plaintiff in its initial response to the plaintiff. If any defendant elects to treat the complaint as such a notice—

- (1) the court shall stay all discovery and all other proceedings in the action for the appropriate period after filing of the complaint; and
- (2) the time for filing answers and all other pleadings shall be tolled during the appropriate period.

(g) Effect of contractual or statutory waiting periods

In cases in which a contract, or a statute enacted before January 1, 1999, requires notice of nonperformance and provides for a period of delay prior to the initiation of suit for breach or repudiation of contract, the period of delay provided by contract or the statute is controlling over the waiting period specified in subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

(h) State law controls alternative methods

Nothing in this section supersedes or otherwise preempts any State law or rule of civil procedure with respect to the use of alternative dispute resolution for Y2K actions.

(i) Provisional remedies unaffected

Nothing in this section interferes with the right of a litigant to provisional remedies otherwise available under Rule 65 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or any State rule of civil procedure providing extraordinary or provisional remedies in any civil action in which the underlying complaint seeks both injunctive and monetary relief.

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 5, 2009 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscpri.html>).

(j) Special rule for class actions

For the purpose of applying this section to a Y2K action that is maintained as a class action in Federal or State court, the requirements of the preceding subsections of this section apply only to named plaintiffs in the class action.

(Pub. L. 106–37, § 7, July 20, 1999, 113 Stat. 196.)

References in Text

Section 3(7) of the Year 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(3), is section 3(7) of Pub. L. 105–271, which was formerly set out in a note under section 1 of this title.

The Federal Rules of Evidence, referred to in subsec. (c)(3), are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, referred to in subsec. (i), are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.