

Understanding Georgia's 2025 Tort Reform: Key Legal Changes for Civil Lawsuits

If you're a property or business owner in Georgia, a new tort reform bill, signed into law by Gov. Brian Kemp on April 21, 2025, may affect you. It impacts how current and future civil tort lawsuits are handled in Georgia. This bill, which is part of Gov. Kemp's broader effort to reform Georgia's liability laws, brings important changes that could impact businesses and individuals alike. Here's a high-level summary of the key changes:

1. *Pain and Suffering Claims*: Plaintiff lawyers can't suggest a dollar amount for pain and suffering in jury arguments unless it's backed by evidence. If they do mention a number, it has to remain the same throughout the case.
2. *Responding to Lawsuits and Discovery*: When you file a motion to dismiss or to request more information, your answer to the complaint and the discovery timeline are paused until the Court decides the motion. This prevents potentially unnecessary work for the defendant.
3. *Dismissing Lawsuits*: A plaintiff can dismiss their lawsuit without a judge's approval, but only within 60 days after the response is filed or if all parties agree. If a plaintiff has dismissed a similar case before, a second dismissal means it can't be filed again.
4. *Attorney's Fees*: Lawyers can't double-dip and collect the same fees twice for the same work. But, importantly, nothing in this new section takes away any contractual right to recover attorney's fees, court costs, or litigation expenses.
5. *Seat Belt Use in Accidents*: Not wearing a seat belt in a car accident can now be used as evidence that a plaintiff may be partly at fault for their injuries.
6. *Property Owner Responsibilities*: For negligence claims, property owners are only liable if it's shown they ignored foreseeable security threats on their property.
7. *Medical Bill Recovery*: People can only claim the actual costs of necessary medical treatment, not inflated amounts. This reduces the potential for excessively high verdicts tied to inflated medical bills.
8. *Splitting Injury Trials*: In cases involving serious injuries or death, trials can be divided into two parts — deciding fault and determining compensation — if requested early and if the case involves more than \$150,000.

For small business owners, property owners, and individuals, these changes may mean you need to adjust how you approach personal injury and liability cases in Georgia. Whether protecting your business or dealing with an injury case, these new statutes may affect your legal plans and even your insurance. We recommend contacting your insurance provider to see if this law impacts your coverage or premiums. Stay informed about further changes, as the State House is still considering additional proposals in Gov. Kemp's reform package.

If you have any questions or need advice on how this new law might affect you, please contact the [Chambliss Team](#). We're here to help you navigate these changes.