

NOTICE TO THE BAR

LANDLORD TENANT – PROTOCOLS FOR CASES IN WHICH AN APPLICATION FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE IS PENDING; ONGOING COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS

This notice provides information about the Judiciary's adjournment protocol for those residential landlord tenant cases in which an application for rental assistance is pending. It also provides information about the Judiciary's ongoing efforts to connect landlords and tenants with available rental assistance resources.

Requests to Adjourn Court Proceedings in Residential Landlord Tenant Cases Pending Resolution of Rental Assistance Application

The following protocol applies to all court proceedings, including mandatory settlement conferences and trials, in residential landlord tenant cases for non-payment, habitual late payment, or failure to pay a rent increase. Either party (tenant or landlord) may request adjournment of a scheduled court date if an application for rental assistance is pending. These protocols remain subject to refinement based on any future developments.

- The party requesting the adjournment must provide documentation that an application for rental assistance has been submitted and the status of that pending application, if known.
- Consistent with existing authority and current practice, a short adjournment will be granted to provide time to obtain and submit that documentation.
- If the requesting party does provide documentation of their pending application for rental assistance, the judge shall adjourn the mandatory settlement conference or trial date to allow for resolution of the rental assistance application for a period of 60 days or when the application is resolved, if earlier.
- The judge may expand the 60-day adjournment period if the parties agree or if the judge determines that exceptional circumstances exist.

Ongoing Efforts to Support Resolution of Landlord Tenant Cases Without Trial

Receipt of rental assistance benefits both tenants and landlords. Resolution of prospective or pending landlord tenant cases through the distribution of available rental assistance funds also supports the Judiciary in its ongoing efforts to provide a fair, efficient, and neutral forum for the adjudication of disputes. Accordingly, the Judiciary is continuing to work to connect tenants and landlords with rental assistance resources so that potential and pending disputes can be resolved without trial. As one step in those efforts, the Judiciary is hosting an informational webinar on landlord tenant legal information and community resources on Thursday, August 5, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Additional details are available on the Judiciary's [website](#). A recording of that webinar will be posted. Vicinages will be conducting additional information outreach events in the coming weeks.

The Judiciary's website also has [information](#) about what rental assistance and legal assistance resources are available in each of the counties. This information is also distributed to parties in pending cases in writing and again conveyed by staff at settlement conferences. The Judiciary is continuing to work with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA), county and municipal leaders, and organizations in all counties to conduct outreach events to local communities.

Questions about adjournment requests and all aspects of landlord tenant case processes may be directed to Taironda E. Phoenix, Assistant Director for Civil Practice at (609) 815-2900 ext. 54900 or taironda.phoenix@njcourts.gov. Requests for information about community outreach events should be directed to Janie Rodriguez, Chief of Outreach and Litigant Services, at (609) 815-2900 ext. 52363 or Janie.rodriquez@njcourts.gov.



Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: August 5, 2021