

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA  
WESTERN DISTRICT

IN RE: FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT :  
TEMPORARY PROCEDURES : No. 23 WM 2020  
REGARDING CERTAIN RESIDENTIAL:  
LANDLORD TENANT ACTIONS :

**ORDER OF COURT**

**AND NOW**, this 31<sup>st</sup> day of August 2020, pursuant to Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2), this Court having declared a judicial emergency in the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania through December 31, 2020, and recognizing that rent assistance through the CARES Rent Relief Program and other programs is available for landlords and tenants in Allegheny County and that landlords and tenants may require time to apply for such assistance and additional time for their applications to be processed, the following is hereby **ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED**.

1. Effective September 1, 2020, all residential landlord tenant actions will be accepted for filing within the Fifth Judicial District pursuant to the applicable statutes and rules governing those actions.
2. Initial hearing dates for residential landlord tenant actions filed at the Magisterial District Courts where the action is based solely on non-payment of rent shall be scheduled at the latest available landlord tenant court date consistent with Pa.R.C.P.M.D.J. 504 and may be scheduled up to seven (7) days beyond the time limit set forth in Rule 504, if the Magisterial District Judge finds it necessary due to the volume of cases already scheduled.
3. On such cases, if on or before the initial hearing date, the tenant provides an affidavit or testifies under oath affirming that the tenant has submitted or will submit an application for rental assistance under the CARES Rent Relief Program or any of the other available rental assistance programs, the initial hearing date shall be used to conduct a status conference rather than a hearing. During this status conference, the CARES Rent Relief Program or other program shall be considered by the parties who shall determine if they will move forward with an application.

4. If both parties agree to move forward with an application through the CARES Rent Relief Program or other available rental assistance program, the hearing shall be continued to allow for sufficient time for the application to be processed as agreed to by the parties and the Magisterial District Judge. Multiple continuances may be granted so there is sufficient time for the application to be processed and the relief to be provided. A hearing shall not occur until the application has either been granted, denied or withdrawn.
5. If, during the status conference, the parties do not both agree to move forward with an application, the case may be postponed to a new date for a hearing on the matter or the Magisterial District Judge may, in his or her discretion, continue the hearing to allow for an application to be made and processed.
6. The procedures in paragraphs 2 through 5 above apply only to residential landlord tenant actions at the Magisterial District Courts where the action is based solely on non-payment of rent.
7. Application for COVID-19 related rent assistance through the CARES Rent Relief Program can be made online at <https://covidrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us>.
8. Additional information about other rental assistance programs may be found at the following links:
  - <https://www.ura.org/pages/covid-19-resources-for-residents>
  - <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>
  - <https://renthelppgh.org/>

The Fifth Judicial District Judicial Temporary Prohibition on Commencement of Certain Residential Landlord Tenant Actions expires on August 31, 2020. This Order shall become effective on September 1, 2020 and shall remain in effect until further Order of Court.

BY THE COURT:



,P. J.

Kim Berkeley Clark  
President Judge