

IN RE: ADMINSTRATIVE ORDER : IN THE COURT OF COMMON
CONCERNING CERTAIN RESIDENTIAL : PLEAS OF BERKS COUNTY,
LANDLORD TENANT ACTIONS : PENNSYLVANIA
: No. 20-3264

ORDER OF COURT

AND NOW, this 1st day of September 2020, pursuant to Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2), this Court having declared a judicial emergency in the 23rd Judicial District, and recognizing that rent assistance through the CARES Rent Relief Program and other programs is available for landlords and tenants in Berks 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 with the 23rd 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

Judicial Administrative Order 20-3264
Berks County Prothonotary Office



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 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 her or his 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. Applications and information for COVID-19 related rent assistance through the CARES Act Rent Relief Program are available here:
 - phfa.org
 - Berks Coalition to End Homelessness (bceh.org; 610-372-7222)
 - Reading Human Relations Commission (reading.pa.gov/content/human-relations-commission; 610-655-6141).

This Order shall become effective on September 1, 2020 and shall remain in effect until further Order of the Court.

BY THE COURT:

Thomas G. Parisi, P.J.

Thomas G. Parisi,

President Judge

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE ENTRY OF THIS ORDER OR DECREE PURSUANT TO RULE P.C.P. 236 YOU ARE NOTIFIED THAT THIS ORDER/DOCUMENT HAS BEEN FILED IN THE PROTHONOTARY'S OFFICE OF BERKS COUNTY AND THIS IS AN EXTRACT FROM THE RECORD OF SAID COURT CERTIFIED THIS

1 DAY OF Sept 2020

Jonathan K. Del Collo, Prothonotary

Jonathan K. Del Collo Deputy