

NOTICE TO THE BAR AND PUBLIC

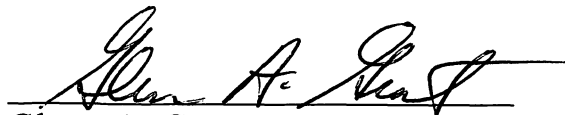
LANDLORD TENANT -- TRANSFER OF CERTAIN LANDLORD TENANT CASES FROM THE ESSEX VICINAGE TO MONMOUTH, OCEAN, AND UNION VICINAGES

The Supreme Court has authorized the transfer of landlord tenant complaints filed in the Essex Vicinage from January 1, 2023 through April 30, 2023, to other counties for handling through trial. This temporary measure will enable the Essex Vicinage to allocate resources to address pending cases filed before 2023 while ensuring that recent filings also advance without undue delay. The Court's March 7, 2023 Order is attached.

Notice in English and Spanish will be provided to all parties involved in a transferred case. Court events including trials will be conducted virtually absent individualized accommodations for an in-person trial.

The Judiciary extends its appreciation to the tenant advocates and landlord representatives who are preparing to support this necessary interim protocol, and to everyone in the Monmouth, Ocean, and Union Vicinages who will handle the transferred cases.

Questions on this notice should be directed to the Civil Practice Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts at (609) 815-2900 x54900.



Glenn A. Grant

Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: March 7, 2023

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a moratorium on residential evictions, followed by modifications to certain court processes so that tenants and landlords could access emergency federal, state, and local housing assistance funds. Those adjustments enabled many New Jersey residents to preempt or resolve court actions, maintain continuity in housing, and avoid widespread displacement during a public health crisis. At the same time, the pandemic and its aftermath have resulted in lengthy delays in the resolution of pending and new landlord tenant cases, especially in areas where many residents rent rather than own their homes. That situation has been most severe in the Essex Vicinage.

More timely disposition of landlord tenant cases is required. Some of the state's other Vicinages therefore will be called on to temporarily assist the Essex Vicinage in expediting the resolution of its pending landlord tenant cases and new filings.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, effective immediately and pending further court order:

1. Landlord tenant cases filed in the Essex Vicinage from January 1, 2023 through April 30, 2023 will be transferred to certain other vicinages for case management and disposition, as follows:

- a. All cases filed by the Newark Housing Authority from January 1 through April 30, 2023 will be transferred to the Monmouth Vicinage.
 - b. All other cases filed from January 1, 2023 through February 28, 2023 will be transferred to the Monmouth Vicinage.
 - c. All new cases filed from March 1, 2023 through March 31, 2023 and not filed by the Newark Housing Authority will be transferred to the Ocean Vicinage.
 - d. All new cases filed from April 1, 2023 through April 30, 2023 and not filed by the Newark Housing Authority will be transferred to the Union Vicinage.
2. The courts will provide notice to all attorneys and parties of the transfer of landlord tenant cases filed in the Essex Vicinage from January 1 through April 30, 2023 as set forth in the preceding paragraph.
 - a. Notice will be provided through eCourts for all cases.
 - b. For cases filed through the date of this Order that were already served, notice will also be served on all parties not registered in eCourts through regular mail and email.

- c. For cases filed from January 1, 2023 through April 30, 2023 and not yet served, notice will also be served on all parties not registered in eCourts through personal service and regular mail.
 - d. The notice of transfer will include a copy of this Order along with contact information for the receiving vicinage (Monmouth, Ocean, and Union).
3. For landlord tenant cases transferred from the Essex Vicinage pursuant to this Order, all court proceedings including trials will be scheduled and conducted in a virtual format, subject to the following provisions:
- a. The initial mandatory case management conference will be conducted virtually by staff in Monmouth, Ocean, or Union.
 - b. Cases not resolved at the mandatory case management conference will be scheduled for a virtual settlement conference and trial date before a Civil Division Judge in Monmouth, Ocean, or Union, which will be an exception to the general framework for landlord tenant trials provided for in the Supreme Court's October 27, 2022 Order.
 - c. When special circumstances require, the Essex Vicinage and a receiving Vicinage (Monmouth, Ocean, or Union) may schedule

in-person trials in the Essex County Courthouse, subject to the provision of specific written notice to all attorneys and parties.

4. For all landlord tenant cases transferred from the Essex Vicinage pursuant to this Order, the courts will support participation by attorneys and parties who require assistance with virtual technologies or who seek to appear in person:
 - a. Courts will accommodate attorneys and parties in participating virtually from a courthouse location in Essex or in the receiving Vicinage (Monmouth, Ocean, or Union).
 - b. Courts will have discretion to accommodate participants who wish to appear in person in the receiving Vicinage (Monmouth, Ocean, or Union).
 - c. As necessary, courts will reschedule matters to accommodate an attorney or party who appears in error in the Essex Vicinage rather than in the receiving Vicinage.
5. Landlord tenant cases transferred from the Essex Vicinage pursuant to this Order will be handled by the receiving Vicinage (Monmouth, Ocean, or Union) through the disposition of the case. Following disposition, such cases will be transferred back to the Essex Vicinage.

- a. The judgment or order entered by the receiving Vicinage will provide that the case has been transferred to the Essex Vicinage for any future applications, including for any motions for post-judgment relief.
 - b. The judgment will be served through eCourts on all attorneys.
 - c. The judgment will be served by regular mail on all self-represented parties, and by email if available.
6. The Judiciary will provide notice and plain language information, including in Spanish, about the temporary transfer of landlord tenant cases filed in the Essex Vicinage authorized by this Order, including on its public website njcourts.gov.



Chief Justice

Dated: March 7, 2023