



Dispute Resolution Services

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Residential Tenancy Branch
Office of Housing and Construction Standards

DECISION

Dispute Codes OPR, MNR

Introduction

This matter proceeded by way of an *ex parte* Direct Request Proceeding, pursuant to section 55(4) of the *Residential Tenancy Act* (the “Act”), and dealt with an Application for Dispute Resolution by the landlord for an Order of Possession based on unpaid rent and a monetary Order.

The landlord submitted two signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding forms which declare that on February 19, 2016, the landlord served each of the above-named tenants with the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding via registered mail.

Issue(s) to be Decided

Is the landlord entitled to an Order of Possession for unpaid rent pursuant to sections 46 and 55 of the *Act*?

Is the landlord entitled to monetary compensation for unpaid rent pursuant to section 67 of the *Act*?

Background and Evidence

The landlord submitted the following evidentiary material:

- Two copies of the Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding served to the tenants;
- A copy of a residential tenancy agreement which was signed by the landlord the tenants on October 16, 2015, indicating a monthly rent of \$973.75 due on the first day of the month for a tenancy commencing on November 1, 2015;
- A Monetary Order Worksheet showing the rent owing during the portion of this tenancy in question, on which the landlord establishes a monetary claim in the amount of \$973.75 for unpaid rent owing for February 2016;

- A copy of a 10 Day Notice to End Tenancy for Unpaid Rent (the Notice) dated February 04, 2016, which the landlord states was served to the tenants on February 04, 2016, for \$973.75 in unpaid rent due on February 01, 2016, with a stated effective vacancy date of February 14, 2016; and
- A copy of the Proof of Service of the Notice showing that the landlord served the Notice to the tenants by way of personal service via hand-delivery to the tenant “MB” at 4:30 PM on February 04, 2016. The personal service was confirmed as the tenant “MB” acknowledged receipt of the Notice by signing the Proof of Service form.

The Notice restates section 46(4) of the *Act* which provides that the tenants had five days to pay the rent in full or apply for Dispute Resolution or the tenancy would end on the effective date of the Notice. The tenants did not apply to dispute the Notice within five days from the date of service and the landlord alleged that the tenants did not pay the rental arrears.

Analysis

Direct Request proceedings are *ex parte* proceedings. In an *ex parte* proceeding, the opposing party is not invited to participate in the hearing or make any submissions. As there is no ability for the tenants to participate, there is a much higher burden placed on landlords in these types of proceedings than in a participatory hearing. This higher burden protects the procedural rights of the excluded party and ensures that the natural justice requirements of the Residential Tenancy Branch are satisfied.

In this type of matter, the landlord must prove they served the tenant with the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding, the Notice, and all related documents with respect to the Direct Request process, in accordance with the *Act* and Policy Guidelines. In an *ex parte* Direct Request Proceeding, the onus is on the landlord to ensure that all submitted evidentiary material is in accordance with the prescribed criteria and does not lend itself to ambiguity or give rise to issues that may need further clarification beyond the purview of a Direct Request Proceeding. If the landlord cannot establish that all documents meet the standard necessary to proceed via the Direct Request Proceeding, the application may be found to have deficiencies that necessitate a participatory hearing, or, in the alternative, the application may be dismissed.

I have reviewed all documentary evidence provided by the landlord. Section 89 of the *Act* provides the approved methods by which an application for dispute resolution can be served. Section 89 provides, in part, as follows:

Special rules for certain documents

89 (1) An application for dispute resolution or a decision of the director to proceed with a review under Division 2 of Part 5, when required to be given to one party by another, must be given in one of the following ways:

- (a) by leaving a copy with the person;
- (c) by sending a copy by registered mail to the address at which the person resides or, if the person is a landlord, to the address at which the person carries on business as a landlord;
- (e) as ordered by the director under section 71 (1) *[director's orders: delivery and service of documents]*.

(2) An application by a landlord under section 55 *[order of possession for the landlord]*, 56 *[application for order ending tenancy early]* or 56.1 *[order of possession: tenancy frustrated]* must be given to the tenant in one of the following ways:

- (a) by leaving a copy with the tenant;
- (b) by sending a copy by registered mail to the address at which the tenant resides;
- (c) by leaving a copy at the tenant's residence with an adult who apparently resides with the tenant;
- (d) by attaching a copy to a door or other conspicuous place at the address at which the tenant resides;
- (e) as ordered by the director under section 71 (1) *[director's orders: delivery and service of documents]*.

On the Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding forms, the landlord indicates that each tenant was served the Direct Request Proceeding documents by way of registered mail. If service of the Direct Request Proceeding documents is carried out in this manner, the landlord must provide evidentiary material, in the form of a Canada Post Registered Mail Receipt which includes the tracking number, and the name of the person to whom the registered mailed item was addressed, along with the destination address to which the mailed item is to be delivered, as proof of service via registered mail.

The landlord has provided only one Canada Post Registered Mail Receipt which does not contain the name of the individual to whom the registered mail item was sent, nor the address to which the registered mail item was to be delivered. In the absence of this supporting information, I am unable to determine or infer within the limited scope of the Direct Request process, which of the two respondent tenants were the intended recipients of the registered mail item. Furthermore, the landlord has not provided the

name and signature of a witness on the Proof of Service form to confirm that service of the documents was carried out by way of registered mail

Therefore, I find that the landlord has not proven service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding to either respondent tenants in accordance with the *Act*. I further find that there is no evidence before me that establishes that the landlord was given leave to serve the Direct Request Proceeding documents in an alternate fashion as ordered by a delegate of the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch in accordance with sections 89(1)(e) or 89(2)(e) of the *Act*.

Based on the foregoing, I find that the landlord has not proven service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding documents containing a copy of the application for dispute resolution in accordance with the *Act*. Therefore, I dismiss the landlord's application for an Order of Possession and a monetary Order with leave to reapply.

Conclusion

I dismiss the landlord's application with leave to reapply.

This decision is made on authority delegated to me by the Director of the Residential Tenancy Branch under Section 9.1(1) of the *Residential Tenancy Act*.

Dated: February 22, 2016

Residential Tenancy Branch

