



Dispute Resolution Services

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Residential Tenancy Branch
Office of Housing and Construction Standards

DECISION

Dispute Codes OPRM-DR, FFL

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 a signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding which declares that on September 23, 2019, the landlord served the tenant with the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding by way of personal service via hand-delivery. The Proof of Service form also establishes that the service was witnessed by “MP” and a signature for “MP” is included on the form.

Based on the written submissions of the landlord, and in accordance with section 89 of the *Act*, I find that the tenant has been duly served with the Direct Request Proceeding documents on September 23, 2019.

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*?

Is the landlord entitled to recover the filing fee for this application pursuant to section 72 of the *Act*?

Background and Evidence

I have reviewed all written submissions and evidence before me; however, only the evidence and submissions relevant to the issues and findings in this matter are described in this decision.

On the landlord's Application for Dispute Resolution by Direct Request, the landlord seeks an Order of Possession based on unpaid rent and a Monetary Order for unpaid rent in the amount of \$3,382.00.

The landlord submitted the following evidentiary material:

- A copy of a residential tenancy agreement which was signed by the landlord and the tenant, indicating a monthly rent of \$1,650.00, due on the first day of each month for a tenancy commencing on January 01, 2018;
- A copy of a "Notice of Rent Increase" form, provided to the tenant during the course of the tenancy, which demonstrates that the monthly rent was raised to the current amount of \$1,691.00, effective January 01, 2019;
- A Direct Request Worksheet showing the rent owing during the relevant portion of this tenancy in question, on which the landlord establishes that there is unpaid rent owed in the amount of \$3,382.00, comprised of the balance of unpaid rent due by September 01, 2019;
- A copy of a 10 Day Notice to End Tenancy for Unpaid Rent (the Notice) dated September 02, 2019, which the landlord states was served to the tenant on September 02, 2019, for \$3,382.00 in unpaid rent due on September 01, 2019, with a stated effective vacancy date of September 12, 2019; and
- A copy of the Proof of Service of the Notice form asserting that the landlord served the Notice to the tenant by way of personal service via hand-delivery on September 02, 2019. The Proof of Service form establishes that the service of the Notice was witnessed and a name and signature for the witness are included on the form.

The Notice restates section 46(4) of the *Act* which provides that the tenant 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 tenant did not apply to dispute the Notice within five days from the date of service and the landlord alleged that the tenant 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.

The Direct Request process is a mechanism that allows a landlord to apply for an expedited decision, and as such, the landlord must follow and submit documentation exactly as prescribed by the *Act* and Policy Guideline #39 – Direct Requests. There can be no omissions or deficiencies with items being left open to interpretation or inference.

Section 59(2)(b) of the *Act* provides that an application for dispute resolution must provide the full particulars of the dispute that is to be the subject of the dispute resolution proceeding. I find that, with respect to the portion of the application that references a request for a monetary order, the landlord has not provided sufficient and complete particulars, such as the details of the calculation of the amount being sought for unpaid rent. Rather, the landlord has not provided any particulars to demonstrate how the amount of unpaid rent claimed as being owed by the tenant, in the amount of \$3,382.00, was calculated. Therefore, I find that portion of the landlord's application does not comply with section 59(2)(b) of the *Act*.

On the Application for Dispute Resolution by Direct Request, the landlord states that a monetary Order in the amount of \$3,382.00 is sought for unpaid rent. On the Direct Request Worksheet, the landlord has not provided any details to depict the accounting of the rental arrears in amount of \$3,382.00 claimed as being owed by the tenant. The most recent Notice of Rent Increase form depicts that monthly rent in the amount of \$1,691.00 is owed by the tenant each month. However, the landlord has not provided any information as to why an amount of \$3,382.00 was owed by September 01, 2019, or what that amount was comprised of.

Of particular note is that on the Direct Request Worksheet, the landlord is expected to provide a “breakdown” of the balance of rent owed. However, the landlord provides only an “opening balance” of \$3,382.00 claimed as being owed for unpaid rent as of September 01, 2019, without providing any supporting information or accounting of how that sum was calculated.

By drafting the Direct Request Worksheet beginning with an outstanding amount being owed as a general sum by September 01, 2019, in the amount of \$3,382.00, without providing any information as to the nature of the sum being carried forward and whether it relates to unpaid rent or a charge arising from an item that cannot be considered by way of the Direct Request process, I find that the landlord has not adhered to section 59(2)(b) of the *Act*, as the landlord has not provided any particulars with respect to this portion of the application.

I find that the landlord has submitted an Application for Dispute Resolution by Direct Request which does not provide the full particulars with respect to the calculation of rent purportedly owed. I find that the evidentiary material presented by the landlord brings into question the correct amount of rental arrears owed by the tenant.

I further find that as a result of the incomplete calculation found on the landlord’s Direct Request Worksheet, as described above, it brings into question whether the Notice provided to the tenant alerted the tenant to an incorrect amount of rent owing, as the amount indicated on the Notice has not been substantiated by way of evidentiary material that clearly provides an accounting of the unpaid rent owed purportedly owed by the tenant. Therefore, it leaves open the possibility that the landlord’s request for an Order of Possession based on unpaid rent may be based on an unsubstantiated and unproven amount of rent purportedly owed.

As previously indicated, 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 narrow scope of a Direct Request Proceeding.

I find that there are deficiencies with this application, as outlined above, which cannot be clarified within the narrow scope of the Direct Request process. These deficiencies cannot be remedied by inferences in the absence of more evidentiary material, or oral testimony, which may clarify the questions raised by these inconsistencies. Therefore, I dismiss the landlord’s application for an Order of Possession based on unpaid rent and a monetary Order with leave to reapply.

It remains open to the landlord to reapply for dispute resolution via the Direct Request process if all requirements for an application for dispute resolution via Direct Request, as outlined in Policy Guideline #39, can be met, or, in the alternative, the landlord may wish to submit an application for dispute resolution to be heard via a participatory hearing.

As the landlord was not successful in this application, I find that the landlord is not entitled to recover the \$100.00 filing fee paid for this application.

Conclusion

I dismiss the landlord's application for an Order of Possession with leave to reapply.

I dismiss the landlord's application for a monetary Order with leave to reapply.

I dismiss the landlord's request to recover the \$100.00 filing fee paid for this application without 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: October 04, 2019

Residential Tenancy Branch