



Dispute Resolution Services

Page: 1

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 landlords for an Order of Possession based on unpaid rent and a monetary Order.

The landlords submitted a signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding which declares that on June 19, 2015, at 12:15 PM, the landlord "CC" served the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding by hand by leaving the documents with an individual other than the tenant. The individual to whom the documents were served by hand was a person identified only by a first name, bearing the initial "A". The service was confirmed as the individual identified as "A" acknowledged receipt of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding by signing the Proof of Service form. The Proof of Service forms also establishes that the service was witnessed by "EC" and a signature for EC is included on the form.

Issue(s) to be Decided

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

Are the landlords entitled to monetary compensation for unpaid rent pursuant to section 67 of the *Act*?

Background and Evidence

The landlords submitted the following evidentiary material:

- A copy of the Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding served to the tenant;
- A copy of a residential tenancy agreement which was signed by the landlords and the tenant on October 1, 2014, indicating a monthly rent of \$700.00 due on the first day of the month for a tenancy commencing on October 1, 2014;

- A Monetary Order Worksheet showing the rent owing and paid during the portion of this tenancy in question, on which the landlords establish a monetary claim in the amount of \$1,730.00 for unpaid rent, comprised of the balance of outstanding rent owing for the period of April 2015 to June 2015;
- A copy of a 10 Day Notice to End Tenancy for Unpaid Rent (the Notice) dated June 8, 2015, which the landlords state was served to the tenant on June 8, 2015 for \$1,830.00 in unpaid rent due on June 1, 2015, with a stated effective vacancy date of June 18, 2015; and
- A copy of the Proof of Service of the Notice showing that the landlord "CC" served the Notice to the tenant by way of personal service via hand-delivery at 7:30 PM on June 8, 2015. The Proof of Service form establishes that the service was witnessed by "EC" and a signature for EC is 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 landlords 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.

I have reviewed all documentary evidence provided by the landlord. Section 89 of the *Act* provides the approved methods by which documents comprising an application for dispute resolution can be served. Section 89 reads, 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;
- (d) if the person is a tenant, by sending a copy by registered mail to a forwarding address provided by the tenant;
- (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 form, the landlords have indicated that the Direct Request Proceeding documents were served by hand by leaving the documents with an individual other than the tenant. The individual to whom the documents were served by hand was a person identified only by a first name, bearing the initial "A". The tenancy agreement included with this application does not indicate whether any other tenants or occupants reside with the tenant and does not contain any information to identify whether the person identified as "A" is an adult who resides with the tenant.

The Proof of Service form provided by the landlord does not include any additional information to establish that "A" is in fact an adult who apparently resides with the tenant, and furthermore, there is no information provided in any of the evidentiary material submitted by the landlords that speaks to the issue of whether "A" is an adult who apparently resides with the tenant.

As the landlords have not served the tenant with a copy of the Notice of Direct Request Proceedings containing a copy of the application for dispute resolution in accordance with section 89(1) of the *Act*, I dismiss the landlord's application for a monetary award with leave to reapply.

If the landlord had demonstrated that "A" was in fact an adult who apparently resides with the tenant, then the service requirement of the documents would have been fulfilled in accordance with section 89(2)(c) of the *Act*, and therefore, would have permitted me to hear this application only for the portion that relates to the landlord's application for an Order of Possession. However, by failing to demonstrate that the person with whom the documents were left, "A", is an adult who apparently resides with the tenant, I find that the landlords have not served the documents in a manner approved under section 89(2) of the *Act*.

I further find that there is no evidence before me that establishes that the landlords were 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 landlords have not served the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding containing a copy of the application for dispute resolution in accordance with the *Act*. Therefore, I dismiss the landlords' application for an Order of Possession and a monetary Order with leave to reapply.

Conclusion

I dismiss the landlords' 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: June 23, 2015

Residential Tenancy Branch

