



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 July 17, 2015, the landlord’s agent “MT” served the above-named tenants with the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding via registered mail. The landlord provided two copies of the Canada Post Customer Receipts containing the Tracking Numbers to confirm these mailings. Section 90 of the *Act* determines that a document served in this manner is deemed to have been received 5 days after service. The Proof of Service form also establishes that the service was witnessed by “KW” and a signature for “KW” is included on the form.

Based on the written submissions of the landlord, and in accordance with sections 89 and 90 of the *Act*, I find that the tenants have been deemed served with the Direct Request Proceeding documents on July 22, 2015, the fifth day after their registered mailing.

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 tenants on May 3, 2015, indicating a monthly rent of \$1,950.00 due on the first day of the month for a tenancy commencing on May 1, 2015. The landlord did not sign the agreement. However, a tenancy agreement is an instrument of the landlord, and, once endorsed by the tenant(s), the landlord's failure to sign his own agreement does not invalidate it;
- 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 \$1,950.00 for outstanding rent owing for July 2015;
- A copy of a 10 Day Notice to End Tenancy for Unpaid Rent (the Notice) dated July 7, 2015, which the landlord states was served to the tenants on July 7, 2015, for \$1,950.00 in unpaid rent due on July 1, 2015, with a stated effective vacancy date of July 17, 2015; and
- A copy of the Proof of Service of the Notice showing that the landlord's agent "MT" served the Notice to the tenants by way of leaving a copy inside the rental unit for the tenants at 5:00 PM on July 7, 2015. The Proof of Service establishes that the service was witnessed by "NB" and a signature for "NB" is included on the 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 88 of the *Act* provides the approved methods by which documents can be served. Section 88 reads, in part, as follows:

88 All documents, other than those referred to in section 89 [*special rules for certain documents*], that are required or permitted under this Act to be given to or served on a person must be given or served in one of the following ways:

- (a) by leaving a copy with the person;
- (b) if the person is a landlord, by leaving a copy with an agent of the landlord;
- (c) by sending a copy by ordinary mail or 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 ordinary mail or registered mail to a forwarding address provided by the tenant;
- (e) by leaving a copy at the person's residence with an adult who apparently resides with the person;
- (f) by leaving a copy in a mail box or mail slot for the address at which the person resides or, if the person is a landlord, for the address at which the person carries on business as a landlord;
- (g) by attaching a copy to a door or other conspicuous place at the address at which the person resides or, if the person is a landlord, at the address at which the person carries on business as a landlord;
- (h) by transmitting a copy to a fax number provided as an address for service by the person to be served;
- (i) as ordered by the director under section 71 (1) [*director's orders: delivery and service of documents*];

On the first page of the Proof of Service of the Notice form, the landlord's agent "MT" checked a box indicating that the Notice was attached to the door or other conspicuous place. The landlord's agent further provides, under the "special details" section of the form, that a copy of the Notice was left inside the rental unit for the tenants. The instructions provided on the Proof of Service of the Notice form direct the landlord to describe the specific conspicuous place where the Notice was attached.

I find that the information provided by the landlord's agent under the "special details" section of the form does not demonstrate that the Notice was attached to the door of the rental unit, and does not demonstrate that the Notice was attached to any specific conspicuous location. I further find that the landlord's agent has not provided any information to demonstrate that the Notice was attached at all to satisfy the method of service purportedly used by the landlord's agent "MT". Rather, the information provided by the landlord's agent "MT" is vague and limited in scope and only provides that the Notice was left inside the rental unit at large, without reference to any specific location within the rental unit to clarify where inside the rental unit the Notice may have been left, and fails to establish that the Notice was attached in a conspicuous place in accordance with the provisions of section 88 of the *Act*.

Therefore, I find that the landlord has not demonstrated that the Notice was attached to the door or other conspicuous place, as indicated on the Proof of Service of the Notice form. I further find that the tenant has not been served with the Notice in a manner consistent with the service provisions for documents as provided under section 88 of the *Act*. I also find that there is no evidence before me that establishes that the landlord was given leave to serve the Notice in an alternative fashion as ordered by a delegate of the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch in accordance with section 88(i) of the *Act*.

Based on the foregoing, I find that the landlord has not demonstrated that the Notice was properly served in accordance with the *Act*, and therefore, the Notice is set aside and is of no force and effect.

As the landlord's application for an Order of Possession arises from a Notice that has been set aside, I dismiss the landlord's application for an Order of Possession, based on the July 7, 2015 Notice, without leave to reapply. The landlord may wish to serve a new Notice to the tenant(s) if the landlord so wishes.

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

Conclusion

I dismiss the landlord's application for an Order of Possession without leave to reapply.
I dismiss the landlord's application for a monetary Order 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: July 30, 2015

Residential Tenancy Branch

