



Dispute Resolution Services

Page: 1

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 two signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding forms which declare that on March 02, 2018, the landlord’s agent “KS” served each of the above-named tenants with the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding via registered mail to an address which is different than the address of the rental unit. The landlord provided two copies of the Canada Post Customer Receipts containing the Tracking Numbers to confirm these mailings.

The landlord submitted a third signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding which declares that on March 02, 2018, the landlord’s agent “KS” attached a Notice of Direct Request Proceeding to the door of the rental unit. The Proof of Service form does not include the name of the person to whom the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding was addressed and does not indicate the intended recipient of the Direct Request Proceeding documents.

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*?

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 relevant 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;
- (b) if the person is a landlord, by leaving a copy with an agent of the landlord;
- (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*].

Under the provisions of Policy Guideline #39 – Direct Requests, the onus is on the landlord to serve the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding in a manner approved under section 89 of the *Act*. Section 89 of the *Act* does permit a respondent to be served the Direct Request Proceeding documents by way of registered mail.

On the Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding forms which declare that the tenants were served the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding via registered mail, the landlord has indicated that the Direct Request Proceeding documents were served by way of registered mail to an address that is not the same as the address of the rental unit. If the parties had agreed that the address to which the Direct Request Proceeding documents were mailed was an approved alternate service address for the tenants, within the narrow scope of the Direct Request process, the landlord bears the burden to provide proof to support any such agreement. I find that the address to which the documents were mailed does not appear in any of the evidentiary material provided by the landlord as an approved alternate service address for the tenants, and there is no evidence before me to demonstrate that the parties agreed that the landlord may serve the documents to the tenants via an alternate address that differs from the address of the rental unit.

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 by serving the documents via registered mail to an address that differs from the address of the rental unit and one that is not established as an alternate service address for the tenants, the landlord has not served the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding in accordance with the *Act*. I find that the landlord has not sufficiently established that the Direct Request Proceeding documents have been served in accordance with Policy Guideline #39, and further find that I am not able to

confirm service of the Notice of Direct Request to the tenants, which is a requirement of the Direct Request process.

The landlord submitted a third signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding which declares that on March 02, 2018, the landlord's agent "KS" attached a Notice of Direct Request Proceeding to the door of the rental unit. The Proof of Service form does not include the name of the person to whom the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding was addressed and does not indicate the intended recipient of the Direct Request Proceeding documents.

In the absence of more supporting information or evidentiary material, 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 Notice of Direct Request Proceeding documents which the landlord asserts were attached to the door of the rental unit, and further, I am unable to confirm which respondent tenant may have received, or may have been deemed to have received, the hearing documents that were attached to the door, as the landlord has not provided a name on the Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding form to identify the intended recipient of the Direct Request Proceeding documents that were attached to the door of the rental unit.

Therefore, with respect to the landlord's attempt to serve the tenants by way of attaching the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding to the door of the rental unit, I find that the landlord has not sufficiently established that the Direct Request Proceeding documents have been served in accordance with Policy Guideline #39, and further find that I am not able to confirm service of the Notice of Direct Request to the tenants, which is a requirement of the Direct Request process.

As previously indicated, in an ex parte Direct Request Proceeding, the onus is on the applicant 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. I find that there are deficiencies with this application, as outlined above, which cannot be clarified by way of the Direct Request Proceeding. 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.

Based on the foregoing, I dismiss the landlord's application for an Order of Possession 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: March 16, 2018

Residential Tenancy Branch