



# Dispute Resolution Services

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Residential Tenancy Branch  
Office of Housing and Construction Standards

## DECISION

Dispute Codes      OPR-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.

The landlord submitted a signed Proof of Service of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding which declares that on August 17, 2018, the landlord’s agent served the tenant with the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding by way of personal service via hand-delivery. The personal service was confirmed as the tenant acknowledged receipt of the Notice of Direct Request Proceeding by signing the Proof of Service form. The Proof of Service form also establishes that the service was witnessed by “KD” and a signature for “KD” 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 August 17, 2018.

### 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 recover the filing fee for this application pursuant to section 72 of the *Act*?

### Background and Evidence

The landlord submitted the following evidentiary material:

- A copy of a residential tenancy agreement which was signed by the landlord's agent and the tenant, indicating a monthly rent of \$400.00, due on the first day of each month;
- A Direct Request Worksheet showing the rent owing during the portion of this tenancy in question;
- A copy of a 10 Day Notice to End Tenancy for Unpaid Rent (the Notice) dated August 01, 2018; and
- A copy of the Proof of Service of the Notice showing that the landlord's agent attests that the Notice was served on August 02, 2018, by way of personal service via hand-delivery to a person other than the tenant. The person with whom the Notice was left was identified as an individual bearing the initials "BP".

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.

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;
- (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
- (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;
- (i) 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 form, the landlord's agent has provided information in the field of the form indicating that the Notice was hand-delivered to the person (the tenant). However, the landlord's agent also provides that the Notice was not left with the tenant, rather, it was left with an individual other than the tenant, identified as bearing the initials "BP". The information provided by the landlord demonstrates that the Notice was not served by hand directly to the tenant, rather, that it was left with an individual other than the tenant.

The landlord left the Notice at the rental unit with a person other than the tenant. The manner in which the Notice was served, by leaving it with a person other than the tenant, may have been in accordance with section 88(e) of the *Act* which permits for the Notice to be left at the tenant's residence with an adult who apparently resides with the tenant.

If service of the Notice is carried out in this manner, the landlord is required to provide details that support the landlord's claim that the individual to whom the Notice was given is an adult who *resides* with the tenant. I find that the information provided by the landlord does not adequately demonstrate that this requirement has been fulfilled and does not provide sufficient details to clearly establish that service of the Notice was carried out in a manner consistent with section 88 of the *Act*.

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 evidence or information to identify whether the individual identified as “BP” is an adult, and furthermore, whether “BP” 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 “BP” 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 landlord that speaks to the issue of whether “BP” is an adult who apparently resides with the tenant.

I find that, by serving the Notice to an individual that has not been clearly proven to be an adult who apparently resides with the tenant, the landlord has not served the Notice in a manner consistent with the service provisions for documents as provided under section 88 of the *Act*. I further find that there is no evidence before me that establishes that the landlord was given leave to serve the Notice in an alternate 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, I am not able to confirm service of the Notice to End Tenancy to the tenant, 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 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 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: August 20, 2018

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Residential Tenancy Branch