



For immediate release: April 21, 2021

Supreme Court Special Committee Report Outlines Plan to Prepare for Pending Landlord-Tenant Crisis

A special committee formed by Chief Justice Stuart Rabner released a series of recommendations today to reform how courts handle landlord-tenant matters and to confront the impending flood of cases they will be asked to hear once a statewide moratorium on evictions is lifted.

[The report](#), which the Supreme Court will consider by the end of next month, outlines 18 recommendations that address the immediate impact of COVID-19 and long-term improvements for the handling of landlord-tenant matters.

“The committee’s work complements the Judiciary’s ongoing efforts with Executive and Legislative branch leaders to try to prevent widespread housing instability and homelessness once the moratorium on residential evictions ends,” Chief Justice Rabner said. “The Court welcomes comments on the committee’s proposals, which are designed to improve the overall landlord-tenant process and fairly and expeditiously resolve the large number of filings expected soon.”

COVID-19 has left tens of thousands of tenants struggling or unable to pay their rent. At the same time, landlords who rely on

rent to pay their bills have seen their own livelihoods placed in jeopardy. Residential evictions currently are on hold under a moratorium imposed by Gov. Phil Murphy.

Central to the report of the Judiciary Special Committee on Landlord Tenant are the following recommendations:

- Hire and train legal specialists to assist with more than 50,000 pending eviction cases and more than 194,000 new filings expected by 2022.
- Create structured opportunities to resolve landlord-tenant matters at case management and settlement conferences.
- Connect individuals with rental resources available through the state Department of Community Affairs and other sources.

Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, served as chair of the special committee and thanked its members for identifying collaborative solutions to confront a pending crisis and for laying the foundation for a better process for handling landlord-tenant cases in the future. Burlington County Assignment Judge Jeanne Covert served as vice-chair.

The Special Committee brought together various stakeholders, including the New Jersey State Bar Association, Legal Services of New Jersey, the New Jersey Apartment Association, and a coalition of housing advocates.

Members of the public have until May 21 [to submit comments on the report.](#)

###