

## NOTICE TO THE BAR

### **LANDLORD TENANT -- PILOT PROGRAM FOR SOME IN-PERSON TRIAL CALENDARS IN THE ESSEX VICINAGE TO START SEPTEMBER 2022**

The Supreme Court has authorized a pilot program for limited in-person landlord tenant trial calendars in the Essex Vicinage, starting on or after September 1, 2022. The pilot program is intended to address concerns, including as related to party non-appearances for virtual proceedings.

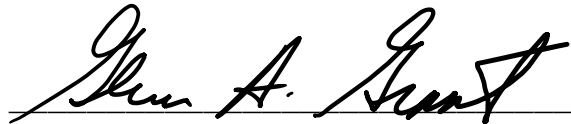
As detailed in its [July 14, 2021 Order](#), the Court is committed to supporting meaningful participation by tenants and landlords at each step of the court process. The Court-authorized landlord tenant legal specialist program, as well as the expanded roster of trained settlers, are continuing to advance settlement without trial in many cases throughout New Jersey. However, for some parties, especially those without legal representation, the current virtual format may create unintended challenges to participation in settlement conferences and trials. In response to such concerns, the Court has authorized the Essex Vicinage to schedule and conduct limited in-person landlord tenant calendars.

On or after September 1, 2022, the Essex Vicinage will schedule in-person and virtual landlord tenant trial calendars on an alternating schedule of two weeks in person, two weeks virtual. All case management conferences conducted before the trial date will continue to be conducted virtually. The notice issued after such case management conference will inform the parties of the date and format (in-person or virtual) of their trial. Whether conducted in person or virtually, the number of matters listed for trial for each session will be modest.

Consistent with the Court's [November 18, 2021 Order](#), judges will continue to exercise discretion as appropriate, including to accommodate the request of a party to participate in person in an otherwise virtual event, or to participate virtually in an otherwise in-person event.

The Judiciary will monitor appearance rates and outcomes for both in-person and virtual landlord tenant matters and consider such data, as well as stakeholder feedback, in determining whether to continue, revise, or expand the pilot program.

Additional information will be posted on the Judiciary's public website, including on the Essex webpage ([njcourts.gov/courts/vicinages/essex.html](http://njcourts.gov/courts/vicinages/essex.html)).

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Glenn A. Grant", is written over a horizontal line.

Glenn A. Grant

Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: August 1, 2022