

City of Alexandria, Virginia

City of Alexandria COVID-19 Eviction Response



Alexandria Eviction Prevention Task Force



Focused on reducing the impact of the current evictions crisis and developing long-term prevention strategies.

Work done through collaboration among the City, state government agencies, businesses, non-profits, landlords, tenants, faith community and community advocates.

Goals:

- Provide a clear understanding of the eviction landscape, who is being evicted, the eviction process, and current services, resources, and policies.
- Identify and resolve gaps in eviction prevention services.
- Engage stakeholders in the work.
- Identify actionable recommendations for City Council, service providers, and other stakeholders.
- Develop long term strategies to reduce evictions.

Name	Role	Organization
Genevieve Fields	Co-Chair	DCHS -Office of Community Services
Danien Johnson	Co-Chair	Director, ALIVE! House and Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership
Lesa Gilbert	Member	DCHS – Director, Center for Economic Support
Danien Johnson	Member	Director, ALIVE! House
Dipti Pidikiti-Smith	Member	Legal Services of Northern Virginia
Mary Horner	Member	Legal Services of Northern Virginia
George McAndrews	Member	City Attorney’s Office
Eric Keeler	Member	Alexandria Office of Housing
Melodie Seau	Member	Alexandria Office of Housing
Bert Bayou	Member	African Communities Together
Evelin Urrutia	Member	Tenants and Workers United
Blair Copeland	Member	Carpenter’s Shelter
Kelly Stone	Member	Economic Opportunities Commission
Melanie Gray	Member	Christ Episcopal Church
Rawles Jones	Member	Community Member
Tim Gleeson	Member	Alexandria Sheriff’s Office
James Romano	Member	DCHS – Office of Community Services



Key Steps in the Eviction Process:

- Eviction Notice
- Summons
- Hearing
- Appeal
- Writ of Possession
- Eviction



COVID Eviction Data

July 2020 –
April 2021

- 514 Judgments Entered
- 1,128 Dismissed or non-suited
- 257 Pending Cases
- 423 Writs Issued
- 845 Individuals Assisted through Courthouse Outreach



Eviction Data Comparison

2019

- ▶ 1,883 Judgments Entered
- ▶ 2,687 Dismissed or non-suited
- ▶ **4,632** Unlawful Detainer Filings

July 2020 – April 2021

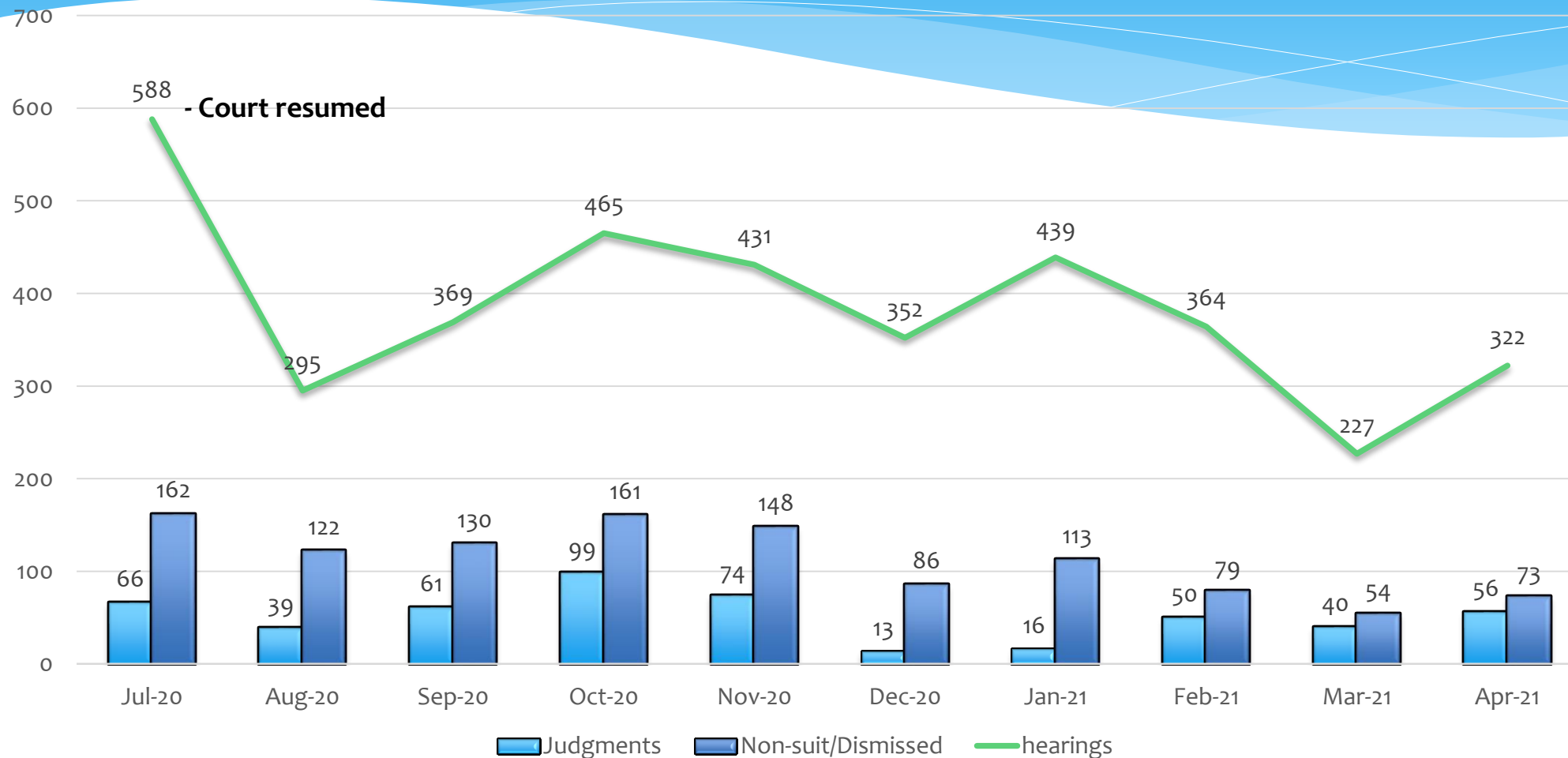
- 514 Judgments Entered
- 1,128 Dismissed
- 179 Continued (86 to July)
- **1,135** Unlawful Detainer Filings

	Historically	COVID	This year
	2019	7/2020 – 4/2021	1/2021 – 4/2021
Median	\$2,531.58	\$7,309.39	\$9,370.81
Mean	\$3,536.76	\$5,413.07	\$7,580.92

Judgment amounts are increasing



Hearings and Case Results

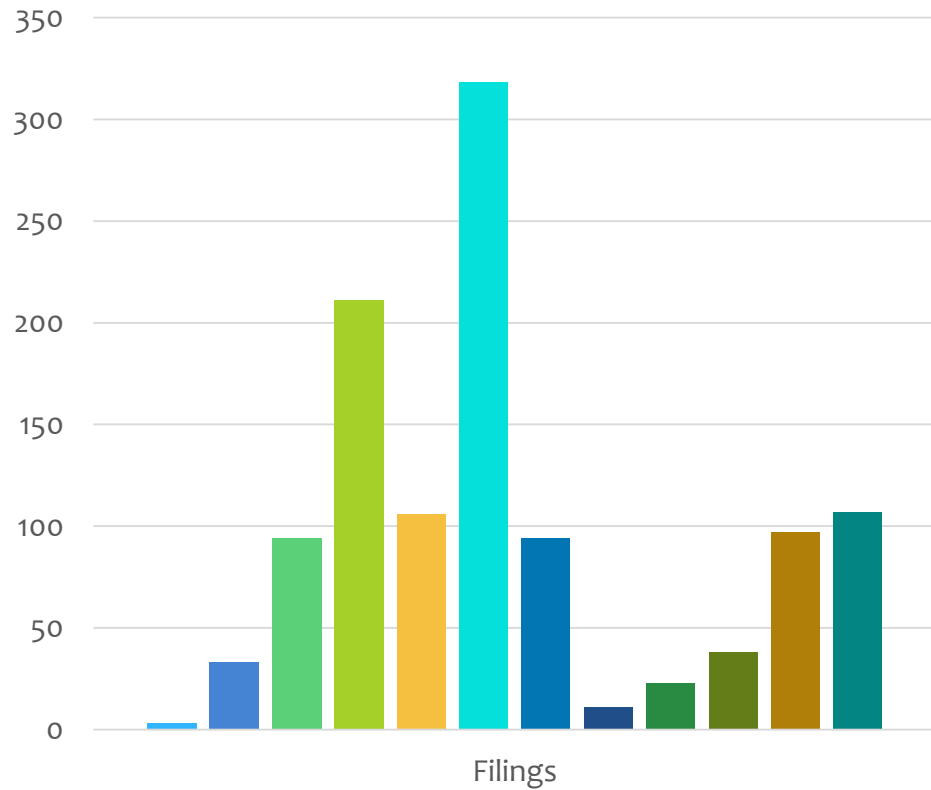


(July 2020-April 2021)



Unlawful Detainers Filed in COVID

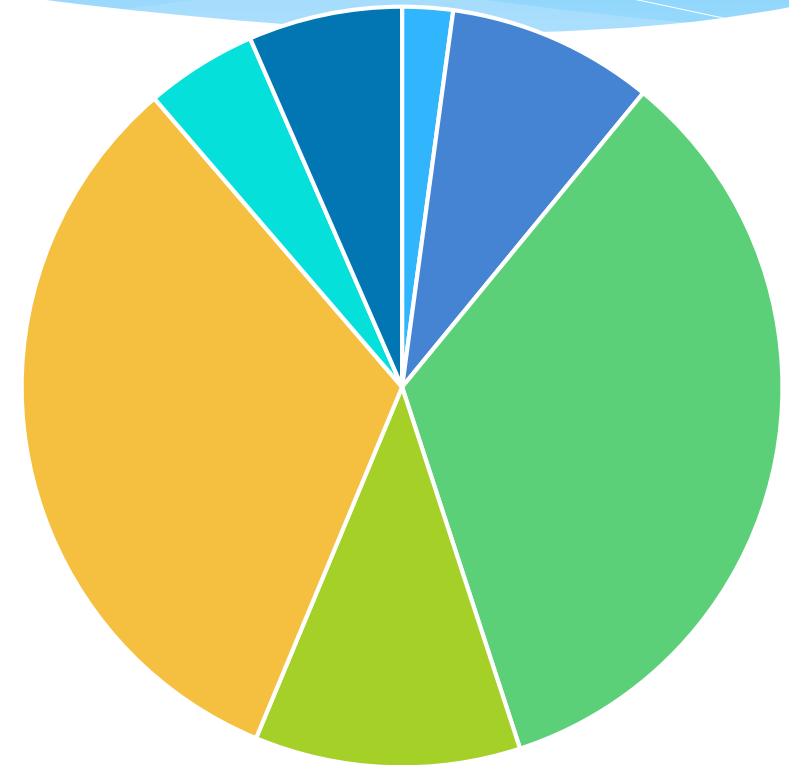
UD Filings by Month



■ May-20 ■ Jun-20 ■ Jul-20 ■ Aug-20 ■ Sep-20 ■ Oct-20
■ Nov-20 ■ Dec-20 ■ Jan-21 ■ Feb-21 ■ Mar-21 ■ Apr-21

78% of UD's were filed the zip codes: 22304 (380), 22311 (362), and 22305 (126)

UD Filings by Zip



■ 22301 ■ 22302 ■ 22304 ■ 22305 ■ 22311 ■ 22312 ■ 22314



COVID Writ Data

- Sheriff received **423** unduplicated writs
- 104 have **Paid**
- 43 Families provided **CDC Declaration** prior to eviction
- 17 **Cancelled** for other reasons
- 176 have **Moved**
- 63 **Evicted**/Locks Changed
- 20 Evictions *Currently Pending*

July 2020 – April 2021



Top Filers of Unlawful Detainers in 2020

Owners and Properties	# of Units	# of UDs	UDs as % of Units
CIM Group Southern Towers	2,184	437	20%
UDR Presidential Greens	399	203	51%
CIM Group Mason at Van Dorn	1,180	176	15%
ARHA	1,100	135	12%
Morgan Properties Stoneridge	797	85	11%
Morgan Properties Brookdale	472	82	17%
Homes for America Brent Place	207	73	35%
Trinity Group Arrive 2801	571	67	12%
Morgan Properties Willow Run	400	67	17%
UDR Newport Village	937	65	7%

Outreach and Rental Assistance

Interventions

Targeted Outreach



- Mayor's March 2020 letter to City landlords
- Site based outreach - Morgan Properties, Presidential Greens, Casa Chirilagua, Southern Towers (planned)
- Alexandria General District Court
- Tenant Rights Sessions
- Landlord Webinars
- Service Navigation for residents
- Track and distribute unlawful detainer and writ information to community partners on a weekly basis for direct outreach
- Mailers containing information on legal protections

Rental Assistance



Virginia Rent Relief Program (RRP)

City of Alexandria residents have received \$7,050,697 in rental assistance funds through the Virginia Rent Relief Program (RRP).

DCHS and Office of Housing programs

- Since March 13, 2020, DCCHS and the Office of Housing have served **3,458** households with **\$9.9 million** in emergency rent and mortgage assistance
- Funds utilized are a combination of federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds, state Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP funds), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and CARES Act funds.

Emergency Financial Providers

- Christ Episcopal Church
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Casa Chirilagua
- ALIVE!



Barriers and Challenges

State Rental Assistance Program

- Access to technology
- Application follow-up
- Month to Month Lease

Ongoing Challenges

- Need for Intensive case management/navigation
- Language and literacy barriers
- Overcoming mistrust and issues related to immigration status
- Leasing/roommate issues
- Communication and follow up by landlords
- Non-renewals of leases
- Self-eviction
- Data collection



Key Actions and Recommendations

Continue targeted outreach at the courthouse and in the community

Continue to identify and utilize strategies and resources to keep residents housed and address ongoing financial impact of pandemic

Continue and increase capacity for service navigation

Continue coordination and strategic planning

Explore Eviction Court and Mediation

- Includes Judge who hears tenant/landlord cases, case management support, and legal assistance
- Provides clear guidance, consistency and predictability

Explore legal counsel for tenants in Unlawful Detainer Hearings

Additional Resources Needed for:

- Residents who do not qualify for State Program
- Bilingual Staffing - Spanish, Amharic, Arabic
- Data support staff



Appendices



Alexandria Landlords working with the State Program

		State Program	Overall	% of total
	Apartment Complexes (10 or more units)	93	125	74%
	Total units	30,348	34,292	89%

Alexandria Apartment Complexes Utilizing State Program - update

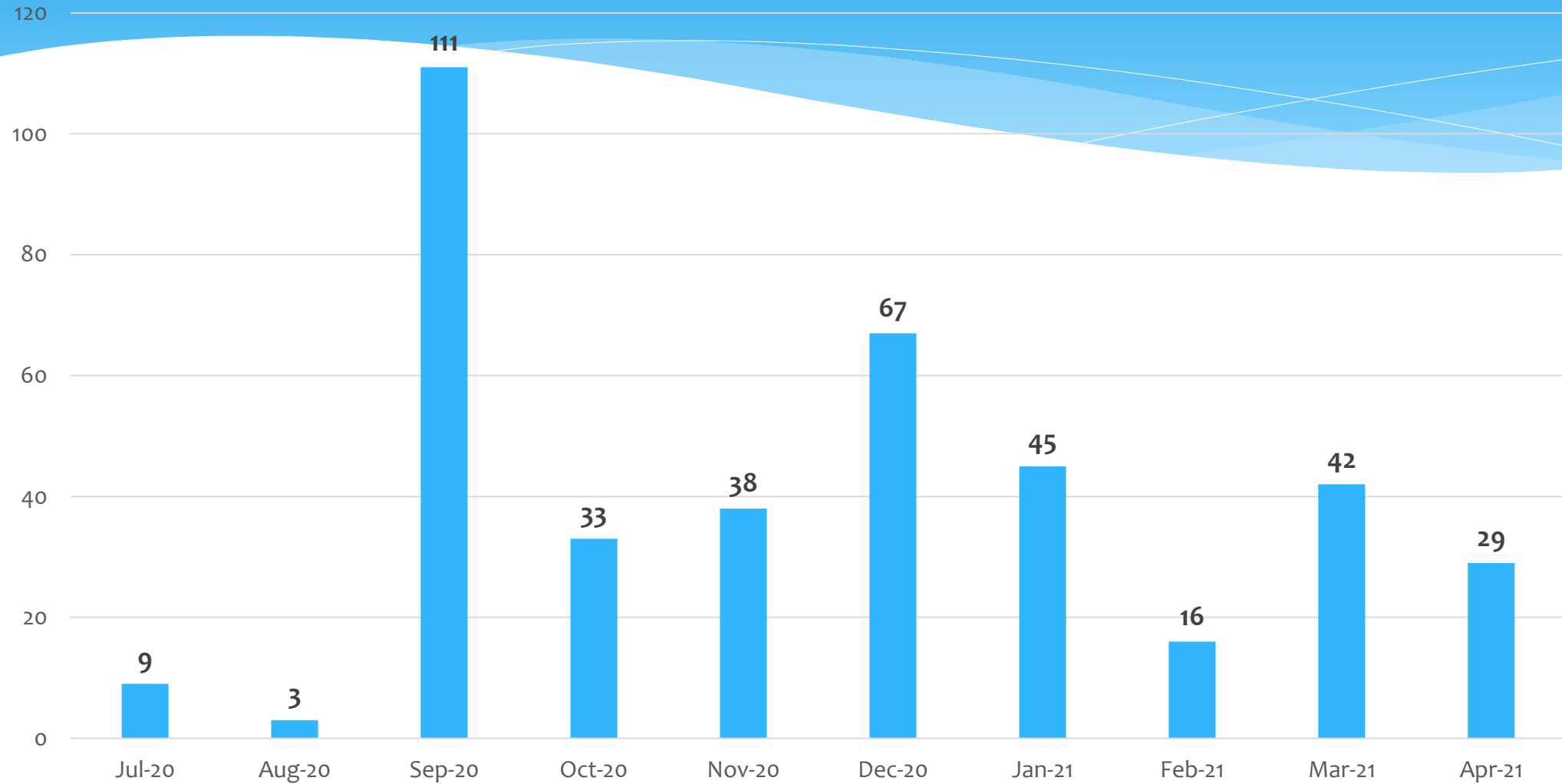


800 Carlyle
Arrive 2801
Arrive Alexandria
Assembly Alexandria
Belle Pre
Bennington Crossing
Beverly Park
Braddock Lee Apartments
Brent Place
Brookville Apartments
Carlyle Place
Carydale East Apartments
Eaton Square
Edlandria
Heritage at Old Town
Jackson Crossing
Key Towers
Lacy Court
Landmark Towers
Lerner Excelsior Tower

Lloyd Apartments
London Park Towers
Lynhaven Apartments
Mason at Van Dorn
Meridian at Braddock Station
Meridian at Eisenhower Station
Monticello Lee
Brookdale Apartments
Lynbrook Apartments
Stoneridge Apartments Mark Center
New Brookside
Newport Village
Normandy Hill Apartments
Parcview
Park Meridan at Eisenhower Station
Park Vue
Parkstone
Presidential Greens
Potomac West
Reserve at Eisenhower
Reserve at Potomac Yard

Southern Towers
St James Plaza
The Alante
The Alexander
The Arbors on Duke
The Aspen
The Dalton
The Encore
The Fields of Alexandria
The Fields of Old Town
The Mark Apartments
The Nexus
The Oliver in Alexandria
The Porter
The Station
The Thorton
Town Square at Millbrook
Whitestone at Landmark
Willow Run Apartments
Windsor at Halstead
Woodmont Park Apartments

Writs July 2020 – April 2021





The Eviction Process in Virginia

NAVIGATING THE EVICTION PROCESS DURING COVID-19

1 NOTICE



If you miss a rent payment, your landlord is **required** to give you a written notice (called a "Pay or Quit" notice) **before** filing an eviction suit. **You do not have to move out after receiving this notice.** Under current state law, your landlord **must wait at least 14 days** after giving you this notice to file an eviction suit. It is a warning that your landlord is planning to take legal action. If you live in a building with **more than 4 units**, your landlord also cannot evict you without first offering a repayment plan. If you agree to a repayment plan, you may be eligible for assistance from the state or your local jurisdiction to help you make payments.

2 SUMMONS



If you receive a summons, **you must appear in court** at the date & time specified. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you may be able to appear remotely. **If you do not appear in court on this date, there will be a default judgement for the landlord.**

3 FIRST RETURN



The date listed on the summons is the "first return" date. The first return is your opportunity to dispute the case and request a trial. If you lost income due to COVID-19, you may be able to request a 60-day delay in your case at this time. **If you do not appear in court on this date, there will be a default judgement for the landlord.**

4 TRIAL DATE



The trial is your opportunity to present evidence in your defense, including papers, receipts and witnesses. For advice on your case or to seek representation contact Legal Services of Northern Virginia at: **703-778-6800**.

5 APPEAL PERIOD



If the judge rules in favor of your landlord, **you cannot be evicted for at least 10 days** (even if the landlord is awarded immediate possession). During this period, you can appeal the ruling. If the judge ruled you owe your landlord money and you appeal the ruling, you will need to pay a writ tax and appeal bond (usually equal to the rent you owe, late fees, attorney fees, and any other damages).

6 WRIT OF POSSESSION



If the judge rules in favor of your landlord, the landlord will issue a "writ of eviction" to the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff has 30 days from the time the writ is issued to post a notice of eviction on your door. The Sheriff must give you **at least 72 hours** from the time the notice is posted to vacate the premises, but usually will allow 7-10 days.

7 EVICTION



After 72 hours (or the amount of time listed on the eviction notice) the eviction can take place. It is best to pack-up and move your belongings before this time. If you do not have a place to live, contact your local Department of Social Services. If your landlord locks you out of your home, or otherwise attempts to evict you without following the steps above, you may be able to file an "Unlawful Exclusion" suit. Contact: **1-866-LEGL-AID** or **1-833-NoEvict**.

