

Housing Court's Tenant Community Public Outreach

Presented by,
The Housing Court Department



NOTICE: This presentation, content, and the statements made during and related to this presentation is for general informational purposes only and nothing related thereto shall be construed as any of the presenters providing legal advice of any kind. If you feel you need legal advice, please contact an attorney.

Introduction and Opening Remarks

Hon. Chief Justice Diana H. Horan

Deputy Court Administrator Jorge Ghazal

Asst. Deputy Court Administrator Keith Tan

Case Manager Caroline Quan-Sanchez

Administrative Attorney John Kimball

Western Division - Clerk Magistrate Michael Doherty

Metro South Division - First Assistant Clerk Magistrate Delia Mathes

Southeast Division - Chief Housing Specialist Suzette Fagan-Clarke

Metro South Division - Chief Housing Specialist Catarina Andrade





eFiling

eFiling is electronic filing into your court case using **eFileMA.com**. It can be done by anyone who has access to a computer and the internet. While eFile is available 24/7, the Clerk's office are open Monday – Friday (8:30AM – 4:30PM), so be mindful of processing time.

Registration for eFiling is free. If a case has already been filed into the court, all subsequent filings for that case are **free**.

To learn more about how to eFile, read our eFile guide, watch our tutorial videos, or review our frequently asked questions visit [eFiling in the Housing Court](#).



eReminder

What is eReminder?

EReminder is a feature developed that allows the courts to enter the party's cell phone information and enroll the party to receive a text reminder on their case for upcoming court events.

There are two text reminders that the party will receive. **4 days** before and **16 hours** before the scheduled event.

Simply fill out a request form, available on [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov). This website can also be found on our Informational Sheets (via QR Code) and on flyers available in the Clerk's office.

This service is a courtesy only and it will not replace the official court notice received by the parties.

MassCourts:Eastern
Housing Court-Hearing
in 20H84SP [REDACTED] on
[2021-03-10](https://www.mass.gov/guides/housing-court-resources) at 9:00 AM.
See [mass.gov/guides/housing-court-resources](https://www.mass.gov/guides/housing-court-resources)
for resources. Do not
reply.

events. If y



Enroll in Text Reminders

To sign up for text message reminders of upcoming court events in a specific case, scan the QR code and complete the eReminder form. Texts will be sent 4 days before, and 1 day before, the court event.



Access Massachusetts Court Cases

Home Search

Search

Court Department*

Housing Court

Court Division*

Central Housing Court

Court Location*

Central Housing Court

Number of Results*

25

Name

Case Type

Case Number

Ticket/Citation #

Last Name*

First Name*

Middle Name

Suffix

Choose One

Or Search by Business Name

Company Name*

Case Type

All Cases
Housing Court Civil
Housing Court Small Claims
Housing Court Summary Process
Housing Court Supplementary Process

Case Status

All Statuses
Active
Closed
COVID JT Assignment Pending
Reopened
Suspended
Suspended COVID19 - TBD
Suspended-Covid-19

Party Type

All Party Types
Court Clinic
Defendant
Guardian Ad Litem
Intervenor
Plaintiff
Receiver
Tenancy Preservation Program

Date of Birth Search Range
Begin Date

MM/dd/yyyy

End Date

MM/dd/yyyy

Date of Death Search Range
Begin Date

MM/dd/yyyy

End Date

MM/dd/yyyy

File Date Search Range
Begin Date

MM/dd/yyyy

End Date

MM/dd/yyyy

eAccess

<https://www.masscourts.org/>

Search

9/23/2024



Helpful Links and Virtual Counters

- [Housing Court Resources](#)
 - Provides helpful resources regarding Lawyer for the Day Programs, TPP, guidance on how to eFile, and more.
- [Housing Court Forms](#)
 - Forms that can be filed with the Court can be found here. This page is constantly being reviewed and forms are updated frequently.
- [Housing Court Locations](#)
 - Our Division's court location, hours, listed accessibility coordinators and court docket list can be found here.
- [eFiling in the Housing Court](#)
 - Overview on the eFiling process, guided videos and materials on how to register and eFile into your court case.
- [Remote/virtual Court Services](#)
 - Speak with a court employee on our virtual counters without having to come into the Clerk's Office.





Legal Landscape

- “Housing Court 101”
- Interim Standing Order 1-23
 - What is a Standing Order?
 - Important Highlights of SO 1-23
- Summary Process Basics



View from the Clerk's Office

- Services provided: Neighbor to Neighbor disputes, Tenant and Landlord disputes, Water or Utility Shut Offs, Conditions and Repairs, Small Claims, Referrals to the Court Service Center or Law Library
- Providing Procedural Information: Accessible LIVE in the Clerk's Office, over the phone, via email, and on Zoom
- Please be on time for all appearances and if you are unable to be on time contact our office for instruction.
- Please be patient and respectful, our staff is not only assisting you but is also assisting other customers. Our staff is there to service everyone that utilizes the Housing Court. Remember our staff will not provide legal advice, our staff will provide procedural advice/information.





Housing Specialist Department

Role of the Housing Specialists

- Housing Specialists are sworn officers of the Court.
- Mediate cases between litigants and assist in reaching a settlement.
- Formulate agreements between parties.
- Provides procedural advice as to tenant's and landlord's rights regarding court procedures.
- The Housing Specialists can connect the parties to resources that are available in the communities.
- Performs inspections of properties for electrical, plumbing, structural, and sanitary code violations and reports findings to the Court; may re-inspect to ensure work is completed and is in compliance with necessary codes and standards;
- Monitors receiverships appointed by the court to ensure all housing standards are followed and monies are accounted.
- Assists in providing financing information where repairs are necessary, but funds are unavailable;
- Prepares probation records for criminal offenders and criminal contempt cases;



Knowledge of Local Resources

- Lawyer For The Day Program
- Tenancy Preservation Program TPP
- Renew Collaborative Pilot Program
- RAFT assistance through communities' service providers such as: Neighbor Works Housing Solution, SMOCH, MBHP, Housing Assistance Corp(HAC), etc. (Renters, homeowner, and landlord)
- Domestic Violence Resources (Family and Community Resources)
- Court Service Centers (CSC are available to assist court users with filling out court documents and guiding individuals through court processes)

Please consult with the Housing Court Division in your local area for more information.



Benefits of Mediation



Mediation helps the parties determine the outcome of their case.



Rights to have a hearing before a judge is not given up by engaging in the mediation process.



Parties get a chance to listen to each other and hear what is being said.



Allow everyone to review their positions in the case against their actual interest in the solution.



Parties can work out solutions by exploring all possible options.



Mediation is confidential.

How to Prepare for Mediation

Pay attention to the notices given for your court event. Have documents translated, if necessary.

Pay attention to dates scheduled for Tier 1 event. Missed dates are missed opportunities.

Request accommodation such as an interpreter or ADA needs prior to first court event.

File an answer timely in your case.

File any documents you would like the court to review.

Make copies of receipts to prove any claims.

Come with an open mind.





Process for Review of the Agreements

- Agreements with an unrepresented party are reviewed by the Housing Specialists before Court's approval.
- Inquiry is made to the parties as to their understanding of the terms and conditions of the agreement.
- The agreement is submitted to the judge for final approval.
- Agreements can be eFiled with the court and is subject to the review process.

Helpful Reminders at Counter & in Mediation

- Be patient and respectful to the court staff.
- File any documents with the court that you wish for the court to consider.
- Be prepared with your documents. If there is a dispute, have your proof (i.e. receipts, Board of Health report)
- Be willing to listen to the other party in the case.
- Stay calm as possible. It's an emotional time/event but it's important for your concerns to be heard.
- Be realistic – know where and when a compromise can be made.
- Do not leave the Court without fully understanding the process.





Questions?