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To: Assignment Judges
Trial Court Administrators

From: Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D. 

Subj: Landlord/Tenant – Application and Training for Expanded Pool of Settlers
for Pretrial/Settlement Conferences

Date: January 20, 2021

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, the Supreme Court suspended landlord/tenant (LT) trials and authorized pretrial/settlement conferences with specially trained, neutral parties to assist litigants in resolving eviction complaints. In its September 30, 2020 Order, the Court authorized three additional categories of individuals (in addition to trained Judiciary staff and others) to assist as settlers in LT matters. This memo sets forth the training requirements for these settlers.

The Court expanded the pool of LT settlers to include the following groups:

1. Retired judges not serving on recall – with no additional training required;
2. Newly admitted attorneys who served as Judiciary law clerks during the 2019-2020 term, provided they have completed:
 - a. Law clerk complementary dispute resolution (CDR) training during their recent law clerkship;
 - b. Five hours of landlord tenant training; and
 - c. Two hours of observation with an experienced LT settlor.
3. New Jersey attorneys in good standing, provided they have completed:
 - a. An abbreviated four-hour CDR training¹;

¹ Attorneys who are mediators and have taken a 40-hour mediation course pursuant to R. 1:40-12(b)(4) or R. 1:40-12(b)(5) will not be required to take the four-hour complementary dispute resolution course.

- b. Five hours of landlord tenant training; and
- c. Two hours of observation with an experienced LT settlor.

The four-hour CDR basic training session will be conducted by vicinage training coordinators using a program and materials developed by the central office Civil Practice Division. The five-hour LT training session will be initially offered by the Civil Practice Division in a live-virtual format and will be recorded for future use by vicinage training coordinators. Vicinage Assistant Civil Division Managers will be responsible to coordinate two hours of observation with an experienced LT settlor as applicable.

Applicants seeking to serve as LT settlers will receive continuing legal education (CLE) credits for their participation in the four-hour CDR basic training session and five-hour LT training session. Vicinage training coordinators will issue the credits to applicants upon completion of the four-hour CDR basic training session and for any sessions of the recorded five-hour LT training. The Civil Practice Division will issue the credits to applicants who complete the five-hour landlord tenant session in the live-virtual format.

Application Process

Individuals must complete the attached Application to Serve as a Landlord Tenant Settlor, which is posted on the Civil Practice Division Mediation Resources page: <https://www.njcourts.gov/courts/civil/medipol.html?lang=eng>. The completed application must be submitted through the Civil Practice Division's mailbox: CivilArbMed.Mbx@njcourts.gov.

Screening Process

Upon receipt of the completed application, the Civil Practice Division will determine what, if any, training is required by the applicant. Retired judges, who are exempt from any training or observation requirements, will be approved immediately. Other applicants will be notified by the Civil Practice Division of their training requirements and advised to contact the Assistant Civil Division Manager in the county (or in one of the counties) where the applicant has selected to serve. In the event an applicant wishes to serve as a settlor in more than one county, one Assistant Civil Division Manager will be identified as the contact person for that applicant.

The Assistant Civil Division Manager in the county where the applicant has selected to serve will coordinate required training and observation for the applicant in conjunction with the vicinage training coordinator. Upon completion of required training and observation, the applicant will become eligible to serve as an LT settlor. If the applicant has applied to serve in more than one county, the identified Assistant Civil Division manager will advise the other counties that the applicant is eligible to serve as an LT settlor.

Questions regarding this memorandum should be directed to Assistant Director for Civil Practice Taironda Phoenix by email at Taironda.Phoenix@njcourts.gov or by phone at (609) 815-2900, ext. 54900.

Attachment: Application to Serve as a Landlord Tenant Settlor

cc: Civil Presiding Judges
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