

Name: Matthew Sawicki

Date: 10/12/2022

ADM File Number: 2020-08

Comment:

Greetings,

I am the Court Administrator at the 17th District Court in Redford, Michigan. We have a substantial Landlord-Tenant Docket. I'd like to briefly share some thoughts/ideas on the process created by AO 2020-17.

I'd like to start by saying I applaud the efforts of the judiciary to try and keep tenants in their rented properties during the pandemic and I believe this administrative order created an admirable pandemic standard for courts to follow with respect to landlord-tenant cases. However, I also think the order has, in part, served its purpose.

In an emotional/human sense, I am sympathetic to those that face eviction and may be unfamiliar with how landlord-tenant cases work. Couple that with the fact that courts cannot provide legal advice, you have an end result that removes tenants from a property, when there may have been a solution with quality representation.

I think a solution to this issue is to leverage technology to not only inform parties but also effectively connect them with resources that may resolve the conflict. I have thought of a solution that will improve the workflow at the district court, reduce the judicial resources required to process these cases, and ultimately provide representation for individuals that need the most help.

An ODR format for LT cases would connect parties with resources including the court and legal representation, provide information on the process of the hearing, and ultimately result in cases being resolved in a more efficient manner.

However, the rule requiring a pretrial (LT Arraignment) to be held exactly seven days prior to an actual hearing, makes using an LT ODR near impossible for courts with limited resources to schedule cases seven days from a virtual pretrial.

Therefore, I am proposing courts be given more leeway when scheduling Landlord Tenant hearings. Specifically, the rule requiring a hearing be held exactly seven days after a pretrial hearing should be changed to allow more time or eliminated.

Further, I believe we can accomplish everything that is accomplished at the pretrial in a virtual space using pre-recorded videos from the judge and a question-answer system that narrows down the issues in the case and allows tenants to ask the judge questions directly about the process.

It is archaic to think that in this digital age we can't use our technological resources to rethink how we handle cases in our courts. These LT cases are no different.

Thank you for your time and for reviewing my comment.

Sincerely,

Matt Sawicki