



BOSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
52 Chauncy Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

Phone: 617-988-4000
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By e-mail:
timothy.sullivan@jud.state.ma.us;
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March 12, 2020

Chief Justice Timothy F. Sullivan
Housing Court Department
Edward Brooke Courthouse
24 New Chardon Street
Boston, MA 02114

Benjamin O. Adeyinka, Esq.
Deputy Court Administrator
Housing Court Department
24 New Chardon Street
Boston, MA 02114

Re: COVID-19 and the Boston Housing Court

Dear Chief Justice Sullivan and Attorney Adeyinka:

I am writing to notify the Housing Court of Boston Housing Authority's (BHA) intention to immediately suspend its filing and prosecution of all Housing Court cases and matters with respect to its non-essential eviction actions. We define non-essential cases to be non-payment and cause cases that do not involve or include allegations of criminal activity or lease violations that impact the health or safety of BHA residents and employees and/or the general public. BHA intends to impose this suspension immediately and for the duration of the state of emergency issued by Governor Baker on March 10, 2020.

To facilitate BHA's intentions to suspend its non-essential Housing Court matters, BHA requests that the Housing Court allow BHA's future requests for reasonable continuances with respect to any scheduled trial or hearings relating to non-essential cases. We also ask that the Court permit the BHA to return to the Housing Court any executions for possession relating to any non-essential case that may expire prior to the end of the state of emergency for re-issuance after the suspension of the state of emergency.

BHA takes these unprecedented actions and submits these extraordinary requests in response to the current public health emergency. We do so in an effort to safeguard the health and safety of BHA residents and our employees involved with BHA's eviction actions. We believe these steps will help mitigate the potential transmission of the virus by reducing the number of in-person interactions in the Housing Court.



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In addition to asking the Housing Court to comply with BHA's requests, we also write to document our support of the City of Boston's Office of Housing Stability letter to your offices dated March 11, 2020 and Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) letter dated March 11, 2020. We believe the BHA requests contained in this letter as well as those contained in the City and GBLS requests are prudent and are mandated for public health and safety reasons and, therefore, are in the best interest of the Court and those they serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kate Bennett", is written over the typed name.

Kate Bennett
Administrator