



March 17, 2020

UPDATE REGARDING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Friends:

The Covid-19 pandemic is impacting lives across the country. Some of the greatest impacts will be on the housing industry. Like all businesses, your primary concern is the health and safety of your employees. However, you have also been entrusted with the health and safety of the families you are housing.

Our law firm is committed to providing you as much assistance as we can as you cope with Covid-19. Some issues that have been shared with our firm are addressed below:

Evictions:

I began circulating an email to clients regarding court closures; however I was out of the office and I did not have the emails for all clients. In summary, ALL courts in the state have suspended in-person hearings (with limited exceptions) through March 31st. During the suspension, no evictions will be heard by the courts. It is unclear the impact the suspension will have on three day evictions for threats and violence. We hope to have more clarity in the days to come.

We encourage you to continue processing evictions as court dockets will likely experience backlogs of hundreds of cases. Cases will normally be heard in the order they were either filed or served. Please note, as additional information from federal and state government officials becomes available, I fully expect the in-person court closure to extend past March 31.

Social Distancing:

The CDC has recommended having employees work remotely where possible. The necessary interaction between managers, office staff, maintenance and residents makes working remotely very difficult. We recommend that residents be encouraged to use phone and email to contact employees for apartment related issues. We are preparing a notice that will be available to all clients that can be used to alert residents about limiting visits to the office and using other means of communication.

Donald F. Paine
(1939 - 2013)

¹Licensed in Tennessee

²Licensed in Illinois

³Licensed in New York

⁴Licensed in North Carolina

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Maintenance Requests:

We recommend for all non-emergency maintenance requests that tenants certify in writing that they have not been diagnosed with Covid-19, they have not been physically present with anyone diagnosed with Covid-19 in the last 14 days and that they have not traveled to countries listed by the CDC as Level 2 or 3 countries. Residents will be told that their representations will be treated in the same manner as representations made on a rental application. Providing false information may result in eviction.

It will be difficult in obtaining these representations in an emergency. We suggest handling emergency maintenance requests on a case by case basis.

Lease Terminations:

If your community ends up having a Covid-19 case, you may experience residents who panic and insist they need to terminate their lease. While we can provide assistance with collections after the fact, the better outcome is convincing tenants that terminating their lease is not the best option. Our office is collecting guidance from the appropriate authorities that management can supply to residents. By no means should management try to put themselves in the role of experts on Covid-19. Nevertheless, we encourage the dissemination of information from the CDC and government authorities.

The forms described in this correspondence will be available on our landlord portal starting tomorrow.

Please go to: www.painetarwater.com In the upper right-hand corner, click on Landlord Portal (no password is required). Click on Covid-19 Updates.

We are available to assist you with any additional questions. Many of you use Cathi as your primary contact. I encourage you to use any of the emails or phone numbers listed below.

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Sincerely,

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