



Dispute Resolution Center OF THURSTON COUNTY

ERPP Process Quick Reference Sheet

Case Prioritization & Periods of Peak Volume:

- The DRC seeks to process cases fairly, equitably, and efficiently.
- Cases of rent due for 30+ days take priority for case management.
- Notices of rent due for current month only will be kept on file, however a case will not be opened, unless the tenant makes contact with the DRC.
- When a tenant does not engage in an opened ERPP case, either by lack of contact or direct refusal, the DRC will advance the case expeditiously, issuing a certificate at the landlord's request, within five days, upon expiration of the notice period addressed on the notice.
- When a tenant does engage through active participation with the DRC, the ERPP case will be processed with the method of early resolution most appropriate for the circumstances of the case (Conciliation with facilitated agreement, Mediation or Meet-and-Confer clinic). Landlord participation is mandatory.
- Rental assistance and civil legal services organizations are also working with finite capacity. Effective communication by and through the DRC is critical to delivering effective and efficient ERPP services.
- Should a tenant seek rent assistance and the landlord agrees to wait for processing of that application, tenant should be aware that at any point after the initial 14-day period, the landlord may request to expedite the process. Timely response to the DRC is essential for continued engagement in resolution.

Starting an ERPP Case:

- An ERPP case may only be started by the landlord serving the tenant a complete and accurate ERPP Notice and a pay or vacate notice, with both the ERPP notice and pay or vacate notice sent to the DRC at the same time it is served on the tenant.
- Notices may be emailed to: erpinfo@mediatethurston.org or cstead@mediatethurston.org. Landlords with numerous tenants are encouraged to prioritize appropriately for their needs. Sending ERPP Notices by USPS first class or certified mail is not required or recommended and will slow down processing of the case.
- It is the landlord's responsibility to correctly serve the proper notices; the DRCs are not responsible for improper service of improper notices.
- Landlords are responsible for confirming case status upon DRC request. Landlords that are not responsive to inquiries from the DRC will experience an extended timeline to allow for tenant contact and case advancement.
- Upon opening cases, DRC staff review notices and: 1) enter cases into the DRCs case management system; 2) make the first contact attempt to the tenant; in addition they may refer tenants to rental assistance providers, as appropriate.
- To expedite the ERPP process, landlords should include any Reasonable Offer of Repayment made to the tenant along with the ERPP notice in their email to the DRC.

Case Certification:

- Certificates are issued within five business days after a completed early resolution process, whether via conciliation, with a facilitated agreement, or either mediation or meet and confer clinic (with or without an agreement).
- After 14 days without contact beyond initial intake or any form of early resolution, landlords may request certification. Please allow five business days for certificate completion.

Attendance:

Attendance expected: All parties are expected to attend the Meet and Confer and/or Mediation session. If the parties resolve the case among themselves before the Meet and Confer and/or Mediation session, the parties are expected to inform the DRC in writing or by phone that they have resolved the case and request the DRC cancel the scheduled Meet and Confer and/or Mediation session. The DRC will then close the case file.

Method of attending: The attendance expectation is defined by the method of Meet and Confer and/or Mediation session scheduled - in-person, telephonic and/or video conference. Recognizing that multiple participation avenues in a joint session can disrupt conflict resolution, if a party or representative, including an attorney for a party, wishes to participate in an in-person session via remote means (*e.g.*, phone or video conference), this must be agreed upon among all participants in advance of the session.

Recognition of Unforeseen Circumstances:

No Call/No Show: If the DRC does not receive a written request to cancel the Meet and Confer and/or Mediation session, and neither party attends, the DRC will notify the parties of the missed session and reschedule to another available date and time for a Meet & Confer and/or Mediation session. No Certificate will be issued.

Landlord attends, but tenant does not: If the landlord attends but the tenant does not, the tenant will have 2 business days to respond to the DRC to explain their absence and reschedule to the closest available date and time for a Meet & Confer and/or Mediation session. If the tenant fails to contact the DRC within 2 business days, unless the landlord directs otherwise, the DRC will issue the Certificate to all parties within 1 business day and thereafter close the DRC case file.

If the landlord attends the rescheduled session but the tenant does not, unless the landlord directs otherwise, the DRC will issue the Certificate to all parties within 1 business day and thereafter close the DRC case file.

Tenant attends, but landlord does not: If the tenant attends but the landlord does not, the DRC will notify the parties of the landlord's failure to attend and reschedule to another available date and time for a Meet & Confer and/or Mediation session. No Certificate will be issued.

If the tenant attends the rescheduled session but the landlord does not, no Certificate will be issued and the DRC will thereafter close the DRC case file.