

As a resident of Cook County I and my family depend on the court system that you oversee to provide justice in both criminal and civil matters. The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in severe economic hardship resulting in the inability to pay rent for thousands of Cook County residents.

On March 27th, the CARES Act was passed, putting an eviction moratorium into effect for all tenants in buildings with mortgages financed by Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, The FHA, and others. Tenants in covered buildings are supposed to be protected against eviction filings until at least July 25, 2020.

Additionally, in order to prevent evictions that would render thousands of residents homeless and exacerbate the risk to public health, Governor Pritzker put in place an Executive Order first to prevent the execution of evictions (Sec. 2 Executive Order 2020-10) and then further clarified his order to prevent even the commencement of eviction actions (Sec 2. Executive Order 2020-30).

The Circuit Court of Cook County, however, has failed to follow this executive order. The language of the order is as follows:

"A person or entity may not commence a residential eviction action pursuant to or arising under 735 ILCS 5/9-101 et seq., unless a tenant poses a direct threat to the health and safety of other tenants, an immediate and severe risk to property, or a violation of any applicable building code, health ordinance, or similar regulation."

Despite this, the Circuit Court of Cook County has continued accepting filings of thousands evictions for nonpayment of rent, including ones that should be protected under the CARES Act. This practice must stop immediately.

Please take action to stop the filing of eviction actions and order the Circuit Court Clerk of Cook County to ensure that this change takes place. We ask that you also take action to ensure all evictions filed during the COVID-19 crisis are vacated, particularly those that should have been prohibited by the CARES Act and Gov. Pritzker's Executive Order.

Thank You,
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