

## MAINE JUDICIAL BRANCH

### Forcible Entry and Detainer (Eviction) Information Sheet

You have been served with a summons and complaint in an eviction case against you brought by your landlord. In Maine, an eviction case is called a Forcible Entry and Detainer or “FED”. Please read this form to understand the court process and how to defend yourself in your case.

**If you do not take action in this case, you will likely be evicted from your home.** You have the right to be represented by an attorney, but the court will not provide you with an attorney for this type of case. You can hire an attorney or, if you qualify, you may be able to get free legal help. Contact information for free legal help is given below. **To ask for free legal help, please contact one of these legal service groups as far ahead of your court date as possible.**

**If your case involves nonpayment of rent, you may qualify for help in paying your rent.** Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) offers a COVID-19 Rent Relief Program that may help pay your rent. See [www.mainehousing.org/covidrent](http://www.mainehousing.org/covidrent) for more information or contact MSHA at 1-800-452-4668. You can apply online or contact a Community Action Agency through the contact information on the MSHA website.

#### Court Proceedings

**Step One: Telephonic Status Conference** - The first court event in this case is a telephone conference. The Summons and Complaint or Scheduling Notice you received with this Information Sheet tells you the date and time of the phone conference and the number to call. All court notices are sent to the address listed on the complaint. **If you get your mail at a different address you should tell the Court right away.**

When you call, you will meet by phone with a judge and your landlord, or the landlord’s attorney, or both. At the phone conference, the judge will talk with both sides to decide what happens next in your case. If you and your landlord have an agreement, this call is the time to talk about that agreement with the judge. If you do not have an agreement, the judge may schedule the case for mediation or a hearing. You have a right to ask for mediation at the phone conference. You may also say if you prefer to attend future court events by phone or by video.

**Step Two: Mediation** - Mediation is a process where a person approved by the court tries to help the parties come to an agreement. This person is called a mediator. A mediator is trained to work with parties to reach an agreement without taking sides. Some options for agreement are: a plan for rent payment to keep a tenant in the rented home; setting a move-out date; or some other solution that the landlord and tenant both agree to. Mediation is held by phone or by video.

**Step Three: Hearing** - If your case is scheduled for a hearing, the court will send you a letter with the date and time for that court event. Most hearings will be in person at the courthouse, unless you and your landlord agree, or one of you asks, to attend remotely by phone or video, and the judge approves your agreement or request. If you want to attend remotely but cannot send a written request, please call the court at 207 \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

**ADA Notice:** The Maine Judicial Branch complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation contact the Court Access Coordinator, [accessibility@courts.maine.gov](mailto:accessibility@courts.maine.gov), or a court clerk.

**Language Services:** For language assistance and interpreters, contact a court clerk or [interpreters@courts.maine.gov](mailto:interpreters@courts.maine.gov).

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**Legal Help Available:** You may seek free legal assistance by calling:

Pine Tree Legal Assistance (free for low income tenants):

207-774-8211 during the following hours:

Monday	12:00- 2:30
Tuesdays	9:00 – 11:30
Thursday	9:00 – 11:30
Friday	9:00 – 11:30

Legal Services for the Elderly (free for those 60 and older)

1-800-750-5353

**Weekly Information Session:** Pine Tree Legal Assistance holds weekly eviction information sessions. Join to learn more about the eviction process in Maine.

When: Tuesdays at 9:00 am.

To Join:

- (a) Go to [ptla.org/fed](http://ptla.org/fed) for telephone or internet/video options OR
- (b) Install the Zoom app on your smartphone and scan this code with your smartphone camera:



When you scan this code, you will be asked for your name and email address. No-one will use that information for any purpose, and it will not be tracked in anyway.

Questions about the above, or need an interpreter? Call the court at 207 \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

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