

# STATE OF NEW YORK

3183

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

January 20, 2017

Introduced by Sens. KRUEGER, BAILEY, HAMILTON, HOYLMAN, MONTGOMERY, PERKINS, RIVERA, SERRANO, STAVISKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development

AN ACT to amend the real property actions and proceedings law, in relation to proceedings to recover possession

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The opening paragraph of section 711 of the real property  
2 actions and proceedings law, as amended by chapter 739 of the laws of  
3 1982, is amended to read as follows:

4 [~~A~~] No tenant in a residential dwelling shall be removed from  
5 possession except in a special proceeding or through other judicial  
6 process. For the purposes of this article, a tenant shall include an  
7 occupant of one or more rooms in a rooming house or a resident, not  
8 including a transient occupant, of one or more rooms in a hotel who has  
9 been in possession for thirty consecutive days or longer[~~, he shall not~~  
10 ~~be removed from possession except in a special proceeding~~]. A special  
11 proceeding may be maintained under this article upon the following  
12 grounds:

13 § 2. Subdivision 1 of section 721 of the real property actions and  
14 proceedings law, as added by chapter 312 of the laws of 1962, is amended  
15 to read as follows:

16 1. The landlord or lessor, provided, however, that no person may  
17 institute a proceeding pursuant to this article with respect to premises  
18 located in a multiple dwelling until such time as the owner of the  
19 multiple dwelling has registered properly with the agency responsible  
20 for code enforcement, in accordance with the provisions of section three  
21 hundred of the multiple residence law or section three hundred of the  
22 multiple dwelling law.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[~~-~~] is old law to be omitted.

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1 § 3. Subdivision 1 of section 731 of the real property actions and  
2 proceedings law, as amended by chapter 563 of the laws of 1994, is  
3 amended to read as follows:

4 1. The special proceeding prescribed by this article shall be  
5 commenced by petition and a notice of petition prepared in accordance  
6 with rules approved by the appellate division with jurisdiction over the  
7 proceedings. Such rules shall provide for the use of language that is  
8 designed to be understood by the respondent in the proceeding. The peti-  
9 tion shall include such other notice of the rights of the respondent as  
10 may be deemed appropriate, including a statement that a form answer is  
11 available from the clerk of the court. A notice of petition may be  
12 issued only by an attorney, judge or the clerk of the court; it may not  
13 be issued by a party prosecuting the proceeding in person.

14 § 4. Section 741 of the real property actions and proceedings law, as  
15 added by chapter 312 of the laws of 1962, the opening paragraph as  
16 amended by chapter 583 of the laws of 1979 and subdivision 5 as amended  
17 by chapter 302 of the laws of 1976, is amended to read as follows:

18 § 741. Contents of petition. The petition shall be verified by the  
19 person authorized by section seven hundred twenty-one of this article to  
20 maintain the proceeding; or by a legal representative, attorney or agent  
21 of such person pursuant to subdivision (d) of section [~~thirty hundred~~  
22 three thousand] twenty of the civil practice law and rules. An attorney  
23 of such person may verify the petition on information and belief  
24 notwithstanding the fact that such person is in the county where the  
25 attorney has his office. Every petition shall:

26 1. State the interest of the petitioner in the premises from which  
27 removal is sought.

28 2. State the respondent's interest in the premises and his relation-  
29 ship to petitioner with regard thereto.

30 3. Describe the premises from which removal is sought.

31 4. State whether there are any violations of any state or local hous-  
32 ing codes which remain outstanding on the premises or common areas. In  
33 cities with a population of one million or more, or in any municipality  
34 in which housing code violations are classified by degree of threat to  
35 health and safety, the petition shall itemize any such violations which  
36 have been identified by the applicable code enforcement agency in its  
37 notice of violation as being "hazardous", "immediately hazardous" or  
38 which have been otherwise categorized as constituting a serious, or  
39 imminent, threat to health and safety or requiring immediate repair.

40 5. State whether the petitioner has been notified by the local depart-  
41 ment of social services that payment for rent is being withheld pursuant  
42 to section one hundred forty-three-b of the social services law for any  
43 portion of the premises.

44 6. With respect to premises subsidized directly or indirectly under a  
45 state or federal program which requires that conditions be met in  
46 connection with lease termination or eviction, state the name of the  
47 program, the name of the agency charged with supervision and whether the  
48 petitioner has complied with all applicable rules, regulations and  
49 administrative hearing requirements and has served all notices required  
50 in connection with lease termination or eviction from that public or  
51 subsidized housing program.

52 7. State the facts upon which the special proceeding is based.

53 [~~5-~~] 8. State the relief sought. The relief may include a judgment  
54 for rent due, and for a period of occupancy during which no rent is due,  
55 for the fair value of use and occupancy of the premises if the notice of

1 petition contains a notice that a demand for such a judgment has been  
2 made.

3 Any willful material misstatement or omission by the petitioner with  
4 respect to the requirements of this section shall subject the petitioner  
5 to a civil penalty, not to exceed one thousand dollars, to be assessed  
6 in the eviction proceeding or in a subsequent plenary action. The peti-  
7 tioner may request leave of the court to amend the petition for the  
8 purpose of correcting material misstatements or curing omissions. In the  
9 event leave to amend is granted, the respondent shall be provided an  
10 adjournment to respond of not less than ten days from the date of  
11 service of the amended petition. A petitioner shall be deemed to have  
12 made a material misstatement or omission with respect to the require-  
13 ments of subdivision four of this section upon submission to the court  
14 of certified records, or otherwise properly authenticated records, of  
15 the local agency or agencies charged with code compliance that  
16 violations of applicable codes, other than tenant caused or housekeeping  
17 as determined by the court, were outstanding at the time of the verifi-  
18 cation of the petition which were not described therein. A material  
19 misstatement shall be deemed willful unless the petitioner can establish  
20 by a preponderance of the evidence that such misstatement was not will-  
21 ful. In addition to the foregoing, in the event that an eviction warrant  
22 is executed in a proceeding in which a willful material misstatement is  
23 made, the respondent shall be entitled to damages not exceeding three  
24 times the costs incurred as a result of the eviction unless the peti-  
25 tioner can establish that the eviction would have been justified regard-  
26 less of the misstatement.

27 § 5. Section 743 of the real property actions and proceedings law, as  
28 amended by chapter 644 of the laws of 2003, is amended to read as  
29 follows:

30 § 743. Answer. Except as provided in section [~~732~~] seven hundred thir-  
31 ty-two of this article, relating to a proceeding for non-payment of  
32 rent, at the time when the petition is to be heard the respondent, or  
33 any person in possession or claiming possession of the premises, may  
34 answer, orally or in writing. If the answer is oral the substance there-  
35 of shall be recorded by the clerk or, if a particular court has no  
36 clerk, by the presiding judge or justice of such court, and maintained  
37 in the case record. A form answer, in a form approved by the appellate  
38 division with jurisdiction over the proceeding, shall be made available  
39 to the respondent by the clerk of the court. The form answer shall  
40 include possible defenses to the proceeding, including but not limited  
41 to defenses established by sections two hundred twenty-three and two  
42 hundred thirty-five-b of the real property law, section one hundred  
43 forty-three-b of the social services law and section three hundred  
44 five-a of the multiple residence law. If the notice of petition was  
45 served at least eight days before the time at which it was noticed to be  
46 heard and it so demands, the answer shall be made at least three days  
47 before the time the petition is noticed to be heard and, if in writing,  
48 it shall be served within such time; whereupon any reply shall be served  
49 at least one day before such time. The answer may contain any legal or  
50 equitable defense, or counterclaim. The court may render affirmative  
51 judgment for the amount found due on the counterclaim.

52 § 6. Subdivision 1 of section 745 of the real property actions and  
53 proceedings law, as amended by chapter 403 of the laws of 1983, is  
54 amended to read as follows:

55 1. Where triable issues of fact are raised, they shall be tried by  
56 the court unless, at the time the petition is noticed to be heard, a

1 party demands a trial by jury, in which case trial shall be by jury.  
2 When the petition indicates pursuant to subdivision four of section  
3 seven hundred forty-one of this article, that there are outstanding code  
4 violations, the court shall inquire regarding the duration and severity  
5 of the outstanding violations and may stay the proceeding pending  
6 removal of the violations in accordance with section seven hundred  
7 fifty-five of this article, or make other disposition of the proceeding  
8 including granting a total or partial abatement of rent, or dismissal of  
9 the proceeding, as appropriate. At the time when issue is joined the  
10 court, in its discretion at the request of either party and upon proof  
11 to its satisfaction by affidavit or orally that an adjournment is neces-  
12 sary to enable the applicant to procure his necessary witnesses, or by  
13 consent of all the parties who appear, may adjourn the trial of the  
14 issue, but not more than ten days, except by consent of all parties.

15 § 7. Section 749 of the real property actions and proceedings law is  
16 amended by adding two new subdivisions 4 and 5 to read as follows:

17 4. The notice described in subdivision two of this section shall  
18 include a statement advising the respondent that assistance to prevent  
19 the eviction or otherwise to prevent the respondent from becoming home-  
20 less may be available from the local department of social services and  
21 shall include the phone number provided to the enforcement officer by  
22 any private or public agency providing such assistance at the request of  
23 such agency. Referral to legal aid, legal services or other legal  
24 assistance offices shall also be included on such notices at the request  
25 of such offices. In a proceeding based upon non-payment, such notice  
26 shall also advise the respondent of the rent determined due together  
27 with taxes, assessments, interest, penalties and costs in accordance  
28 with the provision of subdivision one of section seven hundred fifty-one  
29 of this article, and shall advise the respondent of the amount required  
30 and procedure for payment.

31 5. Upon written or oral notification to the officer by an authorized  
32 representative of the local department of social services that an appli-  
33 cation for assistance to prevent eviction is pending on behalf of the  
34 respondent household, the officer shall refrain from execution of the  
35 warrant until such time as that officer is advised by the social  
36 services official of the determination of such application, provided,  
37 however, that the social services district shall guarantee payment to  
38 the petitioner for any additional rent accruing during this period to be  
39 calculated on a pro-rata basis for the number of days delay occasioned  
40 by the operation of this provision.

41 § 8. The opening paragraph and subdivision 1 of section 751 of the  
42 real property actions and proceedings law, as added by chapter 312 of  
43 the laws of 1962, are amended to read as follows:

44 The respondent may, at any time before a warrant is [~~issued~~]  
45 executed, stay the [~~issuing~~] execution thereof and also stay an  
46 execution to collect the costs, as follows:

47 1. Where the lessee or tenant holds over after a default in the  
48 payment of rent, or of taxes or assessments, he may effect a stay by  
49 depositing the amount of the rent due or of such taxes or assessments,  
50 and interest and penalty, if any thereon due, and the costs of the  
51 special proceeding, with the clerk of the court, or where the office of  
52 clerk is not provided for, with the court, who shall thereupon, upon  
53 demand, pay the amount deposited to the petitioner or his duly author-  
54 ized agent; or by delivering to the court or clerk [~~his~~] a written  
55 assurance by an authorized representative of the local department of  
56 social services or an undertaking to the petitioner in such sum as the

1 court approves to the effect that [~~he will pay~~] the rent[~~, or~~] due will  
2 be paid together with such taxes or assessments, and interest and penal-  
3 ty and costs within ten days, at the expiration of which time a warrant  
4 may issue, unless [~~he~~] the respondent produces to the court satisfactory  
5 evidence of the payment.

6 § 9. This act shall take effect on the first of February next succeed-  
7 ing the date on which it shall have become a law and shall apply to  
8 actions and proceedings commenced on or after such effective date,  
9 provided, however, that effective immediately, all actions and proce-  
10 dures with respect to the proposed adoption, amendment, suspension or  
11 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary to the timely implementation  
12 of this act on its effective date are directed and authorized to be made  
13 and completed on or before such effective date.