STATE OF NEW YORK

5278

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 1, 2021

Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- 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 administrative code of the city of New York and the emergency tenant protection act of nineteen seventy-four, in relation to conditions precedent to the bringing of certain actions or proceedings

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

Section 1. Section 26-412 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new subdivision g to read as follows:

g. (1) It shall be unlawful for a landlord to bring an action or proceeding for rent or eviction against a tenant or tenants of housing accommodations that are subject to an outstanding official charge of, or an uncured, violation of any applicable building code. The pleadings of the landlord in any such action or proceeding shall be accompanied by a certificate from the department of buildings stating whether or not there are any such outstanding violations. In the event that a landlord disputes a violation, he or she shall so state in his or her pleadings his or her reasons for such dispute. He or she may then proceed with the action or proceeding.

(2) During the pendency of the dispute over the violation, the tenant or tenants shall pay rent, or any judgment or order therefor awarded to the landlord, into an interest bearing account to be maintained by the court. If the disputed violation is resolved in the landlord's favor, he or she shall receive all such payments together with interest thereon. If the disputed violation is resolved against the landlord, such payments shall first be applied to funding the curing of such violations and the balance thereof, if any, shall then be paid to the landlord. In the event that a landlord or tenant or tenants are able to demonstrate financial necessity therefor, the court may, in its discretion, apply

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

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funds in its custody to the payment of utility bills, if such utilities are currently provided by the landlord, and the making of necessary repairs in the presence of conditions that threaten the health and welfare of the tenant.

§ 2. The administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 26-519.1 to read as follows:

§ 26-519.1 Conditions precedent to action or proceeding. a. It shall be unlawful for a landlord to bring an action or proceeding for rent or eviction against a tenant or tenants of housing accommodations that are subject to an outstanding official charge of, or an uncured, violation of the building code. The pleadings of the landlord in any such action or proceeding shall be accompanied by a certificate from the department of buildings stating whether or not there are any such outstanding violations. In the event that a landlord disputes a violation, he or she shall so state in his or her pleadings his or her reasons for such dispute. He or she may then proceed with the action or proceeding.

b. During the pendency of the dispute over the violation, the tenant or tenants shall pay rent, or any judgment or order therefor awarded to the landlord, into an interest bearing account to be maintained by the court. If the disputed violation is resolved in the landlord's favor, he or she shall receive all such payments together with interest thereon. If the disputed violation is resolved against the landlord, such payments shall first be applied to funding the curing of such violations and the balance thereof, if any, shall then be paid to the landlord. In the event that a landlord or tenant or tenants are able to demonstrate financial necessity therefor, the court may, in its discretion, apply funds in its custody to the payment of utility bills, if such utilities are currently provided by the landlord, and the making of necessary repairs in the presence of conditions that threaten the health and welfare of the tenant.

§ 3. Section 4 of chapter 576 of the laws of 1974, constituting the emergency tenant protection act of nineteen seventy-four, is amended by adding a new section 12-b to read as follows:

§ 12-b. Conditions precedent to action or proceeding. a. It shall be unlawful for a landlord to bring an action or proceeding for rent or eviction against a tenant or tenants of housing accommodations that are subject to an outstanding official charge of, or an uncured, violation of any applicable building code. The pleadings of the landlord in any such action or proceeding shall be accompanied by a certificate from the department of buildings stating whether or not there are any such outstanding violations. In the event that a landlord disputes a violation, he or she shall so state in his or her pleadings his or her reasons for such dispute. He or she may then proceed with the action or proceeding.

b. During the pendency of the dispute over the violation, the tenant or tenants shall pay rent, or any judgment or order therefor awarded to the landlord, into an interest bearing account to be maintained by the court. If the disputed violation is resolved in the landlord's favor, he or she shall receive all such payments together with interest thereon. If the disputed violation is resolved against the landlord, such payments shall first be applied to funding the curing of such violations and the balance thereof, if any, shall then be paid to the landlord. In the event that a landlord or tenant or tenants are able to demonstrate financial necessity therefor, the court may, in its discretion, apply funds in its custody to the payment of utility bills, if such utilities are currently provided by the landlord, and the making of necessary

repairs in the presence of conditions that threaten the health and welfare of the tenant.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately; provided that:

(a) the amendment to section 26-412 of the city rent and rehabilitation law made by section one of this act shall remain in full force and effect only so long as the public emergency requiring the regulation and control of residential rents and evictions continues, as provided in subdivision 3 of section 1 of the local emergency housing rent control act; and

(b) the addition of section 26-519.1 to chapter 4 of title 26 of the administrative code of the city of New York made by section two of this act shall expire on the same date as such law expires and shall not affect the expiration of such law as provided under section 26-520 of such law.