

STATE OF NEW YORK

3254

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 30, 2023

Introduced by Sen. HOYLMAN-SIGAL -- 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 adjournments relating to right to counsel

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

1 Section 1. Subdivision 1 of section 745 of the real property actions
2 and proceedings law, as amended by section 17 of part M of chapter 36 of
3 the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

4 1. (a) Where triable issues of fact are raised, they shall be tried by
5 the court unless, at the time the petition is noticed to be heard, a
6 party demands a trial by jury, in which case trial shall be by jury. At
7 the time when issue is joined the court, at the request of either party
8 shall adjourn the trial of the issue, not less than fourteen days,
9 except by consent of all parties. A party's second or subsequent request
10 for adjournment, except as provided by paragraph (b) of this subdivi-
11 sion, shall be granted in the court's sole discretion.

12 (b) In any jurisdiction in which a party may be eligible under local
13 law for free legal counsel, the court shall notify such party orally of
14 their ability to obtain free legal counsel pursuant to local law, and,
15 if such party elects to obtain, the court shall adjourn the trial for
16 not less than thirty days for such party to retain and consult counsel
17 and shall grant such further adjournments for not less than thirty days
18 each as are necessary for such party to retain and consult counsel.

19 § 2. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 2 of section 745 of the real proper-
20 ty actions and proceedings law, as amended by section 17 of part M of
21 chapter 36 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

22 (a) In a summary proceeding upon the second of two adjournments grant-
23 ed solely at the request of the respondent, or, upon the sixtieth day
24 after the first appearance of the parties in court less any days that

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

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1 the proceeding has been adjourned upon the request of the petitioner,
2 counting only days attributable to adjournment requests made solely at
3 the request of the respondent and not counting an initial adjournment
4 requested by a respondent unrepresented by counsel for the purpose of
5 securing counsel, whichever occurs sooner, the court may, upon consider-
6 ation of the equities, direct that the respondent, upon a motion on
7 notice made by the petitioner, deposit with the court sums of rent or
8 use and occupancy that shall accrue subsequent to the date of the
9 court's order, which may be established without the use of expert testi-
10 mony. The court shall not order deposit or payment of use and occupancy
11 where the respondent can establish, to the satisfaction of the court
12 that respondent has properly interposed one of the following defenses or
13 established the following grounds:

14 (i) the petitioner is not a proper party to the proceeding pursuant to
15 section seven hundred twenty-one of this article; or

16 (ii) (A) actual eviction, or (B) actual partial eviction, or (C)
17 constructive eviction; and respondent has quit the premises; or

18 (iii) a defense pursuant to section one hundred forty-three-b of the
19 social services law; or

20 (iv) a defense based upon the existence of hazardous or immediately
21 hazardous violations of the housing maintenance code in the subject
22 apartment or common areas; or

23 (v) a colorable defense of rent overcharge; or

24 (vi) a defense that the unit is in violation of the building's certifi-
25 cate of occupancy or is otherwise illegal under the multiple dwelling
26 law or the New York city housing maintenance code; or

27 (vii) the court lacks personal jurisdiction over the respondent.

28 Two adjournments shall not include an adjournment requested by a
29 respondent unrepresented by counsel for the purpose of securing counsel
30 made on a return date of the proceeding, including an adjournment pursu-
31 ant to paragraph (b) of subdivision one of this section. Such rent or
32 use and occupancy sums shall be deposited with the clerk of the court or
33 paid to such other person or entity, including the petitioner or an
34 agent designated by the division of housing and community renewal, as
35 the court shall direct or shall be expended for such emergency repairs
36 as the court shall approve.

37 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to actions
38 and proceedings pending on and after such date.