

Hon. George Barnstone
County Civil Court at Law No.1



Hon. LaShawn A. Williams
County Civil Court at Law No.3

Hon. Jim F. Kovach
County Civil Court at Law No.2

Hon. Lesley Briones
County Civil Court at Law No. 4

June 11, 2020

**JOINT STATEMENT REGARDING EXTENDING DEADLINES PURSUANT TO THE CARES ACT
AND TEXAS SUPREME COURT EMERGENCY ORDERS**

The Supreme Court of Texas has issued seventeen (17) Emergency Orders Regarding the COVID-19 State of Disaster (the “*Supreme Court Orders*”). The Supreme Court Orders are available at www.txcourts.gov.

The Supreme Court Orders state that all courts in Texas, subject only to Constitutional limitations, must avoid risk to court staff, parties, attorneys, jurors, and the public. The health and safety of attorneys, their clients, the public, and those who work in the courthouse are paramount.

In order to implement these safety measures, the Supreme Court of Texas has granted courts the authority to modify or suspend any and all deadlines and procedures for a period ending no later than September 30, 2020.

Further, the CARES Act, enacted on March 27, 2020, contains a 120-day moratorium on evictions for renters from certain properties, including properties with federally backed mortgages - Low Income Housing Tax Credit properties, single family and multifamily properties backed by federal loans (*i.e.*, Fannie Mae/Freddie Mac); and most federally-subsidized rental housing properties (*e.g.*, public housing, Section 8 vouchers, project-based Section 8 and others). Plaintiffs filing an eviction action on or after March 27th until July 25th must include a sworn statement that the premises is not subject to the CARES Act evictions moratorium, per the requirements of the Supreme Court of Texas’ 15th Emergency Order.

Upon the July 25th expiration of the CARES Act eviction moratorium, landlords must provide tenants residing in covered properties with a 30-day notice to vacate before proceeding with an eviction action. This requirement protects tenants living in these covered properties from being evicted until at least August 24th.

THEREFORE, given the severity of the risk of spreading COVID-19, limited staffing, facility restrictions, the CARES Act requirements, and the aforementioned governing Supreme Court Orders, the Harris County Civil Courts at Law will continue upholding the protections of the CARES ACT and will—on a case-by-case basis—use the discretion authorized by the Supreme Court to determine if any tenant in an eviction proceeding should be granted an extension or a stay in order to protect public health and safety.

It is so Ordered this 11th day of June, 2020.

Judge George Barnstone
County Civil Court at Law No. 1

Judge Jim F. Kovach
County Civil Court at Law No. 2

Judge LaShawn A. Williams
County Civil Court at Law No. 3

Judge Lesley Briones
County Civil Court at Law No. 4