

Cleveland Housing Court

JUDGE W. MONÁ SCOTT



Housing Court Judge
W. Moná Scott



**Housing Court
Contact
Information**

Housing Specialists
216-664-4295

Bailiffs
216-664-4765

**Justice Center
Courtroom 13B
1200 Ontario St.
44113**

Winter 2021 Issue

A Message from Judge Scott

January marked my first year as Judge of Cleveland Housing Court. During my inaugural year as a judge, I've worked hard to ensure a well-balanced and transparent Court that runs efficiently and effectively for the good of the community. While 2020 and a global pandemic was not what anyone had hoped for, surprisingly it became an operative blessing in disguise because it allowed much of the platform I campaigned on to be incorporated into our response to COVID-19, which impacts so many lives regarding one of life's necessities...housing.

If you watched during my campaign, you knew one of my main platform goals was to make Cleveland Housing Court accessible to all. My desire was and continues to be that everyone is allowed to have their day in court where they can be heard, present their evidence and receive just and balanced rulings. This mandated me to assess prior functioning, priorities, efficiencies and effectiveness of the Court overall.

VIRTUAL COURT: The Ohio Supreme Court met the challenge so that we could soundly establish Housing Court's first virtual court. My team and I took on the challenge to make Housing Court innovative, accessible and safe. We created and implemented new policies and procedures with the community, safety, judicial prudence, stewardship, and fiscal soundness in mind.

SOLUTIONS: Turning a court's way of doing business in-person to virtual has been interesting but not impossible because we've developed solutions. Housing Court created its first ever Zoom kiosk - a continuous sanitized space that allows individuals to get logged in for their virtual hearings and/or meditations. This way, the community can have their day in court without the lack of technology hindering their participation. We also developed solutions to issues with IT and lack of court e-filing. To encourage mediation all of the Court's housing specialists became certified mediators and we instituted the Court's first telecommute policy.

A Message from Judge Scott Cont'd

COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL: Housing Court is striving to maintain contact with the citizens by hosting Zoom & Facebook Live virtual panel discussions around the new virtual court process, eviction moratoriums and training clinics. We have improved our webpage and increased our presence on all social media platforms. Our Housing Clinic was relocated on the first floor of the Justice Center for limited in-person assistance. In addition, our housing specialists receive AND return hundreds of calls weekly and have mediated more cases than ever.

OUR FUTURE IS BRIGHT: It is my hope in correcting and changing required legal filings & approaches, streamlining staff's duties and procedures, tracking data, creating roundtables with Housing Court's established City of Cleveland & community partners, and staying connected to the citizens will make Cleveland Housing Court a more accountable, transparent AND accessible court.

It is my honor to head this prevailing specialized court and my obligation to keep promises on being fair, transparent and balanced. I'm learning, listening and striving to make those who look to us as hope and stability during these unprecedented times.

"I hope my first year as your selected Judge of Cleveland Housing Court has done you proud! Blessings and Happy 2021"
In Solidarity, Judge W. Moná Scott

CDC Eviction Moratorium Extension: The current order temporarily halting residential evictions has been extended until at least March 31, 2021. For more information visit **The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland's** website at lasclev.org/cdc-eviction-moratorium/ or call **216-687-1900**. Additional resources maybe available to those facing eviction. **Read more below.**



CHN Housing Partners
EDEN
EMERALD DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC NETWORK, INC.

NORTHEAST OHIO RENT HELP

833-377-RENT (7368)



**RIGHT TO
COUNSEL**

FREE EVICTION HELP

Rental Assistance is still available for those economically impacted by COVID-19 in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County, visit neorenthelp.org or contact the number listed above. **Right to Counsel** gives Clevelanders facing eviction, living at or below the federal poverty line with at least one child the right to free legal help in Housing Court. **Visit freeevictionhelp.org or call 216-687-1900 for more info.**

Navigating Virtual Hearings



Cleveland Housing Court implemented its virtual courtroom in June of 2020. Virtual Hearings allow case parties, attorneys/representatives, witnesses, etc. to attend hearings online. Case participants have the option to attend their hearings from the comfort of their private spaces via ZOOM. Participants without internet access can visit the Housing Court on the 3rd floor of the Justice Center and sign in with a Housing Court Bailiff on the date of their scheduled

court hearing. Until further notice, hearings will be conducted inside a remote space via ZOOM

Cleveland Housing Court's Housing Clinic

For the safety of our staff and visitors our Housing Clinic is now located on the first floor of the Justice Center weekdays from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Additionally, you can access forms and other information by visiting our website at clevelandmunicipalcourt.org/housingcourt/forms. You can dial 216-664-4295 to speak with a Housing Specialist for further guidance. Please allow up to 24 hours for the Specialist to return your call.

Tips to prepare for your Virtual Hearing:

- Be on time.
- Make sure you have the ZOOM App downloaded to your device.
- Mute your microphone until it is your turn to speak.
- Try your best to silence the noise when your case is called.
- Log-on 15 mins before your scheduled court hearing to ensure that the ZOOM App is running appropriately.

Upcoming Virtual Events

In 2020 Judge Scott hosted three virtual events. These events informed the community about the court's response to the impact of COVID-19, educated residents and stakeholders on the CDC Eviction Moratorium and provided additional guidance to landlords in a three hour training. We have several more virtual events planned for 2021! To learn about upcoming events, send an email to Director of Communications Jayah J. Watters-Clark at watters-clarkj@cmcoh.org and add UPCOMING EVENTS to the subject line.

Judge W. Moná Scott
Justice Center-13th Floor
1200 Ontario Street-Courtroom13B
Cleveland, Ohio 44113



Judge W. Moná Scott
Cleveland Housing Court
Presents...

Virtual Tenant Information Clinic
Saturday, February 20, 2021
at 11:00am to 1:00pm

**Register online at cletenant.eventbrite.com or join us on Facebook Live
@ClevelandHousingCourt**

Visit us at: www.clevelandhousingcourt.org
Follow us on Social Media: