



DECISION AND STATEMENT OF REASONS OF FIONA WATSON, LEGAL MEMBER OF THE FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL WITH DELEGATED POWERS OF THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT

Under Rule 8 of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Housing and Property Chamber Rules of Procedure 2017 ("the Rules")

in connection with

18H Mansfield Gardens, Hawick, Roxburghshire, TD9 8AN ("the Property")

Case Reference: FTS/HPC/EV/23/1796

Labour Relief Ltd, 13 O'Connell Street, Hawick, TD9 9HT ("the Applicant")

Ioan Dorel, 18H Mansfield Gardens, Hawick, Roxburghshire, TD9 8AN ("the Respondent")

1. The Applicant seeks an eviction order in terms of Rule 109 of the Rules and Section 51(1) of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016 ("the 2016 Act"). The Applicant lodged a tenancy agreement and Notice to Leave in support of the application. The Notice to Leave is dated 27 April 2023. The date specified in Part 4 of the Notice is 29 May 2023. In response to a request for further information, the Applicant advised that the Notice was served by Sheriff Officer on 23 June 2023. A copy of the Sheriff Officer's execution of service was provided.

DECISION

2. The Legal Member considered the application in terms of Rule 8 of the Chamber Procedural Rules. That Rule provides:-

Rejection of application

8.—(1) *The Chamber President or another member of the First-tier Tribunal under the delegated powers of the Chamber President, must reject an application if—*

(a) they consider that the application is frivolous or vexatious;

(b) the dispute to which the application relates has been resolved;

(c) they have good reason to believe that it would not be appropriate to accept the application;

(d) they consider that the application is being made for a purpose other than a purpose specified in the application; or

(e) the applicant has previously made an identical or substantially similar application and in the opinion of the Chamber President or another member of the First-tier Tribunal, under the delegated powers of the Chamber President, there has been no significant change in any material considerations since the identical or substantially similar application was determined.

(2) Where the Chamber President, or another member of the First-tier Tribunal, under the delegated powers of the Chamber President, makes a decision under paragraph (1) to reject an application the First-tier Tribunal must notify the applicant and the notification must state the reason for the decision.

- 3. After consideration of the application and the documents submitted by the Applicant in support of same, the Legal Member considers that the application should be rejected on the basis that it is frivolous within the meaning of Rule 8(1)(a) of the Rules.**

Reasons for Decision

4. 'Frivolous' in the context of legal proceedings is defined by Lord Justice Bingham in *R v North West Suffolk (Mildenhall) Magistrates Court*, (1998) Env LR9. He indicated at page 16 of the judgment; *"What the expression means in this context is, in my view, that the court considers the application to be futile,*

misconceived, hopeless or academic". It is that definition which the Legal Member has considered as the test in this application, and on consideration of this test, the Legal Member considers that this application is frivolous, misconceived and has no prospect of success.

5. The Notice to Leave which accompanies the application is dated 27 April 2023. Part 4 of the Notice states that "An application will not be submitted to the Tribunal for an eviction order before 29 May 2023. This is the earliest date that Tribunal proceedings can start and will be at least the day after the end date of the relevant notice period (28 days or 84 days depending on the eviction ground or how long you have occupied the let property)". The Sheriff Officer's execution of service shows that the notice was served on 23 June 2023, which date of service post-dates the date specified in Part 4 of the Notice to Leave. The relevant sections of the 2016 Act are as follows:-

52 Applications for eviction orders and consideration of them

...

- (2) The Tribunal is not to entertain an application for an eviction order if it is made in breach of—
 - (a) subsection (3), or
 - (b) any of sections 54 to 56 (but see subsection (4)).
- (3) An application for an eviction order against a tenant must be accompanied by a copy of a notice to leave which has been given to the tenant.

54 Restriction on applying during the notice period

- (1) A landlord may not make an application to the First-tier Tribunal for an eviction order against a tenant using a copy of a notice to leave until the expiry of the relevant period in relation to that notice.
- (2) The relevant period in relation to a notice to leave—
 - (a) begins on the day the tenant receives the notice to leave from the landlord, and
 - (b) expires on the day falling—
 - (i) 28 days after it begins if subsection (3) applies.

...

- (4) The reference in subsection (1) to using a copy of a notice to leave in making an application means using it to satisfy the requirement under section 52(3).

62 Meaning of notice to leave and stated eviction ground

- (1) References in this Part to a notice to leave are to a notice which—
 - (a) is in writing,

(b) specifies the day on which the landlord under the tenancy in question expects to become entitled to make an application for an eviction order to the First-tier Tribunal,

(c) states the eviction ground, or grounds, on the basis of which the landlord proposes to seek an eviction order in the event that the tenant does not vacate the let property before the end of the day specified in accordance with paragraph (b), and

(d) fulfils any other requirements prescribed by the Scottish Ministers in regulations.

...

(4) The day to be specified in accordance with subsection (1)(b) is the day falling after the day on which the notice period defined in section 54(2) will expire.

(5) For the purposes of subsection (4), it is to be assumed that the tenant will receive the Notice to leave 48 hours after it is sent

6. For the purposes of section 62(1)(d), the relevant regulations are the Private Residential Tenancies (Prescribed Notices and Forms) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, schedule 5 of which sets out the prescribed form for a notice to leave. Part 4 of that form is set out as follows:

Part 4 THE END OF THE NOTICE PERIOD

An application will not be submitted to the Tribunal for an eviction order before (insert date). This is the earliest date that the Tribunal proceedings can start and will be at least the day after the end date of the relevant notice period (28 days or 84 days depending on the eviction ground or how long you have occupied the Let Property).

7. The Legal Member notes that the date specified in the Notice to leave is 29 May 2023, however the Notice itself was not served until 26 days after that, on 23 June 2023. The tenant therefore did not receive sufficient notice from the landlord prior to the date of repossession as stated in Part 4 of the Notice to Leave.
8. The Legal Member therefore determines that the application is frivolous, misconceived and has no prospect of success. The application is rejected on that basis.

What you should do now

If you accept the Legal Member's decision, there is no need to reply.

If you disagree with this decision –

An applicant aggrieved by the decision of the Chamber President, or any Legal Member acting under delegated powers, may appeal to the Upper Tribunal for Scotland on a point of law only. Before an appeal can be made to the Upper Tribunal, the party must first seek permission to appeal from the First-tier Tribunal. That party must seek permission to appeal within 30 days of the date the decision was sent to them. Information about the appeal procedure can be forwarded to you on request.

F. Watson

Fiona Watson
Legal Member
11 September 2023