



**DECISION AND STATEMENT OF REASONS OF JOSEPHINE BONNAR,
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

12 Priorwood Road, Newton Mearns ("the property")

Case Reference: FTS/HPC/EV/20/0499

Andrew Gormley, 4 Carriagehill Drive, Paisley ("the Applicant")

Balal Wali, 12 Priorwood Road, Newton Mearns ("the Respondent")

1. By application dated received on 12 February 2020 the Applicant seeks an eviction order in terms of Rule 109 of the Rules and Section 50 of the Private Housing Tenancies (Scotland) Act 2016 ("the 2016 Act"). The Applicant lodged documents including a copy private residential tenancy agreement and Notice to Leave in support of the application. The eviction grounds stated in both the application and the notice are ground 11, breach of tenancy and ground 12, rent arrears.
2. On 11 March 2020 a request for further information was issued to the Applicant. One of the matters raised in the request was that the Notice to Leave did not appear to comply with Section 55 of the 2016 Act, as the application had been submitted to the Tribunal more than six months after the date specified in the Notice as the earliest date that Tribunal proceedings can begin. The Applicant was also asked to clarify when and how the Notice had been served. The Applicant responded on date by email. He advised that the Notice to Leave had been hand delivered to the Respondent "some time ago" and stated that a

further Notice would be issued by him, if required. He did not address the issue of the Notice being out of time.

DECISION

3. 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.”

4. **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

5. '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.
6. The Notice to leave which accompanies the application is dated 21 February 2019. The Notice states that "An application will not be submitted to the Tribunal for an eviction order before 17 May 2019. 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 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.

(4) Despite subsection (2)(b) the Tribunal may entertain an application made in breach of Section 54 if the tribunal considers it reasonable to do so.

...

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,

...

(3) This subsection applies if—

(b) the only eviction ground, or grounds, stated in the Notice to leave is, or are, one or more of the following –

(ii) that the tenant has failed to comply with an obligation under the tenancy,

(iii) that the tenant has been in rent arrears for three or more consecutive months

...

(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).

55 Restriction on applying 6 months after the notice period expires

(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 more than six months after the day on which the relevant period in relation to that notice has expired.

(2) In subsection (1) “the relevant period” has the meaning given in subsection 54(2)

(3) The reference in subsection (1) to using a copy of the Notice to Leave in making an application means using it to satisfy the requirements of 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.

7. 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).

8. The Legal Member notes that the Notice to leave was hand delivered to the Respondent. The Applicant is unable to provide the date on which he delivered the Notice. However, as the Notice is dated 21 February 2019, specifies 17 May 2019 as the earliest date for an application to the Tribunal and requires to give the respondent 28 days' notice, it is to be assumed that it was given at some point between 21 February and 18 April 2019. In any event, following service of the Notice, an application had to be submitted to the Tribunal no later than 17 November 2019. The application was not submitted until 12 February 2020. The Applicant has therefore failed to comply with the requirements of Section 55 of the 2016 Act. The Tribunal cannot entertain an application which is made in breach of Section 55.
9. The Legal member therefore concludes 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.

Josephine Bonnar

Josephine Bonnar
Legal Member
23 April 2020