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PRESIDING JUDGE ERIC C. TAYLOR ANNOUNCES ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM FOR PARTIES WITH UNLAWFUL DETAINER (EVICTION) CASES TO RESOLVE DISPUTES WITHOUT APPEARING IN COURT, WHILE PROVIDING PARTIES WITH HELPFUL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Unlawful Detainer Online Dispute Resolution Provides Free Mediation Upon Request, Launches December 6 on the Court's Website

Presiding Judge Eric C. Taylor today announced the launch of Unlawful Detainer Online Dispute Resolution (UD ODR) to enable parties in Unlawful Detainer (housing and eviction) cases in Los Angeles County to resolve their disputes online, for free and without direct Court intervention.

"We are proud to offer this first-of-its-kind platform to alleviate stresses on both sides of an eviction case by providing opportunities for negotiation and resolution in a virtual setting, without parties ever having to commute to a courtroom," Presiding Judge Taylor said. "UD ODR is the latest example of the Court's innovative approach to addressing challenges caused by the pandemic in ways that increase access to justice and promote efficiency. By providing the space for negotiation, paired with free mediation offered by our partners at the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) and the Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR), tenants and landlords have a unique opportunity to settle disputes on their terms, online for free without delay."

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I'd like to thank Executive Officer/Clerk of Court Sherri R. Carter and Supervising Judge of Civil David J. Cowan for their efforts to make UD ODR a reality."

Launching Dec. 6 on the Court's website, UD ODR provides litigants and their attorneys:

- A virtual negotiation space to reach resolution conveniently and efficiently without having to enter a courthouse;
- Access to free mediation upon request from DCBA and CCR; and
- Links to state and local housing resources for both landlords and tenants, among other features.

"At DCBA, we understand that a trained and neutral third-party mediator can help parties resolve even the most challenging and contentious of disputes," Director of DCBA Rafael Carbajal said. "Our partnership with CCR can help both tenants and landlords in Unlawful Detainer cases work toward agreeable solutions through free dispute resolution services."

While enabling parties in housing and eviction cases to negotiate settlements online for free with the assistance of mediation before their case goes to trial, the UD ODR platform will also help the Court focus its limited resources on cases where judicial intervention is unavoidable and on eviction filings amid the expiration of certain pandemic-related eviction moratoriums across Los Angeles County.

"CCR is excited to bring our experience providing online mediation services to help with Unlawful Detainer cases," Executive Director of CCR Chris Welch said. "Our organization will work with tenants and landlords, and their respective counsel to navigate this challenging environment. We hope to make the process easier for the courts and litigants and maximize the potential for negotiated settlements."

UD ODR is the latest platform offered by the Court enabling litigants to resolve cases virtually. Starting with ODR for parenting plan agreements in Family Law cases in 2019, the Court expanded ODR with [Small Claims cases](#) which also includes the assistance of free mediation. These pioneering services are safe, efficient and cost-effective as they save litigants the time and commuting costs necessary to attend court hearings and simultaneously promote efficient case processing and reduce delay.

UD ODR is voluntary and available to all parties and attorneys-of-record in housing cases. Beginning Dec. 6, each self-represented plaintiff, or the attorney-of-record for a represented plaintiff, is encouraged to register for UD ODR within five (5) calendar days of case filing, and each self-represented defendant or attorney-of-record for a represented defendant is encouraged to register for UD ODR within five (5) calendar days of receiving a summons and complaint.

Once both parties register, the platform guides them through a negotiation process by

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asking simple questions to encourage resolution. Parties may use UD ODR's chat feature to negotiate directly and share documents. If parties are unable to reach an agreement on their own, they may request mediation through the platform at no cost. Mediation is provided by DCBA or CCR and takes place virtually either through videoconference within the platform, over the phone or via chat. If an agreement is reached, UD ODR generates the proper form for electronic signatures. If the signed agreement is provided to the Court for review no later than two (2) court days before the scheduled trial and is approved by the Court, the trial is canceled and no court appearances are required.

There is no risk to participating in UD ODR – parties unable to reach an agreement within two (2) court days of their scheduled trial will be required to appear in court. All information shared within UD ODR is confidential. The judge and court staff will not have access to any of the correspondence that took place within UD ODR and the information will not be part of the case file.

UD-ODR uses TurboCourt, an online dispute resolution platform built by Intresys, Inc., a vendor that focuses on eGovernment technology solutions for judicial clients.

The UD ODR webpage also provides a list of external resources for both landlords and tenants. Resources include links to the State of California's 'Housing is Key' website with information on receiving monetary assistance from applicable government agencies, contact numbers for legal aid agencies in Los Angeles County, and other resources offered by DCBA and the Los Angeles Housing Department, including housing counselor assistance for both tenants and landlords.

While UD-ODR is available for use on any smartphone or mobile device, its use on a laptop or desktop computer is preferable to more easily access embedded links for helpful tips and guidance.

More information on UD ODR can be found on the UD ODR landing page (<https://my.lacourt.org/odr/unlawful-detainers>), including links to Frequently Asked Questions for litigants and attorneys and "How-To" videos (<https://my.lacourt.org/odr/unlawful-detainers?popup=TakeAVideoTour>) on the UD ODR platform.

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