



Hon. Fern A. Fisher
Administrative Judge

April 2006

Welcome to the Resource Center

The Civil Court Resource Centers provide services at no cost to self-represented litigants who have cases pending in the Civil Courts of the City of New York.

Resource Center Services

The Civil Court employs **Resource Center Court Attorneys** (also known as Pro Se Attorneys), who provide free legal and procedural information to self-represented litigants. They are neutral parties who **cannot give legal advice** or tell you the best way to handle your case. Resource Center Court Attorneys can provide information:

- on how to commence cases
- on how to answer cases
- on how to collect judgments
- on how to obtain or make repairs
- on filling out forms
- on court procedure
- on landlord-tenant law or small claims cases
- on referrals to appropriate agencies.

Informational Videos: The Resource Center provides videos you can watch to better understand how to proceed in court.

The following videos are currently available:

✿ *“The Resolution Part”* (4 min, 22 sec) English/Spanish

The Resolution Part is the first court room where litigants with landlord-tenant cases appear. If cases do not settle in the Resolution Part, the judge will refer the litigants to a Trial Part. This video explains the Resolution Parts’ procedures and objectives and introduces the role of various court personnel.

✿ *“Getting Repairs and Services”* (16 min, 23 sec) English/Spanish

This video follows the story of Rosa Santiago, a tenant whose apartment needs repairs. The video explains the step-by-step procedures for successfully obtaining repairs.

✿ *“Collecting Rent”* (21 min, 55 sec) English

This video profiles Tom Porter, a small property owner who is owed rent. The video describes the steps needed to collect rent.

Library: Resource Centers have small libraries of written materials. Sample forms and publications are available on topics involving the Civil, Housing and Small Claims Courts. Civil Court publications are also available:

-Guide to Small Claims

-Dispute Resolution Through Mediation

-How to Prepare For A Landlord-Tenant Trial

-How to Try or Defend A Civil Case When You Don't Have A Lawyer

-A Landlord's Guide to New York City Housing Court

-A Tenant's Guide to New York City Housing Court

Internet Access: Resource Centers provide free limited access to the internet for litigants to research community resources, rental assistance programs, civil, and landlord-tenant law topics. Visitors may use the computer for up to 30 minutes to visit a number of web sites. A few of these helpful web sites are listed below:

New York State Unified Court System, Court Help, www.nycourthelp.gov

This web site for self-represented litigants includes a frequently asked questions section and provides official court forms.

LawHelp, www.lawhelp.org/ny

This web page is designed to assist low-income New Yorkers find legal resources and contains self-help information on a wide range of topics.

Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/hpd/home.html

This web site allows users to look up information on Housing Maintenance Code violations and building registrations.

Department of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR), www.dhcr.state.ny.us

This web site provides information on rent-regulated apartments, supplies forms, and links to other sites.

Volunteer Attorneys: Resource Center staff may refer self-represented litigants who need legal advice or help completing forms to the Volunteer Lawyers Project. To find out courthouse locations, dates, and times when volunteer lawyers are available, you can look on the web page below or ask Resource Center staff.

<http://nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/housing/vlpselfrep.shtml#meet>

Hours of Operation

Resource Centers in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens are open Monday through Friday from 9:30 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. to assist litigants in landlord-tenant cases. These Centers remain open on Thursday evenings until 7:00 P.M. to serve those who cannot come during regular business hours.

In Staten Island, the Resource Center is open daily from 9:30 A.M. until 5:00 P.M.

The Resource Center Court Attorney at the Harlem Community Justice Center is available only on Monday and Thursday, but staff is available on other days to provide information to the public.

Assistance with Civil and Small Claims cases is available on a limited basis in all Civil Courthouses except Harlem. Hours vary.

For more information, please visit the Civil Court web site:

www.nycourts.gov/nyccivilcourt