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New Tool Allows Landlords, Tenants to Resolve Eviction Cases Online

Landlords and tenants in Ada County have a new way to resolve certain eviction claims. Starting today, the parties in new cases involving evictions for nonpayment of rent will be invited to negotiate an agreement through an online portal that may remove the need for them to attend court.

The Idaho Supreme Court is evaluating this Online Eviction Resolution service in a pilot project focused on Idaho's largest county. Today's launch comes as a federal moratorium on evictions for nonpayment of rent is expected to expire July 31 and as Ada County experiences a severe housing shortage.

The service uses software that guides parties through a negotiation process and the necessary information for an agreement. It allows both sides to address items that would not be part of a normal eviction case, including payment of owed rent. And it helps them locate resources that may help resolve their dispute — including how to contact agencies that offer financial support for tenants whose ability to pay rent was affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Participants can:

- Work together to reach an agreement from any computer or internet-connected mobile device.
- Prevent extra trips to the courthouse and related costs, including parking, gas and childcare.
- Work on the case when they have time, not just when the court is open.

“We hope this service will help ensure landlords and tenants are aware of the financial assistance available to them, and that they have every opportunity to resolve their dispute in a way that satisfies both parties,” said Ada County Magistrate Judge Adam Kimball.

Landlords and tenants will receive information on accessing the system after their case is filed. If the parties are not able to come to an agreement online, they will still have the option of going through the traditional court process, possibly including separate mediation or a trial.

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