Tenant Guide to Protective Orders

What is a protective order?

- It is a court order that requires a tenant to **pay their rent into the court registry** instead of directly to the landlord while the case is ongoing.
- At the end of the case, the money in the court registry is released to the landlord or the tenant depending on the outcome of the case.
- If a protective order is entered, even though your case is ongoing, **you will still have to pay your rent** to the court.

How do I pay my protective order?

- Protective orders must be paid into the court in one of 3 ways:
- The court will provide you with an info sheet explaining these options

In person

Deliver to the Landlord Tenant Courthouse: 510 4th St NW, Room 110

- M-F, 8:30 - 5:00
- Sat, 9:00 - 12:00
- W, 6:30 - 8:00

By Mail

Send a personal check to:
Landlord Tenant Court Clerk
510 4th St NW, Room 110 Washington, DC 20001

Electronically

Only for payments below $1000. Contact landlordandtenantdocket@dcsc.gov or call (202) 879-4879 for access to the portal.

Questions? Call LTLAN (202)-780-2575

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How much will I have to pay?

- Usually, your protective order is equal to your **monthly rent.**
- You may argue that you should **pay less** because:
  - There are conditions issues in your unit and your landlord has not fixed them, or
  - You think your current rent is incorrect.
- You can ask for a **Bell Hearing** to set the protective order amount later
  - You can show the judge pictures of the problems or housing code violations in your unit, or evidence of other issues
  - The judge will decide if, & by how much, to lower your payment.

What happens if I pay late or miss a payment?

- If you need to pay your protective order payment late, **you can ask the judge for more time** to make the payment.
  - You should still pay as soon as you can.
  - You can file a **motion to modify the protective order** to ask for more time.
  - Your landlord may ask the judge to enter sanctions (or punishments) against you for not paying on time.
- **If you miss a payment**, your landlord can ask the judge to enter **sanctions** (or punishments) against you.
  - Sanctions can range from preventing you from asking for a jury trial to entering a judgment in favor of your landlord.
- If you think you will not be able to make a payment, need more time to pay, or cannot afford your payments going forward, **call LTLAN.**