

# ANSWERING A RECOVERY OF COVID-19 RENTAL DEBT COMPLAINT

## SELF-HELP FORM PACKET



SHC-CIV-09 (Rev. 11/01/2021)

Self-Help Services can review your completed forms before you file them with the Court. To request review of your completed forms:

1. Complete the attached forms in black ink.
2. Scan your completed forms and save as a single PDF file.
3. Go to [www.occourts.org/self-help](http://www.occourts.org/self-help) (click the blue button labeled *Click Here to Contact Self-Help Services*), attach the PDF, and complete the online request form. Make sure to select CIVIL as the case type on the form.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ATTORNEY OR PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY<br>STATE BAR NUMBER:<br>NAME:<br>FIRM NAME:<br>STREET ADDRESS:<br>CITY: STATE: ZIP CODE:<br>TELEPHONE NO.: FAX NO.:<br>EMAIL ADDRESS:<br>ATTORNEY FOR (name): | <b>FOR COURT USE ONLY</b> |
| <b>SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF</b><br>STREET ADDRESS:<br>MAILING ADDRESS:<br>CITY AND ZIP CODE:<br>BRANCH NAME:                                                                      |                           |
| PLAINTIFF:<br>DEFENDANT:                                                                                                                                                                         |                           |
| <b>ANSWER—RECOVERY OF COVID-19 RENTAL DEBT</b>                                                                                                                                                   |                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>TO COMPLAINT OF (name):</b>                                                                                                                                          | CASE NUMBER:              |

**ACTION FOR RECOVERY OF COVID-19 RENTAL DEBT**  
**AS DEFINED UNDER CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE SECTION 1179.02**  
**Access to the records in this case is limited under Code of Civil Procedure section 1161.2.5.**

*This form must be used to answer Complaint—Recovery of COVID-19 Rental Debt (form PLD-C-500) within 30 calendar days after defendant is served with the complaint. Alternatively, defendant may file a demurrer, motion to strike, or motion to quash within that same time period if any of those responses are appropriate. A cross-complaint may be made on a separate pleading form (Judicial Council forms that have form numbers preceded by PLD) or individually prepared on pleading paper. Defendant may want to consult with an attorney.*

*If defendant cannot afford to pay filing fees to answer, defendant may ask the court to waive the fees by completing Request to Waive Court Fees (form FW-001), and filing it with the court.*

1. **Defendant** (name or names):

answers the complaint as follows:

**DENIALS (Complete item 2 or item 3, not both.)**

2. **General Denial** (Read the instructions below before checking this item.)

Defendant generally denies each statement in the complaint.

(This item can be checked only if **either** of the following applies:

- The complaint is **not** verified. (The complaint is verified if the Verification at the bottom of page 4 of form PLD-C-500 is signed or if a Verification is attached to the form.); **or**
- The amount demanded in the complaint is \$25,000 or less (a limited civil case) AND the debt has not been assigned to someone other than the landlord. (If item 4 on form PLD-C-500 has been checked, this General Denial **cannot** be checked.)

If this General Denial is checked, go on to item 4.

If this General Denial is not checked, defendant may make the Specific Denials in item 3.)

3. **Specific Denials of Allegations in Complaint**

Defendant may complete this item if Defendant did not check the general denial box, above. Defendant should complete each section in item 3 below if defendant either

- disagrees that one or more statements in the corresponding section of the complaint is true or correct (list those statements by item number or letter in subpart (1) for each section); or
- does not have enough information or belief to state whether one or more of the statements in the corresponding section of the complaint are true or false (list those statements by item number or letter in subpart (2) for each section).

If defendant agrees with all of the statements in a section of the complaint, do not check any boxes for that section in item 3 below. This will be an admission that all the statements in that section of the complaint are true.

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| PLAINTIFF:<br>DEFENDANT: | CASE NUMBER: |
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3. a. **Introductory Allegations** (items 2-4 on form PLD-C-500)

- (1)  Defendant denies the following statements in the section of the complaint titled **Introductory Allegations** (write the item number of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant disagrees with, or explain why defendant disagrees):
- (2)  Defendant has no information or belief as to whether the following items in the section titled **Introductory Allegations** are true, so denies them (write the item number of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant denies on this basis):

b. **Allegations About COVID-19 Rental Debt** (items 5 and 6 on form PLD-C-500)

- (1)  Defendant denies the following statements in the section of the complaint titled **Allegations About COVID-19 Rental Debt** (write the item number of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant disagrees with, or explain why defendant disagrees):
- (2)  Defendant has no information or belief as to whether the following items in the section titled **Allegations About COVID-19 Rental Debt** are true, so denies them (write the item number of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant denies on this basis):

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| PLAINTIFF:<br>DEFENDANT: | CASE NUMBER: |
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3. c. **Allegations About Rental Assistance** (items 7 and 8 on form PLD-C-500)

(1)  Defendant denies the following statements in the section of the complaint titled **Allegations About Rental Assistance** (write the item number of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant disagrees with, or explain why defendant disagrees):

(2)  Defendant has no information or belief as to whether the following items in the section titled **Allegations About Rental Assistance** are true, so denies them (write the item number of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant denies on this basis):

d. **Other Allegations** (item 9 on form PLD-C-500 and any statements in Attachment 9 to the form)

(1)  Defendant denies the following statements in the section of the complaint titled **Other Allegations** or in **Attachment 9** to the complaint (write the item number or letter of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 or in Attachment 9 that defendant disagrees with, or explain why defendant disagrees. If more room is needed, use form MC-025.)

Response is provided on form MC-025, titled as Attachment 3d.

(2)  Defendant has no information or belief as to whether the following items in the section titled **Other Allegations** or in **Attachment 9** are true, so denies them (write the item number or letter of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant denies on this basis):

e. **Demand for Judgment** (item 12 on form PLD-C-500)

(1)  Defendant denies the following statements in the section of the complaint titled **Demand for Judgment** (write the item number or letter of any items in that section of form PLD-C-500 that defendant disagrees with, or explain why defendant disagrees):

(2)  Defendant has no information or belief as to whether the following items in the section titled **Demand for Judgment** are true, so denies them (write the item number or letter of any items that defendant denies on this basis):

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| PLAINTIFF:<br>DEFENDANT: | CASE NUMBER: |
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**4. Defenses and Objections**

*(Check all that apply. NOTE: For each box checked, defendant must state any additional facts needed to support it in item 4m or, if more room is needed, on form MC-025. The parties may disagree about the amount of rent that is owed for various reasons. Read more about these reasons in the California Department of Real Estate's guide at [in the "Living in the Rental Unit" and "Dealing with Problems" sections.](#))*

- a.  Defendant delivered to the landlord one or more declarations of COVID-19–related financial distress and *(check any that apply)*
  - (1)  the amount demanded includes late fees on rent or other financial obligations due between March 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021 (Civ. Code, § 1942.9);
  - (2)  the amount demanded includes fees for services and the fees that were increased between March 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021, or had not been charged before (Civ. Code, § 1942.9).
  
- b.  Defendant has completed an application for government rental assistance for part or all of the amount demanded, which is still pending, and *(check one)*
  - (1)  a copy of the notification from the government rental assistance program that a completed application was submitted is attached, marked as Attachment 4h.
  - (2)  defendant does not have a copy of a notification, but the application was completed with the following government rental assistance program:  
*(name of program):*  
*(date completed):*  
*(application number):*
  
- c.  The landlord refused to obtain rental assistance from the governmental rental assistance program that applied to the housing for which rent or other financial obligations is demanded, even though tenant met all eligibility requirements. (Code Civ. Proc., § 871.10(b).)
  
- d.  Plaintiff was assigned debt in violation of Civil Code section 1788.66 because defendant's household income is at or below 80 percent of the area median income for the 2020 or 2021 calendar year.
  
- e.  The amount of attorneys' fees requested by plaintiff is more than permitted by law for cases for recovery of COVID-19 rental debt. (Code Civ. Proc., § 871.11.)
  
- f.  The amount demanded includes amounts that a third party offered to pay, but which the landlord did not accept. (Civ. Code, § 1947.3; Gov. Code, § 12955.)
  
- g.  Defendant vacated the premises and does not owe rent after *(date)*:
  
- h.  The amount demanded should be reduced because the landlord breached the warranty to provide habitable premises.
  
- i.  The amount demanded includes amounts that the defendant spent to make needed repairs and properly deducted from the rent, but for which the landlord did not give proper credit.
  
- j.  The amount demanded includes the security deposit that the landlord improperly withheld after the lease or rental agreement was terminated.
  
- k.  The amount demanded is in violation of law because the landlord improperly raised the rent in violation of state law or a local rent control ordinance. *(If a local ordinance, provide name of locality and ordinance number):*
  
- l.  Other defenses or objections. *(Describe briefly, and state facts to support them either here or in item m. Include any additional reasons why any claims raised in item 9 or Attachment 9 to form PLD-C-500 should be denied. If more space is needed, check box below and use form MC-025.)*  
 Other defenses and objections are provided on form MC-025, titled as Attachment 4l.

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4. m.  Additional Facts. *(Provide facts supporting each item checked as needed, either below or, if more space is needed, check box below and use form MC-025.)*

Facts are provided on form MC-025, titled as Attachment 4m.

5.  **Other statements** *(specify below or, if more room is needed, check box below and use form MC-025):*

Other statements are on form MC-025, titled as Attachment 5.

|                          |              |
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| PLAINTIFF:<br>DEFENDANT: | CASE NUMBER: |
|--------------------------|--------------|

6. This pleading, including attachments and exhibits, consists of the following number of pages: \_\_\_\_\_

**Demand for Judgment**

7. Defendant requests
- a. that plaintiff take nothing.
  - b.  for costs of suit.
  - c.  attorneys' fees, to the extent permitted under Code of Civil Procedure section 871.11,
    - (1)  of: \$
    - (2)  according to proof.
  - d.  Other (*specify*):

*(Each defendant for whom this answer is filed must be named in item 1 and must sign this answer unless defendant's attorney signs.)*

|                                            |   |                                               |
|--------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------|
| Date:<br><br>_____<br>(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) | ▶ | _____<br>(SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT OR ATTORNEY) |
| Date:<br><br>_____<br>(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) | ▶ | _____<br>(SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT OR ATTORNEY) |
| Date:<br><br>_____<br>(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) | ▶ | _____<br>(SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT OR ATTORNEY) |

**VERIFICATION**

*Required only if complaint is verified.  
An attorney should use a different verification form if verifying the pleading.*

I am the defendant in this proceeding and have read this answer. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

|                                            |   |                                   |
|--------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Date:<br><br>_____<br>(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) | ▶ | _____<br>(SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT) |
| Date:<br><br>_____<br>(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) | ▶ | _____<br>(SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT) |
| Date:<br><br>_____<br>(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) | ▶ | _____<br>(SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT) |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                           |
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| ATTORNEY OR PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY <i>(Name, State Bar number, and address):</i><br><br><br>TELEPHONE NO.: _____ FAX NO. <i>(Optional):</i> _____<br>E-MAIL ADDRESS <i>(Optional):</i> _____<br>ATTORNEY FOR <i>(Name):</i> _____ | <b>FOR COURT USE ONLY</b> |
| <b>SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF</b><br>STREET ADDRESS:<br>MAILING ADDRESS:<br>CITY AND ZIP CODE:<br>BRANCH NAME:                                                                                                       |                           |
| PETITIONER/PLAINTIFF:<br>RESPONDENT/DEFENDANT:                                                                                                                                                                                    |                           |
| <b>PROOF OF SERVICE BY FIRST-CLASS MAIL—CIVIL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 | CASE NUMBER: _____        |

***(Do not use this Proof of Service to show service of a Summons and Complaint.)***

1. I am over 18 years of age and **not a party to this action**. I am a resident of or employed in the county where the mailing took place.
2. My residence or business address is:

3. On *(date):* \_\_\_\_\_ I mailed from *(city and state):* \_\_\_\_\_  
 the following **documents** *(specify):*

The documents are listed in the *Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail—Civil (Documents Served)* (form POS-030(D)).

4. I served the documents by enclosing them in an envelope and *(check one)*:
  - a.  **depositing** the sealed envelope with the United States Postal Service with the postage fully prepaid.
  - b.  **placing** the envelope for collection and mailing following our ordinary business practices. I am readily familiar with this business's practice for collecting and processing correspondence for mailing. On the same day that correspondence is placed for collection and mailing, it is deposited in the ordinary course of business with the United States Postal Service in a sealed envelope with postage fully prepaid.
5. The envelope was addressed and mailed as follows:
  - a. **Name** of person served:
  - b. **Address** of person served:

The name and address of each person to whom I mailed the documents is listed in the *Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail—Civil (Persons Served)* (POS-030(P)).

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (TYPE OR PRINT NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM)

▶

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (SIGNATURE OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM)



## INFORMATION SHEET FOR PROOF OF SERVICE BY FIRST-CLASS MAIL—CIVIL

(This information sheet is not part of the Proof of Service and does not need to be copied, served, or filed.)

**NOTE:** This form should **not** be used for proof of service of a summons and complaint. For that purpose, use Proof of Service of Summons (form POS-010).

Use these instructions to complete the Proof of Service by First-Class Mail—Civil (form POS-030).

A person over 18 years of age must serve the documents. There are two main ways to serve documents: (1) by personal delivery and (2) by mail. Certain documents must be personally served. You must determine whether personal service is required for a document. Use the *Proof of Personal Service—Civil* (form POS-020) if the documents were personally served.

The person who served the documents by mail must complete a proof of service form for the documents served. **You cannot serve documents if you are a party to the action.**

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PERSON WHO SERVED THE DOCUMENTS

The proof of service should be printed or typed. If you have Internet access, a fillable version of the Proof of Service form is available at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms).

Complete the top section of the proof of service form as follows:

First box, left side: In this box print the name, address, and telephone number of the person for whom you served the documents.

Second box, left side: Print the name of the county in which the legal action is filed and the court's address in this box. The address for the court should be the same as on the documents that you served.

Third box, left side: Print the names of the Petitioner/Plaintiff and Respondent/Defendant in this box. Use the same names as are on the documents that you served.

First box, top of form, right side: Leave this box blank for the court's use.

Second box, right side: Print the case number in this box. The case number should be the same as the case number on the documents that you served.

Complete items 1–5 as follows:

1. You are stating that you are over the age of 18 and that you are not a party to this action. You are also stating that you either live in or are employed in the county where the mailing took place.
2. Print your home or business address.
3. Provide the date and place of the mailing and list the name of each document that you mailed. If you need more space to list the documents, check the box in item 3, complete the *Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail—Civil (Documents Served)* (form POS-030(D)), and attach it to form POS-030.
4. For item 4:  
  
Check box a if you personally put the documents in the regular U.S. mail.  
Check box b if you put the documents in the mail at your place of business.
5. Provide the name and address of each person to whom you mailed the documents. If you mailed the documents to more than one person, check the box in item 5, complete the *Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail—Civil (Persons Served)* (form POS-030(P)), and attach it to form POS-030.

**At the bottom, fill in the date on which you signed the form, print your name, and sign the form. By signing, you are stating under penalty of perjury that all the information you have provided on form POS-030 is true and correct.**