

### Trial Commissioner's Statement

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, I am a trial commissioner and am here to welcome you to the Philadelphia Municipal Court. You are all here as a landlord, tenant or witness in a landlord-tenant case that is scheduled for today.

I will first call each case to find out whether the landlord and tenant are here. Please make sure you stay in this room so that I know you are here.

If only the landlord or the tenant is here, you may be entitled to what is called a default judgment. If you are a landlord, please make sure that you know how much the tenant owes you. Do not include the costs you paid to file and serve the landlord-tenant complaint.

I will next give the landlords and tenants who are represented by attorneys time to speak with each other in another room. Please be patient because many of the attorneys are here on more than one case.

If no attorney is involved in a case, the landlord and tenant will meet with a trained mediator who works for the court. Again, your patience is appreciated.

The purpose of meeting in another room is to see if you are able to resolve your case without the need for a trial. If you are able to do so, you will enter into a written, binding agreement. If you are unable to do so, you will come back to this room to have a trial before a judge. Please remember that whatever you talk about in the other room is confidential and should not be mentioned if you later appear at trial before a judge.

The court has no preference as to whether you resolve your dispute by entering into an agreement or by having your case tried before a judge. That choice is yours. Court personnel and a judge are always available to assist you and to try to answer any questions that you may have.

[The following is to be read only before the morning call of the list.]

Additionally, you will find a Courtroom Navigator present in the waiting room area in the next room. The Courtroom Navigator does not work for the court, is not an attorney, and will not provide legal advice. The Courtroom Navigator can assist unrepresented landlords and tenants with basic information about the court process. The Courtroom Navigator can also provide referrals to legal services and resources, and put tenants in contact with a financial counselor.

Please stay in the courtroom now until I call your name and your case. If you received a notice of noncompliance this morning, please remain in the courtroom until you see the judge. If you did not receive a notice of noncompliance this morning, you may proceed through that door to the next room and the waiting room area to speak with the Courtroom Navigator after I call your name and your case. Once you leave this courtroom, please wait in the next room or in the waiting room until your name is called.