

# News Release



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## Charleston County Launches New Housing Court Pilot Program

The Charleston Magistrate Court will hold its first Housing Court on Wednesday, October 2 in an attempt to provide access to legal services to tenants in Charleston County facing eviction from local housing. The initial Housing Court session will take place from 8:30 a.m. to Noon at the North Area 1 Magistrate Court located at 4045 Bridge View Drive in North Charleston.

South Carolina Supreme Court Order establishing the Housing Court:  
<https://www.sccourts.org/courtOrders/displayOrder.cfm?orderNo=2019-05-24-01>

The North Area 1 Magistrate Court will conduct eviction hearings on Wednesday mornings each week, and a pro bono attorney will be present to represent indigent tenants who qualify for pro bono services based on their income.

This is the first Housing Court in South Carolina and the goal is to provide all parties involved with the opportunity to resolve issues without an eviction. According to Charleston County Magistrate Judges, often times these eviction situations are the result of a breakdown in communication.

“During an eviction, a landlord loses a tenant and a family loses a home,” said West Ashley Magistrate Ellen Steinberg. “The Housing Court will be a chance to get all parties in the same room, with a legal representative, and hopefully arrive at a positive outcome.”

Once the Housing Court is established at the North Area 1 Magistrate Court, it will be rolled out to the North Area 3 and West Ashley Magistrate Courts at a later date.

For more information on Charleston County Magistrate Courts:  
<https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/magistrates-summary-courts/index.php>

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- Prepared by the Public Information Office -