

(a) In an action under § 8-401, § 8-402, or § 8-402.1 of this article in which a party prays a jury trial, the District Court shall enter an order directing the tenant or anyone holding under the tenant to pay [all accrued and unpaid rents, and] all rents due and as they come due during the pendency of the action, as prescribed in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) The District Court shall order that the rents be paid into the registry of an escrow account of:

(1) The clerk of the circuit court; or

(2) If directed by the District Court, an administrative agency of the county which is empowered by local law to hold rents in escrow pending investigation and disposition of complaints by tenants.

(c) (1) In an action under § 8-401, § 8-402, or § 8-402.1 of this article, if the tenant or anyone holding under the tenant fails to pay rent [accrued or] as it comes due pursuant to the terms of the order, the circuit court, on motion of the landlord and certification of the clerk or agency of the status of the account, shall ~~give judgment in favor of the landlord and issue a warrant for possession~~ CONDUCT A HEARING WITHIN 30 DAYS.

(2) ~~BEFORE--TAKING--ANY--ACTION--UNDER--PARAGRAPH--(1)--OF--THIS--SUBSECTION, THE CIRCUIT COURT SHALL PROVIDE THE TENANT OR AN INDIVIDUAL HOLDING UNDER THE TENANT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A HEARING AT THE HEARING THE LANDLORD MUST SHOW THAT THE ESCROW ORDER IS VALID AND THAT THE TENANT, WITHOUT LEGAL JUSTIFICATION, HAS FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE ORDER.~~

(3) ~~THE TENANT MAY DISPUTE THE VALIDITY OR TERMS OF THE DISTRICT COURT'S ESCROW ORDER OR RAISE ANY OTHER DEFENSE, INCLUDING ANY LEGAL JUSTIFICATION, TO THE TENANT'S ALLEGED NONCOMPLIANCE WITH THE ORDER.~~

(4) ~~IF THE CIRCUIT COURT DETERMINES THAT THE LANDLORD HAS SUSTAINED THE BURDEN OF SHOWING THAT THE ESCROW ORDER IS VALID AND THAT THE TENANT, WITHOUT CAUSE, HAS FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE DISTRICT COURT'S ORDER, THE COURT MAY TREAT THE TENANT'S PRAYER FOR JURY TRIAL AS WAIVED, AND CAN EITHER IMMEDIATELY CONDUCT A NONJURY TRIAL OR SET THE MATTER FOR A FUTURE NONJURY TRIAL ON THE MERITS OF THE LANDLORD'S CLAIM.~~

(d) Upon final disposition of the action, the circuit court shall order distribution of the rent escrow account in accordance with the judgment. If no judgment is entered, the circuit court shall order distribution to the party entitled to the rent escrow account after hearing.