

Getting Started

Responding to an Eviction Complaint

IMPORTANT: This getting started guide and the instructions are not legal advice. They are only meant to help you learn how to respond to an *Eviction Complaint*. Your use of the forms does not guarantee you will be successful in court.

To learn how to fill out the forms and file them with the court, read the *HOW TO RESPOND TO AN EVICTION COMPLAINT* instruction sheet and the instructions on the forms.

Names of the forms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Appearance</i>• <i>Eviction Answer, Defenses, and Counterclaims</i>• <i>Additional Paragraphs for Answer/Response to Complaint/Petition</i>• <i>Additional Bad Property Conditions</i>• <i>Additional Affirmative Defenses/Counterclaims</i>
Purpose of the forms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Appearance</i>: To let the court and other party know that you plan to participate in the case. This is also how you request a trial by jury if you want to do that.• <i>Eviction Answer, Defenses, and Counterclaims</i>: You are not required to file an <i>Eviction Answer</i> unless ordered to do so by the judge. Use this form to respond to the claims that the Plaintiff made in the Complaint. The <i>Eviction Answer</i> is where you say whether you agree or disagree with what the Plaintiff is claiming.
Types of cases the forms CAN be used for:	Residential evictions
Types of cases the forms CANNOT be used for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cases other than evictions.• The following types of eviction cases:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Commercial○ Mobile homes○ Condominium owners being sued by the association○ Contracts for deed (also called rent to own agreements or installment sales agreements)
Cost to file the forms:	There is a fee for filing. If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, you can ask the court to file for free or at a reduced cost by filing the <i>Application for Waiver of Court Fees</i> found at: ilcourts.info/forms .
Special information or papers needed to complete the forms:	You will need the <i>Eviction Complaint</i> , a copy of your lease (if you have one), and a copy of your eviction notice (if you received one).
Statutes covering the forms:	735 ILCS 5/9 , section 101 through section 307
Where to find the forms and instruction sheet:	ilcourts.info/forms
For more information:	Read the <i>HOW TO RESPOND TO AN EVICTION COMPLAINT</i> instruction sheet that comes with these forms. You may also find more information, resources, and the location of your local legal self-help center at illinoislegalaid.org/ .