

00:00:12:25 --:--:--:--
(narrator)
Hello.

00:00:13:25 --:--:--:--
It's tough sometimes

00:00:14:29 --:--:--:--
to be a small property owner
in our city.

00:00:17:09 --:--:--:--
With the many laws
and regulations

00:00:18:22 --:--:--:--
that one must follow

00:00:19:29 --:--:--:--
and the many bills
that must be paid,

00:00:22:07 --:--:--:--
one tenant's failure to pay rent
can be devastating.

00:00:25:23 --:--:--:--
We'd like you to know

00:00:27:03 --:--:--:--
that the housing court
is here to help,

00:00:29:09 00:00:33:06
and here's the story of how
one landlord solved his problem.

00:00:37:03 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
This isn't happening.

00:00:38:16 00:00:39:24
(woman)
Got to go.

00:00:43:18 --:--:--:--
What's wrong, hon?

00:00:45:08 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
What's wrong?

00:00:46:08 --:--:--:--
What's always wrong?

00:00:47:12 --:--:--:--

I have the mortgage
and the fuel bills

00:00:48:26 --:--:--:--
due on the apartment house,

00:00:49:29 --:--:--:--
and I still haven't
paid the plumber

00:00:51:12 --:--:--:--
for the maintenance
on the boiler from last month.

00:00:53:23 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Are we that badly behind?

00:00:55:20 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
No, not any more than what's
become usual for us.

00:00:58:20 --:--:--:--
Look, Dave Nesbit, the plumber,
he knows I'm good for the money,

00:01:01:28 --:--:--:--
but I don't think Con Edison

00:01:03:02 --:--:--:--
or Chase Bank
will be as forgiving.

00:01:05:21 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Well, there's got to be
something we can do

00:01:07:22 --:--:--:--
between our checking account,

00:01:09:13 --:--:--:--
perhaps borrow
from our savings account.

00:01:11:20 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
No, I don't think
we ought to do that just yet.

00:01:13:28 --:--:--:--
Although if Joe Mason

00:01:15:05 --:--:--:--
would pay the two months'

back rent he owes--

00:01:16:21 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Correction:

00:01:17:21 --:--:--:--
That's three months.
Tomorrow's rent day.

00:01:20:08 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Right.

00:01:21:16 --:--:--:--
That's \$1,500.

00:01:23:18 --:--:--:--
I've tried contacting him
this month.

00:01:25:11 --:--:--:--
All I get is his machine.
He's never home.

00:01:27:25 --:--:--:--
(woman)
You know, I think it's time
we took him to court.

00:01:31:00 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Great, that's what I'll do.

00:01:33:03 --:--:--:--
I can't afford to pay the bills
we've already got piled up,

00:01:35:20 --:--:--:--
so you want me to go out
and hire an attorney

00:01:37:10 --:--:--:--
to take him to court.

00:01:38:24 --:~:~:~:~:~
It'll probably cost us more
to sue him than what he owes us.

00:01:41:22 00:01:42:22
[door clicks open]

00:01:47:05 --:~:~:~:~:~
(woman)
Hi, hon.

00:01:48:12 --:--:--:--

(Samantha)

Hey, Mom. Hey, Dad.

What's up?

00:01:50:24 --:--:--:--

(Tom)

Do you have a lot of homework?

00:01:52:06 --:--:--:--

(Samantha)

No, we had an easy day.

00:01:53:16 --:--:--:--

We took a tour of the courts.

It was interesting.

00:01:55:14 --:--:--:--

Here are some pamphlets.

00:01:57:00 --:--:--:--

So what are you guys doing?

00:01:58:21 --:--:--:--

(woman)

Well, your dad and I

were just talking

00:02:01:22 --:--:--:--

about the rent situation

with the brownstone.

00:02:04:24 --:--:--:--

Mr. Mason is late again

with the rent,

00:02:06:28 --:--:--:--

and this time,

it's three months.

00:02:08:14 --:--:--:--

(Samantha)

Well, why don't you take him

to housing court

00:02:11:02 --:--:--:--

for not paying the rent?

00:02:12:13 --:--:--:--

(Tom)

Your mother and I

were just discussing

00:02:14:07 --:--:--:--

how we can't afford

to hire an attorney to do that.

00:02:16:11 --:--:--:--
(Samantha)
The clerk at housing court
told us

00:02:18:06 --:--:--:--
that you can do it yourself.

00:02:20:17 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
I wouldn't know where to begin.

00:02:22:13 --:--:--:--
(Samantha)
She called it
a summary proceeding.

00:02:24:18 --:--:--:--
All you've got to do
is ask Mr. Mason for the rent,

00:02:27:21 --:--:--:--
and if he doesn't pay within
three days of demanding it,

00:02:30:08 --:--:--:--
you serve him
with a notice of petition

00:02:33:10 --:--:--:--
and a petition
for nonpayment of rent,

00:02:35:11 --:--:--:--
but the forms
you'd have to get yourself.

00:02:37:06 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Sounds like you were
really paying attention there.

00:02:39:19 --:--:--:--
(Samantha)
It was pretty interesting.

00:02:41:06 --:--:--:--
Besides, I know you guys
are always complaining

00:02:43:15 --:--:--:--
how Mr. Mason's holding you up
for the rent,

00:02:45:21 --:--:--:--

so I kind of paid
a little more attention

00:02:48:02 --:--:--:--
and asked some questions during
the housing part of the tour.

00:02:50:17 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Seems she's been
paying attention

00:02:52:11 --:--:--:--
to what goes on around here too.

00:02:55:08 --:~:~:~:~:~
Okay, Samantha,
how am I supposed

00:02:57:02 --:~:~:~:~:~
to demand the rent
from Mr. Mason

00:02:58:24 --:~:~:~:~:~
if I can never get him
on the phone?

00:03:01:11 --:~:~:~:~:~
And what did you
call those forms,

00:03:02:26 --:~:~:~:~:~
and where do I get them?

00:03:04:07 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Samantha)
I guess you just go
to Mr. Mason's apartment

00:03:07:01 --:~:~:~:~:~
and ask for the rent.

00:03:08:07 --:~:~:~:~:~
And the forms--

00:03:09:23 --:~:~:~:~:~
(woman)
You know what?
Excuse me.

00:03:11:05 --:~:~:~:~:~
I think that I remember
seeing legal forms

00:03:13:10 --:~:~:~:~:~
at our stationery store.

00:03:15:00 --:--:--:--
We can start there.

00:03:16:25 --:--:--:--
Look, he's not paying the rent.

00:03:18:23 --:--:--:--
What do we have to lose?

00:03:20:27 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Okay.

00:03:22:09 --:--:--:--
Tomorrow first thing,
I'll stop by the brownstone

00:03:24:13 --:--:--:--
and ask him for the rent
in person.

00:03:26:00 --:--:--:--
If that doesn't work,

00:03:27:11 --:--:--:--
then I'll stop
by the stationery store, okay?

00:03:29:25 --:--:--:--
Look, all I really want
is the rent.

00:03:32:23 --:--:--:--
I don't want
to get tied up in court.

00:03:34:05 00:03:35:06
(woman)
I know.

00:03:57:26 00:03:59:19
(man)
Hi. How are you?

00:04:10:02 00:04:13:02
[classical music
playing quietly]

00:04:15:26 00:04:18:26
[knocking]

00:04:22:14 --:--:--:--
[knocking]

00:04:24:27 --:--:--:--

(Mason)
Yes? Who's there?

00:04:26:26 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
It's me, Tom Porter,
the landlord.

00:04:29:20 --:--:--:--
(Mason)
Mr. Porter, how are you?

00:04:31:16 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
I've been trying to contact you
all month, Mr. Mason.

00:04:34:04 --:--:--:--
(Mason)
Yeah, I got your message.

00:04:36:05 --:--:--:--
Listen, I know I've been
a little behind

00:04:37:25 --:--:--:--
on my bills lately,

00:04:39:00 --:--:--:--
but I will pay you
what I owe soon.

00:04:40:29 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Soon?

00:04:42:02 --:--:--:--
Today November's rent is due,

00:04:43:09 --:--:--:--
and I still haven't received

00:04:44:18 --:--:--:--
September's or October's
rent yet.

00:04:46:09 --:--:--:--
(Mason)
Wait--wait a minute.

00:04:47:18 --:--:--:--
You're saying I owe you
three months' rent?

00:04:49:10 --:--:--:--
I don't think

it can be that much.

00:04:50:20 --:--:--:--
Are you sure?

00:04:52:02 --:--:--:--
Let me look in my checkbook.

00:04:53:19 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Look all you want later.

00:04:55:02 --:--:--:--
Believe me, you owe me
two months' back rent

00:04:57:07 --:--:--:--
plus this month's rent.

00:04:58:21 --:--:--:--
(Mason)
All right, well, look.

00:05:00:16 --:--:--:--
I appreciate the time
you've given me.

00:05:02:13 --:--:--:--
If you can give me
just a little more,

00:05:04:10 --:--:--:--
I will pay you
all that I owe.

00:05:06:20 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Mr. Mason, I'm asking you
for September's, October's,

00:05:09:29 --:--:--:--
and November's rent,
which totals \$1,500.

00:05:12:28 --:--:--:--
If not, in three days,

00:05:14:20 --:--:--:--
I'm bringing an eviction
proceeding against you in court.

00:05:17:21 --:--:--:--
(Mason)
All right, but look.

00:05:19:24 --:--:--:--

With just a little more time,
I'm sure we can fix this

00:05:23:04 --:--:--:--
without having to resort
to courts.

00:05:25:24 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Well, you'll have
the three days.

00:05:28:15 --:--:--:--
Look, I understand that you
have bills, but I'm sorry.

00:05:32:00 00:05:33:01
So do I.

00:05:45:19 --:--:--:--
(narrator)
Mr. Porter is picking up

00:05:47:08 00:05:50:16
the notice of petition
and petition forms.

00:05:58:21 --:--:--:--
[Tom thinking]
I guess I'm the petitioner.

00:06:00:18 --:--:--:--
Yeah, I must be.

00:06:02:03 --:--:--:--
It says, "The petitioner,
who is the landlord,"

00:06:04:13 --:--:--:--
and that's me.

00:06:07:05 --:--:--:--
"This space
is for the tenant's name,

00:06:08:26 --:--:--:--
who is also called
the respondent."

00:06:13:07 --:--:--:--
And here I fill in
the apartment's address

00:06:15:23 --:--:--:--
and on this line
the amount of monthly rent.

00:06:20:23 --:--:--:--
(woman)
So how's it going, hon?

00:06:22:27 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
I don't know.

00:06:24:19 --:--:--:--
On this form,

00:06:26:08 --:--:--:--
I think I'm supposed to list
just the rent,

00:06:28:27 --:--:--:--
and on this form, I have to list
the rent he owes in arrears

00:06:32:02 --:--:--:--
broken down month by month.

00:06:34:09 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Okay, so it looks
like you've done all that.

00:06:36:18 --:--:--:--
What's the problem?

00:06:38:28 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
It says I have to attach
the written demand

00:06:41:14 --:--:--:--
for the rent arrears
to the petition.

00:06:43:24 --:--:--:--
I didn't demand the rent
in writing.

00:06:46:22 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Relax.

00:06:47:29 --:--:--:--
Why don't I go get the lease,

00:06:49:16 --:--:--:--
and we can see
what's what, okay?

00:06:51:22 --:--:--:--

(Tom)
I'm telling you,
I can't do this by myself.

00:06:58:10 --:--:--:--
(Samantha)
Dad, the clerk
at housing court told me

00:07:01:22 --:--:--:--
that anybody
can go down to the court,

00:07:03:15 --:--:--:--
and a court employee
will help you.

00:07:05:04 --:--:--:--
She said these court employees
are called pro se attorneys,

00:07:07:23 --:--:--:--
and they give legal information.

00:07:10:10 --:~:~:~:~
(Tom)
I can't believe
the court's going to help me,

00:07:12:11 --:~:~:~:~
a "property owner."

00:07:13:17 --:~:~:~:~
(Samantha)
Pop, it's true.

00:07:15:01 --:~:~:~:~
There are pro se attorneys there

00:07:16:15 --:~:~:~:~
who can help you figure out
how to file these things

00:07:18:28 --:~:~:~:~
and do all the stuff
you got to do

00:07:20:17 --:~:~:~:~
to get before a judge
by yourself.

00:07:22:25 --:~:~:~:~
(Tom)
Well, Mr. Mason
has a couple of more days

00:07:24:18 --:--:--:--
to come up with the rent,

00:07:25:28 --:--:--:--
and maybe he will,
and that'll be the end of it.

00:07:27:22 --:--:--:--
If not, I'll go over
to the court, see what's what,

00:07:30:14 --:--:--:--
and file these petitions, okay?

00:07:34:01 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Lease.

00:07:35:04 00:07:36:18
(Tom)
Oh, the lease?
Thank you.

00:07:39:01 --:--:--:--
Excuse me.

00:07:40:10 --:--:--:--
Do you know where
the pro se attorney's office is?

00:07:42:10 --:--:--:--
(man)
Yes, sir.
First door on your right.

00:07:44:00 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Thank you.

00:07:45:00 --:--:--:--
(man)
You're welcome.

00:07:46:00 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Excuse me.
Are you the pro se attorney?

00:07:48:08 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Yes. How can I help you?

00:07:54:04 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
I have these forms.

00:07:55:12 --:--:--:--
I wanted to know
if I filled them out correctly.

00:07:57:25 --:--:--:--
It's to start
a nonpayment proceeding

00:08:00:20 --:--:--:--
against one of my tenants.

00:08:02:06 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Okay.

00:08:05:28 --:--:--:--
Oh, yeah.

00:08:08:14 --:--:--:--
So I see the notice of petition
and the petition,

00:08:12:17 --:--:--:--
and you're Mr.--

00:08:13:25 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Porter, Thomas Porter.

00:08:15:08 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Mr. Abramowitz.
Nice to meet you.

00:08:17:27 --:--:--:--
Okay, is the name on the deed

00:08:19:28 --:--:--:--
the same as the one listed here
as the petitioner?

00:08:22:19 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Yes.

00:08:23:19 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Okay, you'll want
to bring the deed with you

00:08:25:28 --:--:--:--
when you come to court.

00:08:28:05 --:--:--:--
Now, I see you've broken down
the rent on both pages,

00:08:32:19 --:--:--:--
and you've listed
the rent arrears monthly

00:08:37:00 --:--:--:--
for all the months
that are owed,

00:08:38:09 --:--:--:--
so that looks good.

00:08:40:21 --:--:--:--
Now, the tenant listed here
actually lives in the apartment.

00:08:45:21 --:--:--:--
Isn't that right?

00:08:46:21 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Yes. Why do you ask that?

00:08:48:23 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Well, it's a little
more complicated

00:08:50:25 --:--:--:--
if it was a sublet
or some other arrangement.

00:08:54:17 --:--:--:--
Now, I see that the apartment
is in Brooklyn.

00:08:56:23 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Yes.

00:08:57:27 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
And you're bringing the case
in the right court,

00:09:00:14 --:--:--:--
because the law
requires you to sue

00:09:02:15 --:--:--:--
in the county in which
the property's located.

00:09:04:17 --:--:--:--
So that's good.

00:09:05:22 --:--:--:--

(Tom)

I have a copy
of the lease with me.

00:09:08:02 --:--:--:--

I checked it.

00:09:09:02 --:--:--:--

It doesn't say anything

00:09:10:07 --:--:--:--

about me having to demand
the rent arrears in writing,

00:09:14:01 --:--:--:--

but I want to be sure.

00:09:16:01 --:--:--:--

(Abramowitz)

Well, your petition says
that you served--

00:09:19:15 --:--:--:--

You demanded the rent from him
orally three days ago.

00:09:22:22 --:--:--:--

Is that right?

00:09:24:00 --:--:--:--

(Tom)

That's right.

00:09:25:08 --:--:--:--

(Abramowitz)

If the lease required you
to do it in writing,

00:09:28:11 --:~:~:~:~:~

it's a little harder,

00:09:29:20 --:~:~:~:~:~

because if you don't
write it exactly so

00:09:32:00 --:~:~:~:~:~

and if you don't serve it
exactly the right way,

00:09:34:03 --:~:~:~:~:~

the court could throw it out,
but you don't have to worry.

00:09:39:05 --:~:~:~:~:~

(Tom)

How about after I file

00:09:41:19 --:--:--:--
the notice of petition
and petition?

00:09:43:27 --:--:--:--
I'm wondering about
serving him properly.

00:09:46:20 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Well, the law says
that the tenant must be served

00:09:50:10 --:--:--:--
with these papers either by
a licensed process server

00:09:54:16 --:--:--:--
or someone other than yourself

00:09:56:00 --:--:--:--
who hasn't served five process
in the last year.

00:10:00:07 --:--:--:--
Here.

00:10:01:22 00:10:04:15
Here's an information sheet
that explains about service.

00:10:06:19 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Well, that's simple.

00:10:08:08 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Now, I noticed
that the apartment building

00:10:10:27 --:--:--:--
has three or more units.

00:10:12:26 --:~:~:~:~:~
Do you have a managing agent,
registered agent?

00:10:17:02 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Tom)
Yes, I do.
I use Mrs. Secord.

00:10:22:10 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Abramowitz)

You must have a managing agent
with a New York City address,

00:10:25:07 --:--:--:--
and you must put her address
down here.

00:10:28:04 --:--:--:--
If your rental property
has three or more units in it,

00:10:30:26 --:--:--:--
you'll also need

00:10:32:04 --:--:--:--
a certified multiple dwelling
registration form.

00:10:35:17 --:--:--:--
Do you have that form?

00:10:37:11 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
My wife gave me all the forms
she thought I needed

00:10:40:26 --:--:--:--
to file the petition.

00:10:44:23 --:--:--:--
Is this it?

00:10:45:23 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Yes, this is a certified copy.

00:10:49:17 --:--:--:--
Keep the certified copy,

00:10:51:16 --:--:--:--
and bring it with you
on your court date.

00:10:53:22 --:--:--:--
Incidentally, you'll need
to file two copies

00:10:56:11 --:--:--:--
of the notice of petition
and petition

00:10:57:27 --:--:--:--
with the court clerk,

00:10:59:09 --:--:--:--
so make sure you make enough

copies for everybody, okay?

00:11:01:27 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Yeah.

00:11:03:08 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
I also suggest to landlords

00:11:05:00 --:--:--:--
that they check to see whether
their property is covered

00:11:07:26 --:--:--:--
by rent stabilization
or rent control.

00:11:10:16 --:--:--:--
Have you checked to see whether
it's covered by either one?

00:11:12:29 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
The apartment is neither.

00:11:14:08 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Okay. That's good.

00:11:15:20 --:--:--:--
Then since your apartment
is not subject

00:11:17:29 --:--:--:--
to rent control
or stabilization guidelines,

00:11:21:06 --:--:--:--
it makes this process
a whole lot easier.

00:11:24:08 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
I finished putting in

00:11:25:16 --:~:~:~:~:~
the managing agent's
information.

00:11:28:20 --:~:~:~:~:~
Am I ready to file?

00:11:30:06 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Abramowitz)
Yes, I think you've got

everything here.

00:11:32:12 --:--:--:--
By the way, besides your deed,
the lease,

00:11:35:12 --:--:--:--
the multiple dwelling
registration form,

00:11:37:22 --:--:--:--
don't forget to bring
your rent records with you

00:11:39:19 --:--:--:--
when you come to court.

00:11:40:27 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Okay.

00:11:43:15 --:--:--:--
Do you think I'll be able
to do this on my own?

00:11:46:00 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
You have everything
you need to proceed.

00:11:48:06 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
What will happen next?

00:11:50:21 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Well, after the tenant is served
with the court papers,

00:11:54:01 --:--:--:--
he has five days to answer
to the clerk.

00:11:57:10 --:--:--:--
Then the court will let you know
the date, the time,

00:12:00:16 --:--:--:--
and the courtroom that you need
to come to court.

00:12:03:08 --:--:--:--
At that point, you'll be in
what's called a resolution part.

00:12:07:00 --:--:--:--

(Tom)
What is a resolution part?

00:12:08:20 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
It's a part of the court
where you and the tenant

00:12:11:07 --:--:--:--
can sit down and try
to work out the problem

00:12:14:01 --:--:--:--
and resolve the case.

00:12:15:09 --:~:~:~:~:
(Tom)
What do you mean?

00:12:17:13 --:~:~:~:~:
(Abramowitz)
Well, there's an attorney
that works for the court

00:12:21:07 --:~:~:~:~:
that works for the judge

00:12:22:17 --:~:~:~:~:
that would sit down
with both of you

00:12:24:13 --:~:~:~:~:
and try to work out
some sort of agreement.

00:12:26:29 --:~:~:~:~:
The court attorney will even try
to write up the agreement

00:12:29:18 --:~:~:~:~:
in what we call a stipulation.

00:12:32:03 --:~:~:~:~:
Then the judge
will look over the agreement,

00:12:34:08 --:~:~:~:~:
make sure both of you
understand it

00:12:36:11 --:~:~:~:~:
and can and will
live up to it.

00:12:38:21 --:~:~:~:~:
(Tom)

Oh, you mean like agreeing
to a payment plan

00:12:41:23 --:--:--:--
or something like that.

00:12:43:07 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Yes, if that's something
you can live with.

00:12:45:17 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
And if we can't settle it
in the resolution part?

00:12:49:13 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Then the judge
would set it out for trial

00:12:52:04 --:--:--:--
either that day
or at a later date,

00:12:54:10 --:--:--:--
and you and the tenant would
have to come back to court.

00:12:57:08 --:--:--:--
At that point, you'd be
in what's called a trial part.

00:12:59:29 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
And if he doesn't even answer
the petition in the first place?

00:13:03:28 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Well, there's always
a default judgment.

00:13:07:12 --:--:--:--
If he fails to come
to any of the proceedings

00:13:10:09 --:--:--:--
and if you hadn't received
the rent from him

00:13:12:16 --:--:--:--
since the time you first
served him with the demand,

00:13:15:24 --:--:--:--

then you can ask
the city marshal to evict him.

00:13:19:14 --:--:--:--
Now, it sounds like you hope
that he will pay his rent

00:13:21:18 --:--:--:--
and you won't have to evict him,

00:13:23:17 --:--:--:--
so if it comes to that point,

00:13:25:13 --:--:--:--
why don't you come back to me
for more assistance then?

00:13:28:06 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
He had trouble paying
earlier this year.

00:13:30:24 --:--:--:--
However, he did catch up,

00:13:33:04 --:--:--:--
but we waited until the middle
of the summer to get paid.

00:13:36:07 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
So this year is the first time
he fell behind.

00:13:38:21 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Yes, I don't know what
the problem is with Mr. Mason.

00:13:42:00 --:--:--:--
He used to be good
at paying his rent.

00:13:43:25 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Hmm.

00:13:45:01 --:~:~:~:~
Well, he may be having
some financial problems.

00:13:46:28 --:~:~:~:~
You should know that there are
some government programs

00:13:49:12 --:~:~:~:~

that might pay the back rent
for some tenants

00:13:52:15 --:--:--:--
under some emergency conditions.

00:13:55:15 --:--:--:--
Your tenant can come and ask
the court attorney about that

00:13:57:24 --:--:--:--
when he comes to court.

00:13:59:13 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Maybe you're right.

00:14:00:23 --:--:--:--
Although I know
he had a good job.

00:14:02:20 --:--:--:--
At least he said he worked
as a rep for a good company.

00:14:07:12 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
Well, anyway,
I wanted you to know

00:14:09:10 --:--:--:--
that there might be
such a program available

00:14:11:17 --:--:--:--
just in case.

00:14:13:17 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Okay.

00:14:14:17 --:--:--:--
Thank you,
Mr. Abramowitz.

00:14:15:21 --:--:--:--
(Abramowitz)
A pleasure.

00:14:16:28 --:--:--:--
Don't forget
you need to file

00:14:18:05 --:--:--:--
the notice of petition
and petition

00:14:19:24 --:--:--:--
with the landlord-tenant clerk
and pay the filing fee.

00:14:22:11 00:14:23:24
(Tom)
Okay. Thanks again.

00:14:25:09 --:--:--:--
Excuse me.

00:14:26:09 --:--:--:--
Is this where I purchase
an index number?

00:14:27:29 00:14:30:03
(man)
Yes, it is, sir.

00:14:32:16 --:--:--:--
(man)
Excuse me, sir.
Excuse me.

00:14:33:26 --:~:~:~:~:~
Are you Joe Mason?

00:14:34:29 --:~:~:~:~:~
This is for you.

00:14:36:23 00:14:41:09
(narrator)
Mr. Mason is now being served
by Mr. Porter's process server.

00:14:43:06 --:~:~:~:~:~
Mr. Porter is picking up
the card sent by the court

00:14:47:09 --:~:~:~:~:~
advising him
of the date and time

00:14:49:19 00:14:51:05
of his court appearance.

00:15:17:03 --:~:~:~:~:~
(man)
Parties for Porter versus Mason,
please step up.

00:15:22:01 --:~:~:~:~:~
(narrator)
The clerk is sending Mr. Porter
and Mr. Mason

00:15:25:03 --:--:--:--
with the court attorney
to conference the case.

00:15:29:20 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Gentlemen, I would like to know
a little more about this case.

00:15:33:03 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
It's simple.

00:15:34:03 --:--:--:--
He owes three months' back rent:

00:15:35:26 --:--:--:--
September's, October's,
and November's

00:15:38:01 --:--:--:--
at \$500 per month.

00:15:39:25 --:--:--:--
(Mason)
See, I thought I had paid
part of September's,

00:15:42:02 --:--:--:--
but I can't find a receipt,
so I guess I do owe it,

00:15:44:29 --:~:~:~:~:~
and I am willing
to pay what I owe.

00:15:48:11 --:~:~:~:~:~
(woman)
Can we work out a payment plan?

00:15:50:20 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Tom)
Sure, as long as it's
a reasonable amount of time.

00:15:53:22 --:~:~:~:~:~
(narrator)
The parties have come
to an agreement,

00:15:56:01 --:~:~:~:~:~
and the judge will now review
this agreement.

00:15:58:27 --:~:~:~:~:~

(judge)
Mr. Porter and Mr. Mason,

00:16:02:02 --:--:--:--
I understand that after working
with my court attorney

00:16:04:17 --:--:--:--
that the two of you
have reached an agreement.

00:16:07:16 --:--:--:--
The court will now review
the agreement

00:16:09:28 --:--:--:--
to make sure that each of you
understands it

00:16:12:10 --:--:--:--
and that each of you
still agrees to it,

00:16:15:04 00:16:18:25
and if that is so,
the court will then so order it.

00:16:24:28 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Hi, guys.

00:16:26:10 --:--:--:--
(woman)
Hey, hon.

00:16:27:14 --:--:--:--
How'd it go in court today?

00:16:28:28 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Samantha)
Yeah, Pop.

00:16:30:04 --:~:~:~:~:~
Are we going to get our rent
from Mr. Mason?

00:16:32:16 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Tom)
It appears to be all resolved.

00:16:34:16 --:~:~:~:~:~
(woman)
You mean he paid all the money?

00:16:36:07 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Tom)

No, not exactly.

00:16:37:12 --:--:--:--
In fact, he claimed he only owed
half the rent for September.

00:16:40:27 --:--:--:--
(woman)
But you did bring
the rent receipts

00:16:42:20 --:--:--:--
to prove otherwise, didn't you?

00:16:44:06 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
Oh, absolutely.

00:16:45:09 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Samantha)
So what are you going to do,
evict him?

00:16:47:09 --:~:~:~:~:~
(Tom)
No, Samantha,
I won't have to,

00:16:48:23 --:~:~:~:~:~
not if he lives up
to this stipulation.

00:16:51:02 --:~:~:~:~:~
That's what this agreement
we signed in court is called.

00:16:53:24 --:~:~:~:~:~
It's signed by me, Mr. Mason,
and the judge,

00:16:56:27 --:~:~:~:~:~
and it says
that he agrees he owes

00:16:58:16 --:~:~:~:~:~
all of September's, October's,
and November's rent

00:17:01:12 --:~:~:~:~:~
and will pay \$1,000 by tomorrow,

00:17:03:14 --:~:~:~:~:~
\$250 by December 15th,

00:17:05:28 --:~:~:~:~:~
and the balance

by January 15th.

00:17:08:22 --:--:--:--
(woman)
And he can afford
to pay all that?

00:17:10:22 --:--:--:--
(Tom)
That's what he told the judge,

00:17:12:08 --:--:--:--
and the judge warned him that
if he didn't make the payments,

00:17:14:22 --:--:--:--
he risked being evicted.

00:17:16:17 --:~:~:~:~:
(woman)
So it sounds like
it all worked out.

00:17:19:07 --:~:~:~:~:
(Tom)
Thanks to the court

00:17:20:12 --:~:~:~:~:
and my lovely
and supportive wife

00:17:23:19 00:17:26:07
and one very, very smart
daughter.

00:18:57:18 --:~:~:~:~:
(narrator)
Free information
on written demands,

00:19:00:06 --:~:~:~:~:
the service of demands,

00:19:01:27 --:~:~:~:~:
and other valuable information

00:19:04:02 --:~:~:~:~:
can be found
at the public resource centers

00:19:06:20 00:19:08:23
which are located
in each housing court.

00:19:11:10 --:~:~:~:~:
(Kaye)

Hello, I'm Judith Kaye,

00:19:14:20 --:--:--:--
chief judge
of the state of New York.

00:19:18:16 --:--:--:--
Housing courts
throughout the city of New York

00:19:21:15 --:--:--:--
hear and resolve a number
of different kinds of disputes

00:19:26:05 --:--:--:--
between landlords and tenants,

00:19:28:20 --:--:--:--
including nonpayment of rent,
illegal evictions,

00:19:33:17 --:~:~:~:~
holdover proceedings,
and housing code violations.

00:19:38:29 --:~:~:~:~
As you've seen in this video,
when a tenant doesn't pay rent,

00:19:44:08 --:~:~:~:~
a landlord may
experience difficulty

00:19:47:07 --:~:~:~:~
maintaining a building.

00:19:49:11 --:~:~:~:~
The collection of rent
can be essential,

00:19:52:24 --:~:~:~:~
especially
for a small-property owner.

00:19:56:13 --:~:~:~:~
The goal of the housing court
is to make sure

00:20:00:06 --:~:~:~:~
that the laws governing disputes
over the payment of rent

00:20:04:05 --:~:~:~:~
are enforced fairly,
efficiently,

00:20:08:22 --:--:--:--
and effectively for everyone.

00:20:12:21 --:--:--:--
Many litigants in housing court
don't have lawyers.

00:20:17:08 --:--:--:--
To help these litigants become
familiar with their rights

00:20:21:15 --:--:--:--
and the procedures
they must follow

00:20:23:29 --:--:--:--
to enforce these rights,

00:20:26:13 --:--:--:--
the housing courts have recently
set up resource centers.

00:20:31:23 --:--:--:--
These centers offer
written materials,

00:20:34:26 --:--:--:--
informational videos,
and housing court counselors

00:20:38:25 --:--:--:--
who can answer basic questions
for both landlords and tenants.

00:20:44:29 --:--:--:--
All of these services,
of course,

00:20:47:13 --:--:--:--
are without charge.

00:20:50:19 --:--:--:--
The housing court
plays a vital role

00:20:53:28 --:--:--:--
in maintaining
the quality of life

00:20:57:00 --:--:--:--
in so many New York City
neighborhoods.

00:21:01:01 --:--:--:--
As the chief judge,
I am committed to assuring

00:21:05:23 00:21:11:15
that this important court
works well for all New Yorkers.