



March 9, 2020

# MARCH HOUSING LAW UPDATES

## Volunteer Lawyers Network Housing Newsletter

### In this issue:

- ◆ Annual Housing Law Seminar: March 26
- ◆ VLN Housing Volunteer of the Year Award Nomination Process
- ◆ Practice Tip: Costs
- ◆ Proposed Tenant Protections Ordinance
- ◆ Free Legal Services contributes to drop in Evictions Statewide
- ◆ Housing Committee Recruitment
- ◆ VLN Staff Updates
- ◆ Volunteer Opportunities and CLEs: March 2020

### Annual Housing Law Seminar

Check out our website for a detailed schedule of events for our **Annual Housing Law Seminar** on **March 26, 2020!** It's going to be a day full of housing law training featuring some of Minnesota's top housing law attorneys. Don't miss it! Registration and schedule are available here: [vlnmn.org/events](http://vlnmn.org/events)

### VLN's Outstanding Housing Attorney and Law Firm/Corporation Award

We see the amazing work our volunteers do every day, and we know you do too. Please take a moment to nominate a volunteer you've seen go the extra mile, take on a tough case, or obtain a particularly meaningful result for a client. One award will be given to an outstanding individual volunteer and one award will be given to an law firm/corporation. The awards will be presented over the noon hour at the Annual Housing Law Seminar.

The application is available here: <https://www.vlnmn.org/volunteer/housing>.

**Nominations are due by noon on Friday, March 13.**

### Practice Tip : Costs

In *HNA Properties v. Moore*, 848 N.W.2d 238 (Minn. App. 2014), the Minnesota Court of Appeals held that a tenant in an eviction action that is dismissed based upon a procedural error is entitled to recover \$200 in costs. However, a dismissal also permits an immediate expungement of the case records by the court pursuant to the expungement statute or the court's inherent authority.

For discussion and a practice tip on statutory costs and expungement, check out our full practice tip on our website, [vlnmn.org/volunteers/housing](http://vlnmn.org/volunteers/housing).

### Tenant Protections Ordinance Proposed in St. Paul

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter and City Council Member Mitra Jalali have proposed a set of five tenant protection ordinances called the S.A.F.E. Housing Protections Ordinance. The proposed five ordinances include: security deposit limitations, tenant screening guidelines, just cause notice, advance notice of sale and a tenants rights and responsibilities information policy. The ordinance will be presented to St. Paul City Council for its first reading on March 11. For more information, see: <https://www.stpaul.gov/news/mayor-melvin-carter-and-councilmember-mitra-jalali-announce-safe-housing-tenant-protections>

### Free legal services plays a role in decreasing eviction rate:

A recent article in the Star Tribune notes that evictions have gone down 33% in Minnesota over the past 10 years, due to the end of the foreclosure crisis and increased community resources and legal advocacy. Hennepin and Ramsey counties account for nearly a third of the eviction judgments in Minnesota, and the article specifically mentions the work being done at the Hennepin and Ramsey County Housing Court Projects. According to the article, "the counties saw 22% and 39% decreases [in eviction judgements] respectively over a decade." Read the full article here: <http://www.startribune.com/minnesota-eviction-numbers-see-dramatic-decline-in-past-decade/567930562/?refresh=true>

## A Fond Farewell..

In the past month, we've said goodbye to 2 of our staff members on the housing team as they move on to new opportunities. Their drive, passion for justice, and compassion for our clients made both Shawn and Ann excellent people to work with. They will be missed!



**Shawn** has accepted a position with the Hennepin County Libraries after serving as our Housing Court Clinic Coordinator for the past year. Shawn had previously worked with the library and is excited to be returning. We will miss Shawn's calm, steady presence at our housing court clinics and his caring and thoughtful way of working clients and volunteers.



**Ann** has taken a position with Standpoint, a nonprofit that promotes justice for domestic and sexual violence victims. At VLN, Ann was responsible for the Ramsey Housing Court Clinic, our Eviction Expungement Clinics and supporting our housing program in countless other ways. We will miss her humor, her ability to connect with clients and her dedication to providing high-quality services to our clients.

## ...And a Warm Welcome

**Becky** is a current volunteer attorney at our Hennepin County Housing Court project. Prior to this position, she worked as an Emergency Rental Assistance coordinator with Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH), an Assistant Public Defender in Douglas County, Nebraska and as a law clerk for both the District and Supreme Courts of Nebraska. At VLN, Becky will be primarily responsible for managing the newly launched Anoka County Housing Court Clinic. We are looking forward to having her passion and expertise as part of our Housing team at VLN!

In



## March 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5	6
9	10 <b>Anoka County Housing Court Training (2 cred)</b>  <b>Volunteer Needed:</b> Hennepin County Housing Court 8:30—12:00	11	12 <b>Volunteer Needed:</b> Ramsey County Housing Court 8—11am  Hennepin County Housing Court 12:30—4:00	13
16	17	18 <b>Volunteer Needed:</b> Anoka County Housing Court 8:30—10:30	19	20
23 <b>Volunteer Needed:</b> Eviction Representation Project (Hennepin)	24		26 <b>Annual Housing Law Seminar (4.75 cred)</b>	27
30 <b>Volunteer Needed:</b> Eviction Representation Project (Hennepin)	31 <b>Volunteer Needed:</b> Hennepin County Housing Court 12:30—4:00			

To volunteer for any of the volunteer opportunities listed, contact Kait at [kait.ripley@vlmn.org](mailto:kait.ripley@vlmn.org)

To register for a training, visit our website at [vlmn.org/events](http://vlmn.org/events)