CHAPTER 566

FORCIBLE ENTRY AND UNLAWFUL DETAINER

566.02 UNLAWFUL DETENTION OF LANDS OR TENEMENTS SUBJECT TO FINE.

When any person has made unlawful or forcible entry into lands or tenements, and detains the same, or, having peaceably entered, unlawfully detains the same, the person entitled to the premises may recover possession thereof in the manner hereinafter provided. A seizure under section 609.5317, subdivision 1, for which there is not a defense under section 609.5317, subdivision 3, constitutes unlawful detention by the tenant.

History: *1989 c 305 s 2*

566.021 NOTICE OF SEIZURE PROVISION.

Landlords shall give written notice to tenants of the provision relating to seizures in section 566.02. Failure to give such notice does not subject the landlord to criminal or civil liability and is not a defense under section 609.5317, subdivision 3.

History: *1989 c 305 s 3*

566.17 EXECUTION OF THE WRIT OF RESTITUTION.

Subdivision 1. **General.** The officer holding the writ of restitution shall execute the same by making a demand upon defendant if found in the county or any adult member of the defendant's family holding possession of the premises, or other person in charge thereof, for the possession of the same, and that the defendant leave, taking family and all personal property from such premises within 24 hours after such demand. If defendant fails to comply with the demand, then the officer shall bring, if necessary, the force of the county and whatever assistance may be necessary, at the cost of the complainant, remove the said defendant, family and all personal property from said premises detained, immediately and place the plaintiff in the possession thereof. In case defendant cannot be found in the county, and there is no person in charge of the premises detained, so that no demand can be made upon the defendant, then the officer shall enter into the possession of the premises, breaking in if necessary, and the property of the defendant shall be removed and stored at a place designated by the plaintiff as provided under subdivision 2.

Subd. 2. **Removal and storage of property.** (a) In cases where the defendant's personal property is to be stored in a place other than the premises, the officer shall remove all property of the defendant at the expense of the plaintiff.

The plaintiff shall have a lien upon all of the goods upon the premises for the reasonable costs and expenses incurred for removing the personal property and for the proper caring and storing the same, and the costs of transportation of the same to some suitable place of storage, in case defendant shall fail or refuse to make immediate payment for all the expenses of such removal from the premises and plaintiff shall have the right to enforce such lien by detaining the same until paid, and, in case of nonpayment for 60 days after the execution of the writ, shall have the right to enforce the lien and foreclose the same by public sale as provided for in case of sales under sections 514.18 to 514.22.

(b) In cases where the defendant's property is to be stored on the premises, the

officer shall enter the premises, breaking in if necessary, and the plaintiff may remove the defendant's personal property. The provisions of section 504.24 apply to property removed under this paragraph. The plaintiff must prepare an inventory and mail a copy of the inventory to the defendant's last known address or, if the defendant has provided a different address, to the address provided by the defendant. The inventory must be prepared, signed, and dated in the presence of the peace officer. The inventory must include the following:

(1) a listing of the items of personal property and a description of the condition of the property;

(2) the date, the signature of the plaintiff or the plaintiff's agent, and the name and telephone number of a person authorized to release the personal property; and

(3) the name and badge number of the peace officer.

The peace officer shall retain a copy of the inventory. The plaintiff is responsible for the proper removal, storage, and care of the defendant's personal property and is liable for damages for loss of or injury to the defendant's personal property caused by the plaintiff's failure to exercise care in regard to it as a reasonably careful person would exercise under like circumstances.

The plaintiff shall notify the defendant of the date and approximate time the officer is scheduled to remove the defendant, family, and the defendant's personal property from the premises. The notice must be sent by first-class mail. In addition, the plaintiff must make a good faith effort to notify the defendant by telephone. The notice must be mailed as soon as the information regarding the date and approximate time the officer is scheduled to enforce the writ is known to the plaintiff, except that the scheduling of the peace officer to enforce the writ need not be delayed because of the notice requirement. The notice must inform the defendant that the defendant and the defendant's property will be removed from the premises if the defendant has not vacated the premises by the time specified in the notice.

Subd. 3. **Penalty; waiver prohibited.** Unless the premises have been abandoned, a plaintiff, agent, or other person acting under the plaintiff's direction or control who enters the premises and removes the defendant's property in violation of this section is guilty of wrongful ouster under section 504.255 and is subject to penalty under section 504.25. The provisions of this section may not be waived or modified by any oral or written lease or other agreement.

History: *1989 c 328 art 2 s 7*

566.175 UNLAWFUL REMOVAL OR EXCLUSION; RECOVERY OF POSSESSION.

Subdivision 1. **Unlawful exclusion or removal.** For purposes of this section, "unlawfully removed or excluded" means actual or constructive removal or exclusion. Actual or constructive removal or exclusion may include the termination of utilities, or the removal of doors, windows, or locks. Any tenant who is unlawfully removed or excluded from lands or tenements which are demised or let to the tenant may recover possession of the premises in the following manner:

(a) The tenant shall present a verified petition to the county or municipal court of the county in which the premises are located, which petition shall:

(1) describe the premises of which possession is claimed and the owner, as defined in section 566.18, subdivision 3, of the premises;

(2) specifically state the facts and grounds that demonstrate that the removal or exclusion was unlawful including a statement that no judgment and writ of restitution have been issued under section 566.09 in favor of the owner and against petitioner as to the premises and executed in accordance with section 566.17; and

(3) ask for possession thereof.

(b) If it clearly appears from the specific grounds and facts stated in the verified petition or by separate affidavit of petitioner or the petitioner's counsel or agent that

the removal or exclusion was unlawful, the court shall immediately order that petitioner have possession of the premises.

(c) The petitioner shall furnish monetary or other security if any as the court deems appropriate under the circumstances for payment of all costs and damages the defendant may sustain if the order is subsequently found to have been obtained wrongfully. In determining the appropriateness of any security the court shall consider petitioner's ability to afford monetary security.

(d) The court shall direct the order to the sheriff or any constable of the county in which the premises is located and the sheriff or constable shall execute the order immediately by making a demand upon the defendant, if found, or the defendant's agent or other person in charge of the premises, for possession of the premises. If the defendant fails to comply with the demand, the officer shall take whatever assistance may be necessary and immediately place the petitioner in possession of the premises. If the defendant or the defendant's agent or other person in control of the premises cannot be found and if there is no person in charge of the premises detained so that no demand can be made, the officer shall immediately enter into possession of the premises and place the petitioner in possession of the premises. The officer shall also serve the order and verified petition or affidavit without delay upon the defendant or agent, in the same manner as a summons is required to be served in a civil action in district court.

[For text of subds 2 to 6, see M.S.1988]

History: *1989 c 328 art 2 s 8*

566.205 EMERGENCY RELIEF PROCEEDING.

Subdivision 1. **Petition.** A person authorized to bring an action under section 566.20 may petition the court for relief in cases of emergency involving the loss of running water, hot water, heat, electricity, sanitary facilities, or other essential services or facilities that the owner is responsible for providing.

Subd. 2. **Venue.** The venue of the action is within the county where the building alleged to contain the emergency condition is located.

Subd. 3. **Petition information.** The petitioner shall present a verified petition to the district court that states the following:

(1) a description of the premises and the identity of the owner;

(2) a statement of the facts and grounds that demonstrate the existence of an emergency caused by the loss of essential services or facilities; and

(3) a request for relief.

Subd. 4. **Notice.** The petitioner shall attempt to notify the owner, at least 24 hours before application to the court, of the petitioner's intent to seek emergency relief. An order may be granted without notice to the owner on finding that reasonable efforts, as set forth in the petition or by separate affidavit, were made to notify the owner but that the efforts were unsuccessful.

Subd. 5. **Relief; service of order.** The court may order relief as provided in section 566.25. The petitioner shall serve the order on the owner personally or by mail as soon as practicable.

Subd. 6. **Limitation.** The tenant remedy under this section does not extend to emergencies which are the result of the deliberate or negligent act or omission of a tenant or anyone acting under the direction or control of the tenant.

Subd. 7. **Effect of other laws.** The requirements of section 566.19 do not apply to a petition for emergency relief under this section.

History: *1989 c 214 s 1*

566.29 ADMINISTRATOR.

Subdivision 1. **Administrator.** The administrator may be a person, local govern-

ment unit or agency, other than an owner of the building, the inspector, the complaining tenant or any person living in the complaining tenant's dwelling unit. If a state or court agency is authorized by statute, ordinance or regulation to provide persons to act as administrators under this section, the court may appoint such persons as administrators to the extent they are available.

[For text of subds 2 and 3, see M.S.1988]

Subd. 4. **Powers.** The administrator is authorized to:

(a) Collect rents from tenants and commercial tenants, evict tenants and commercial tenants for nonpayment of rent or other cause, rent vacant dwelling units on a month to month basis, rent vacant commercial units with the consent of the owner and exercise all other powers necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of Laws 1973, chapter 611;

(b) Contract for the reasonable cost of materials, labor and services necessary to remedy the violation or violations found by the court to exist and for the rehabilitation of the property in order to maintain safe and habitable conditions over the useful life of the property, and make disbursements for payment therefor from funds available for the purpose;

(c) Provide any services to the tenants which the owner is obligated to provide but refuses or fails to provide, and pay for them from funds available for the purpose;

(d) Petition the court, after notice to the parties, for an order allowing the administrator to encumber the premise to secure funds to the extent necessary to cover the cost of materials, labor, and services necessary to remedy the violation or violations found by the court to exist and for rehabilitation of the property in order to maintain safe and habitable conditions over the useful life of the property, and to pay for them from funds derived from the encumbrance; and

(e) Petition the court, after notice to the parties, for an order allowing the administrator to receive funds made available for this purpose by the municipality to the extent necessary to cover the cost of materials, labor, and services necessary to remedy the violation or violations found by the court to exist and for rehabilitation of the property in order to maintain safe and habitable conditions over the useful life of the property, and pay for them from funds derived from the municipal sources. The municipality shall recover disbursements by special assessment on the real estate affected, bearing interest at the rate determined by the municipality, not exceeding the rate established for finance charges for open-end credit sales under section 334.16, subdivision 1, clause (b), with the assessment, interest and any penalties to be collected the same as special assessments made for other purposes under state statute or municipal charter.

[For text of subd 5, see M.S.1988]

Subd. 6. **Building repairs and services.** The administrator must first contract and pay for building repairs and services necessary to keep the building habitable before other expenses may be paid. If sufficient funds are not available for paying other expenses, such as tax and mortgage payments, after paying for necessary repairs and services, the owner is responsible for the other expenses.

Subd. 7. **Administrator's liability.** The administrator may not be held personally liable in the performance of duties under this section except for misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance of office.

Subd. 8. **Dwelling's economic viability.** In considering whether to grant the administrator funds under subdivision 4, the court must consider factors relating to the long-term economic viability of the dwelling. The court's analysis must consider factors including the causes leading to the appointment of an administrator, the repairs necessary to bring the property into code compliance, the market value of the property, and whether present and future rents will be sufficient to cover the cost of repairs or rehabilitation.

History: *1989 c 328 art 2 s 9-13*

566.291 RECEIVERSHIP REVOLVING LOAN FUND.

The Minnesota housing finance agency may establish a revolving loan fund to pay the administrative expenses of receivership administrators under section 566.29 for properties for occupancy by low- and moderate-income persons or families. Property owners are responsible for repaying administrative expense payments made from the fund.

History: *1989 c 328 art 2 s 14*

566.34 ESCROW OF RENT TO REMEDY VIOLATIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** The definitions in section 566.18 apply to this section.

Subd. 2. **Escrow of rent.** If a violation exists in a building, a tenant may deposit the amount of rent due to the owner with the court administrator using the following procedure:

(a) For a violation of section 566.18, subdivision 6, clause (a), the tenant may deposit with the court administrator the rent due the owner along with a copy of the written notice of the code violation as provided in section 566.19, subdivision 2. The tenant may not deposit the rent or file the written notice of the code violation until the time granted to make repairs has expired without satisfactory repairs being made, unless the tenant alleges that the time granted is excessive.

(b) For a violation of section 566.18, subdivision 6, clause (b) or (c), the tenant must give written notice to the owner specifying the violation. The notice must be delivered personally or sent to the person or place where rent is normally paid. If the violation is not corrected within 14 days, the tenant may deposit the amount of rent due to the owner with the court administrator along with an affidavit specifying the violation. The court must provide a simplified form affidavit for use under this clause.

As long as proceedings are pending under this section, the tenant must pay rent to the owner or as directed by the court and may not withhold rent to remedy a violation.

Subd. 3. **Counterclaim for possession.** The owner may file a counterclaim for possession of the premises in cases where the owner alleges that the tenant did not deposit the full amount of rent with the court administrator. The court must set the date for a hearing on the counterclaim not less than seven nor more than 14 days from the day of filing the counterclaim. If the rent escrow hearing and the hearing on the counterclaim for possession cannot be heard on the same day, the matters must be consolidated and heard on the date scheduled for the hearing on the counterclaim. The contents of the counterclaim for possession must meet the requirements for a complaint in unlawful detainer under section 566.05. The owner must serve the counterclaim as provided in section 566.06, except that the affidavits of service or mailing may be brought to the hearing rather than filed with the court before the hearing. The court must provide a simplified form for use under this section.

Subd. 4. **Defenses.** The defenses provided in section 566.23 are defenses to an action brought under this section.

Subd. 5. **Filing fee.** The court administrator may charge a filing fee in the amount set for complaints and counterclaims in conciliation court, subject to the filing of an inability to pay affidavit.

Subd. 6. **Notice of hearing.** A hearing must be held within ten to 14 days of the day a tenant deposits rent with the court administrator. If the cost of remedying the violation, as estimated by the tenant, is within the jurisdictional limit for conciliation court, the court administrator shall notify the owner and the tenant of the time and place of the hearing by first class mail. The tenant must provide the court administrator with the owner's name and address. If the owner has disclosed a post office box as the owner's address under section 504.22, notice of the hearing may be mailed to the post office box. If the cost of remedying the violation, as estimated by the tenant, is above the jurisdictional limit for conciliation court, the tenant must serve the notice of hearing according to the Rules of Civil Procedure. The notice of hearing must specify

the amount the tenant has deposited with the court administrator, and must inform the owner that possession of the premises will not be in issue at the hearing unless the owner files a counterclaim for possession or an action under sections 566.01 to 566.17.

Subd. 7. **Hearing.** The hearing shall be conducted by a court without a jury. A certified copy of an inspection report meets the requirements of rule 803(8) of the Rules of Evidence as an exception to the rule against hearsay, and meets the requirements of rules 901 and 902 of the Rules of Evidence as to authentication.

Subd. 8. **Release of rent prior to hearing.** If the tenant gives written notice to the court administrator that the violation has been remedied, the court administrator must release the rent to the owner and, unless the hearing has been consolidated with another action, must cancel the hearing. If the tenant and the owner enter into a written agreement signed by both parties apportioning the rent between them, the court administrator must release the rent in accordance with the written agreement and cancel the hearing.

Subd. 9. **Consolidation with unlawful detainer.** Actions under this section and actions in unlawful detainer brought under sections 566.01 to 566.17 which involve the same parties must be consolidated and heard on the date scheduled for the unlawful detainer.

Subd. 10. **Judgment.** (a) Upon finding that a violation exists, the court may, in its discretion, do any or all of the following:

(1) order relief as provided in section 566.25, including retroactive rent abatement;

(2) order that all or a portion of the rent in escrow be released for the purpose of remedying the violation;

(3) order that rent be deposited with the court as it becomes due to the owner or abate future rent until the owner remedies the violation; or

(4) impose fines as required in section 566.35.

(b) When a proceeding under this section has been consolidated with a counterclaim for possession or an action in unlawful detainer under sections 566.01 to 566.17, and the owner prevails, the tenant may redeem the tenancy as provided in section 504.02.

(c) When a proceeding under this section has been consolidated with a counterclaim for possession or an action under an unlawful detainer under sections 566.01 to 566.17 on the grounds of nonpayment, the court may not require the tenant to pay the owner's filing fee as a condition of retaining possession of the premises when the tenant has deposited with the court the full amount of money found by the court to be owed to the owner.

Subd. 11. **Release of rent after hearing.** Upon finding, after a hearing on the matter has been held, that no violation exists in the building or that the tenant did not deposit the full amount of rent due with the court administrator, the court shall order the immediate release of the rent to the owner. Upon finding that a violation existed, but was remedied between the commencement of the action and the hearing, the court may order rent abatement and must release the rent to the parties accordingly. Any rent found to be owed to the tenant must be released to the tenant.

Subd. 12. **Retaliation; waiver; rights as additional.** The provisions of section 566.28 apply to proceedings under this section. The tenant rights under this section may not be waived or modified and are in addition to and do not limit other rights or remedies which may be available to the tenant and owner, except as provided in subdivision 2.

History: *1989 c 328 art 2 s 15*

566.35 VIOLATIONS OF BUILDING REPAIR ORDERS.

Subdivision 1. **Noncompliance; fines.** Upon finding an owner has willfully failed to comply with a court order to remedy a violation, the court shall fine the owner according to the following schedule:

(1) $250 for the first failure to comply;

(2) $500 for the second failure to comply with an order regarding the same violation; and

(3) $750 for the third and each subsequent failure to comply with an order regarding the same violation.

Subd. 2. **Criminal penalty.** An owner who willfully fails to comply with a court order to remedy a violation is guilty of a gross misdemeanor if it is the third or subsequent time that the owner has willfully failed to comply with an order to remedy a violation within a three-year period.

Subd. 3. **Fines collected.** Fines collected under subdivision 1 in Hennepin county must be used for expenses of the fourth judicial district, housing calendar consolidation project. Fines collected under subdivision 1 in Ramsey county must be used for expenses of the second judicial district, housing calendar consolidation project.

History: *1989 c 328 art 2 s 16*

NOTE: Subdivision 3, as added by Laws 1989, chapter 328, article 2, section 16, is repealed effective July 1, 1992. See Laws 1989, chapter 328, section 19.