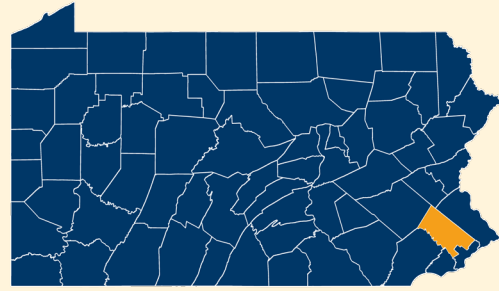


AFTER *the* PAUSE

The rise of eviction filings post-pandemic

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PA



Housing Alliance
of Pennsylvania



**Housing Alliance
of Pennsylvania**

The Housing Alliance is a statewide coalition working to provide leadership and a common voice for policies, practices, and resources to ensure that all Pennsylvanians, especially those with low incomes, have access to safe, decent and affordable homes.

We promote common-sense solutions to balance Pennsylvania's housing market and increase the supply of safe, decent homes for low income people.



INTRODUCTION

This report is an evaluation of how eviction filings and filing rates have changed over time across counties in Pennsylvania and the communities where changes are concentrated. It analyzes the eviction filing data captured by the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts over a five-year span starting July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2023. This publication is part of a larger statewide report that can be found [here](#).

The Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania presents this report not just as a reflection on past data but as a proactive tool for sparking meaningful dialogue on how best to avoid eviction for renters at the local level. This publication signifies our steadfast resolve to partner with local communities in refining and advancing strategies that effectively reduce evictions while underscoring the wider societal gains of promoting secure and sustainable housing environments for everyone.

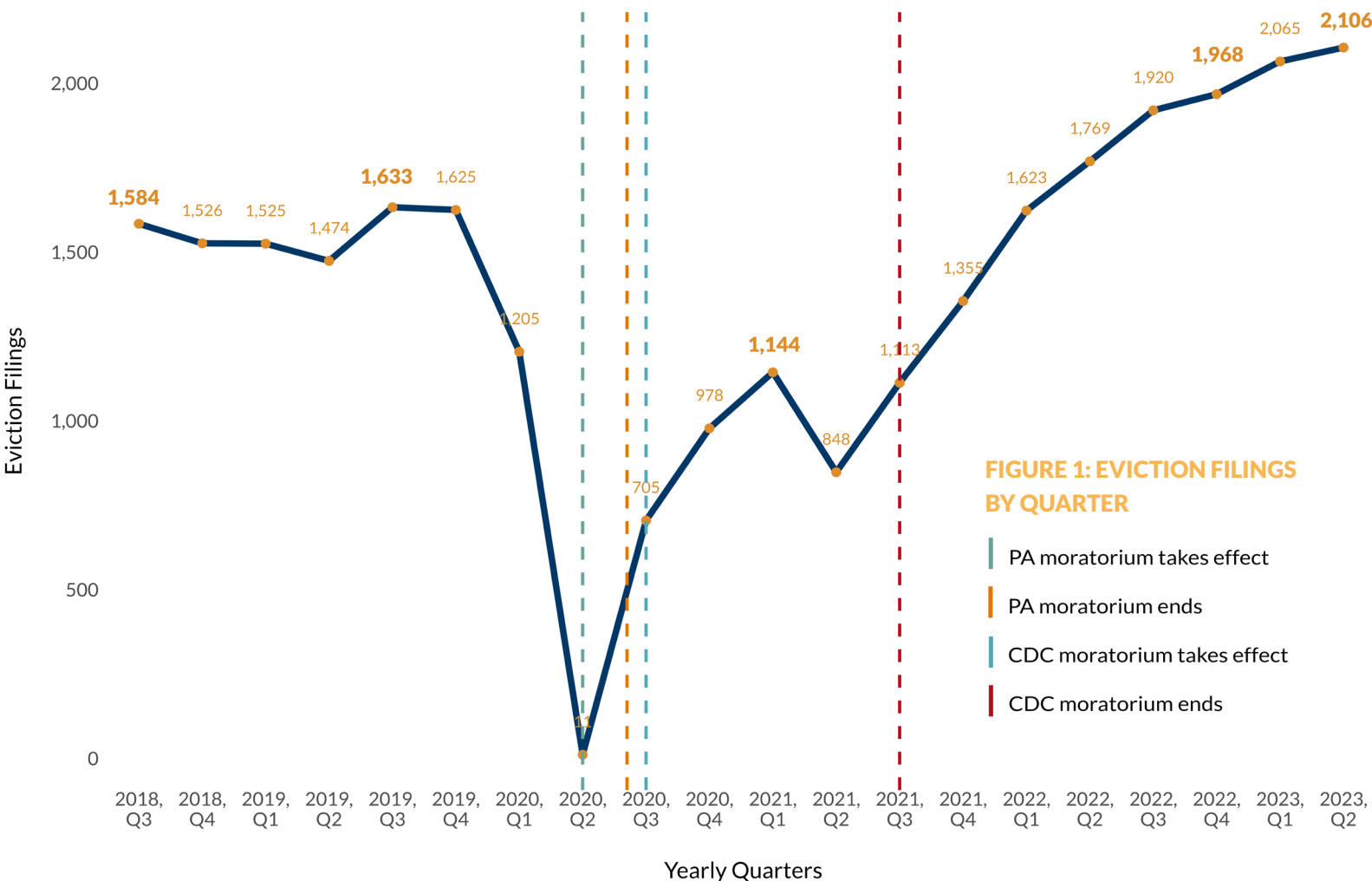
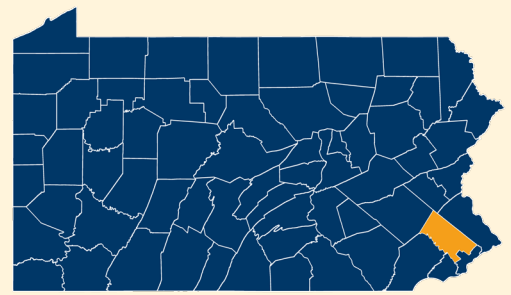
By integrating court data and broader community impacts, we aim to collaborate with communities in expanding effective programs. Our collective efforts are focused on ensuring housing stability for all Pennsylvanians. The main findings of this report are:

- Eviction remains a crisis with the number of eviction filings now higher than pre-pandemic filing levels.
 - In the period from July 2022 to June 2023, Montgomery recorded **8,059 eviction filings**, nearly **131% of the pre-pandemic filing level**.
 - Currently **22 renter households** face an eviction filing every day.
 - **7.1% of the state's overall eviction filings are concentrated in Montgomery County**. The county has the 3rd highest eviction filings in the state.
- Nonpayment of rent is the main driver of eviction, and rents have risen substantially.
 - When comparing overall average rent in July 2020 to July 2022, Montgomery county saw an **increase of \$329**, with rents remaining relatively stable since.
 - Over **95% of cases involve past due rent** demonstrating that non-payment of rent continues to be a main driver for eviction filings and resulting evictions.
 - The number of tenants involved in eviction cases that are behind on rent by more than 3 months has increased from **20% pre-pandemic to 25%**.
- **Montgomery County has several more positive outcomes compared to other counties in the state** which may indicate effective local eviction diversion programs.
 - Montgomery County has the **2nd lowest rate of judgments for the plaintiff** among the top 20 renter counties, and remain lower than pre-pandemic levels.
 - The county also has the **2nd highest rate of eviction case withdrawals in the state at 24%** this past year, and remains higher than pre-pandemic levels.
 - More cases are continued now compared to pre-pandemic numbers, although not at the same rate at which cases were continued during the pandemic.
- The zip codes with the highest concentrations of eviction filings are the same compared to the pre-pandemic time period.
 - **10 out of 30 Magisterial District Judges** hear over 65% of the eviction cases in Montgomery County.
 - **11 out of 49 ZIP codes** have filing rates above the county average of 8.79.

AFTER the PAUSE

The rise of eviction filings post-pandemic

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PA



22
HOUSEHOLDS
ON **AVERAGE**

Approximately **22 renter households** face eviction filings daily in Montgomery County.



ONE
IN
TWELVE

In Montgomery County, 1 in every 12 renter households faces the risk of experiencing an eviction filing.

Before the pandemic, from July 2018 to June 2019, Montgomery County recorded approximately 6,109 eviction filings. As the pandemic took hold and eviction moratoria were enacted, the number of filings witnessed a substantial decline. The lowest point was recorded between July 2020 and June 2021, totaling 3,675, largely attributed to the implementation of the CDC moratorium.

However, since the end of nationwide relief efforts, eviction filings have steadily risen, with a notable spike in the first quarter of 2021 (**Figure 1**). In the period from July 2022 to June 2023, Montgomery recorded **8,059 eviction filings**, nearly 131% of the pre-pandemic filing level (**Figure 2**). To put it in perspective, this implies that approximately **22 renter households** face eviction filings daily in the county.

7.1% of the state's overall eviction filings are concentrated in Montgomery County. In the period from July 2022 to June 2023, Montgomery County has the **3rd highest eviction filings in the state**, after Philadelphia and Allegheny counties.

COUNTY WIDE FILINGS AND FILING RATES HAVE SURPASSED PRE-PANDEMIC NUMBERS

FIGURE 2: EVICTION FILINGS HAVE SURPASSED PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

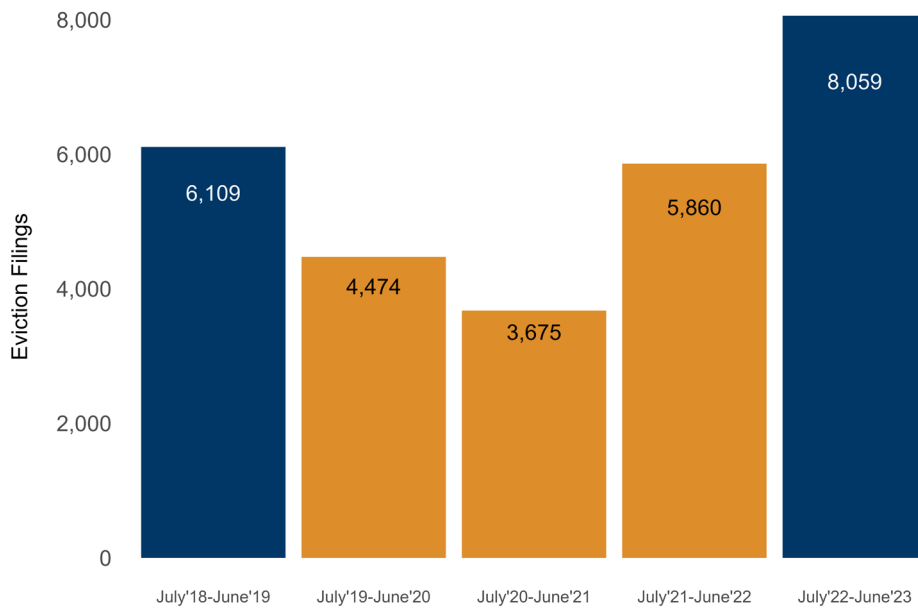
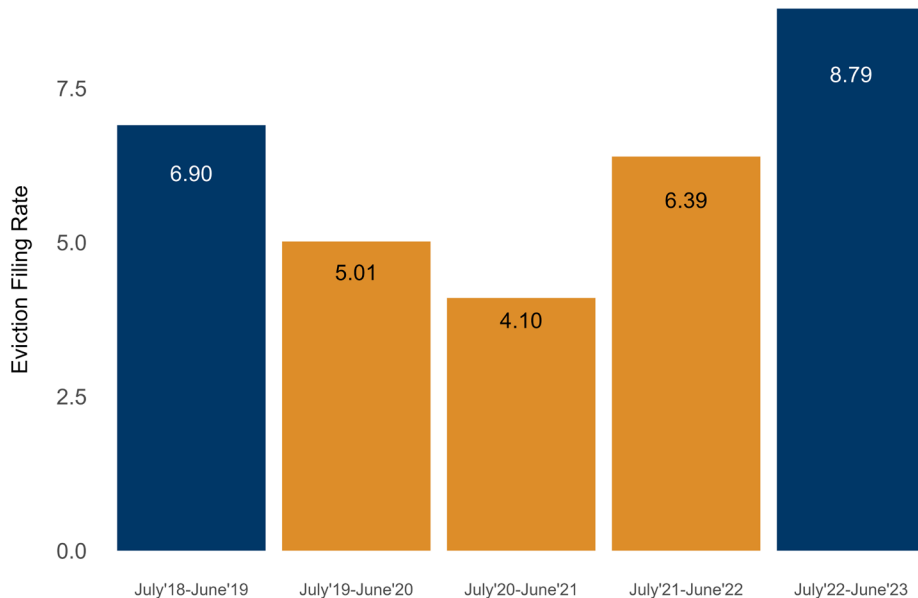


FIGURE 3: EVICTION FILING RATES HAVE SURPASSED PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY



EVICTION FILING RATE: The eviction filing rate is a crucial metric used to gauge the frequency or incidence of eviction filings within a specific geographic area over a defined period, typically expressed as a percentage or as a rate per 100 households. Specifically, it reflects the proportion of rental households within that area that have had eviction cases initiated against them during the specified time frame.

In Montgomery County, the eviction filing rate followed a distinct trajectory. Before the pandemic, it was 6.9%, meaning that approximately 7.3 out of every 100 rental households faced eviction filings. However, with the pandemic's onset and the implementation of eviction moratoria, this rate dropped significantly, reaching a low point of 4.1% between July 2020 and June 2021, reflecting the relief provided by these measures.

This year, Montgomery County's eviction filing rate has surpassed pre-pandemic levels, now at **8.79%** (Figure 3). The county has a higher filing rate than the statewide average of 7.1, and has the **10th highest filing rate among PA counties**.

AT THE ZIP CODE LEVEL...

Figure 4 provides a classification of areas based on their filing rates between July 2022 and June 2023, spanning a 12-month period.

The regions marked in **red** and **orange** indicate filing rates that are **approaching or surpassing the statewide average of 7.1%**. Notably, these areas are populations centers where it is more likely to see concentration of vulnerable populations at risk of eviction.

The areas marked in **light** and **dark blue** have relatively lower filing rates, **below 3.3%**, and have **varied significantly before and after the pandemic**.

Comparing **Figure 4** and **5** reveals an interesting trend that ZIP codes with higher rates before the pandemic also tend to have higher rates at present.

11 out of 49 ZIP codes have a higher filing rate than the county average of **8.79** (page 4). The table on page 4 provides a breakdown of eviction filings by ZIP code in Montgomery County.

FIGURE 4: EVICTION FILING RATE BETWEEN JULY 2022 AND JUNE 2023

[To access an interactive version of this map, click here](#)

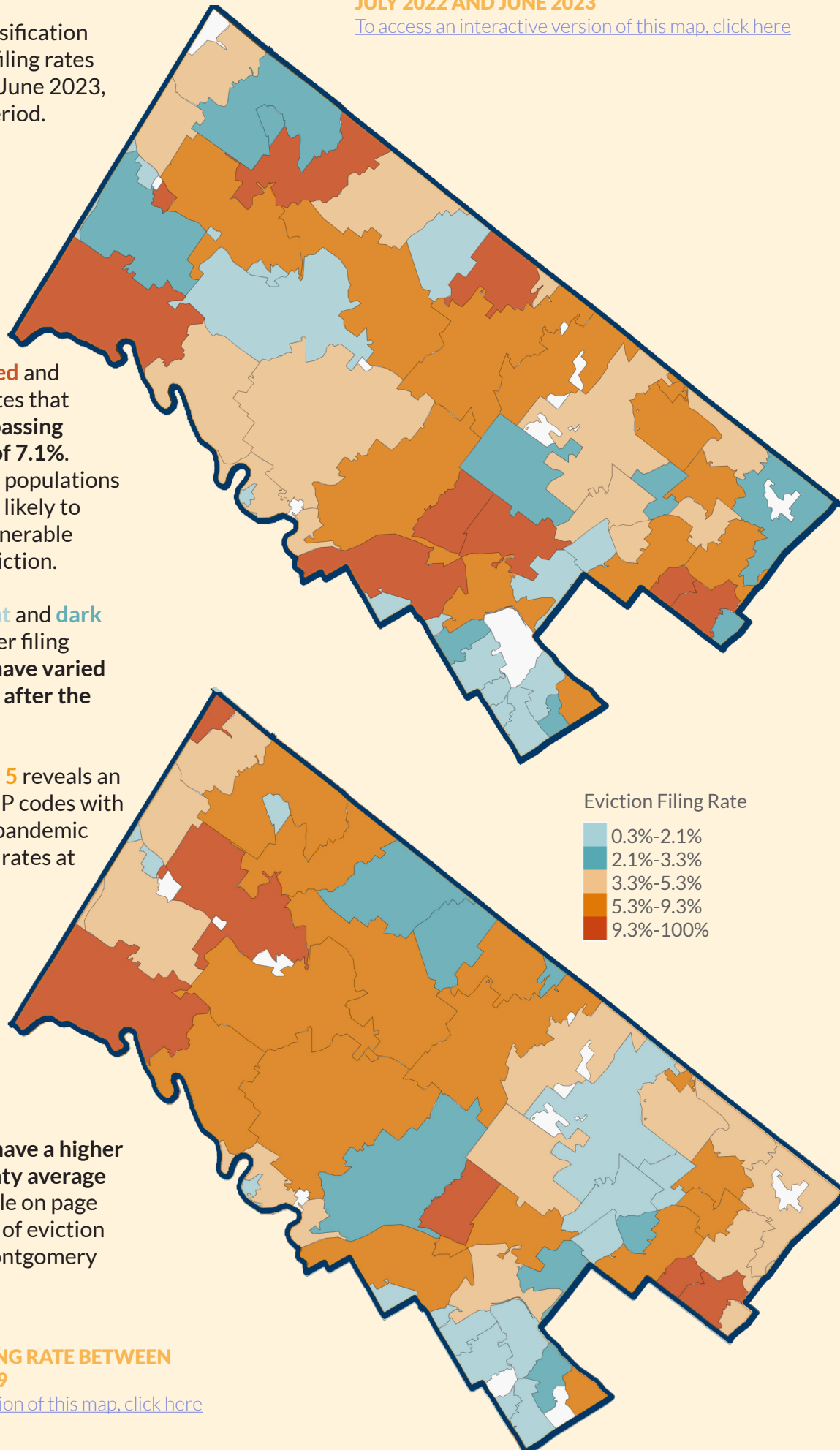


FIGURE 5: EVICTION FILING RATE BETWEEN JULY 2018 AND JUNE 2019

[To access an interactive version of this map, click here](#)

AT THE ZIP CODE LEVEL...

11 out of **49** ZIP codes have a higher filing rate than the county average of 8.79. The full table can be found in the appendix section of the report on page 10 and 11.

ZIP CODE	CITY	CASES (JULY'22-JUNE'23)	FILING RATE	RENTER HOUSEHOLDS
19401	Norristown	1541	17%	9,233
19406	King Of Prussia	1032	19%	5,513
19464	Pottstown	848	13%	6,616
19027	Elkins Park	786	26%	3,065
19446	Lansdale	482	6%	7,903
19440	Hatfield	370	16%	2,387
19403	Norristown	325	6%	5,095
19428	Conshohocken	261	6%	4,258
19046	Jenkintown	224	9%	2,401
19090	Willow Grove	214	9%	2,379
19044	Horsham	206	7%	2,929
19462	Plymouth Meeting	169	14%	1,218
19454	North Wales	148	6%	2,387
19095	Wyncote	138	10%	1,318

AT THE MDJ LEVEL...

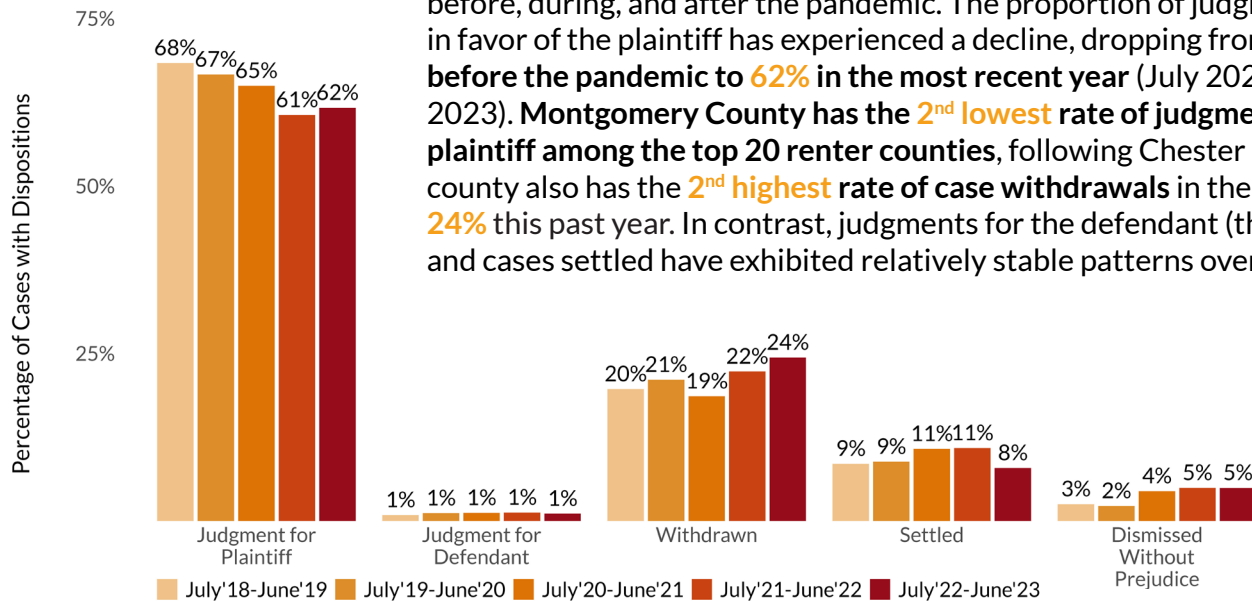
10 out of **30** Magisterial District Judges hear over 65% of the eviction cases in Montgomery County. The table below presents how many eviction cases were filed in each of Montgomery County's Magisterial District Courts between July 2022 and June 2023. The list of judges and jurisdictions is from the Montgomery County website. The full table can be found in the appendix section of the report on page 12.

MDJ	JUDGE	CASES (JULY'22-JUNE'23)	PERCENTAGE SHARE OF CASES
38103	Cerski, Christopher J	750	9%
38116	Hunsicker, Margaret	745	9%
38109	Krouse, Patrick O.	717	9%
38128	Levine, Edward	632	8%
38101	Alfarano, Marc A.	487	6%
38111	Palladino, Scott T.	440	5%
38125	Gallagher, James P.	413	5%
38112	Kropp Sr., Edward C.	402	5%
38115	Ashe, Denise	312	4%
38105	Price, Juanita A.	305	4%

WHILE A MAJORITY OF CASES WERE DECIDED IN FAVOR OF THE LANDLORD, AN INCREASED NUMBER OF CASES WERE WITHDRAWN

FIGURE 6: EVICTION CASE OUTCOMES

Figure 6 provides insights into the outcomes of eviction cases filed before, during, and after the pandemic. The proportion of judgments in favor of the plaintiff has experienced a decline, dropping from **68%** before the pandemic to **62%** in the most recent year (July 2022 to June 2023). Montgomery County has the **2nd lowest** rate of judgments for the plaintiff among the top 20 renter counties, following Chester county. The county also has the **2nd highest** rate of case withdrawals in the state, at **24%** this past year. In contrast, judgments for the defendant (the tenant) and cases settled have exhibited relatively stable patterns over time.

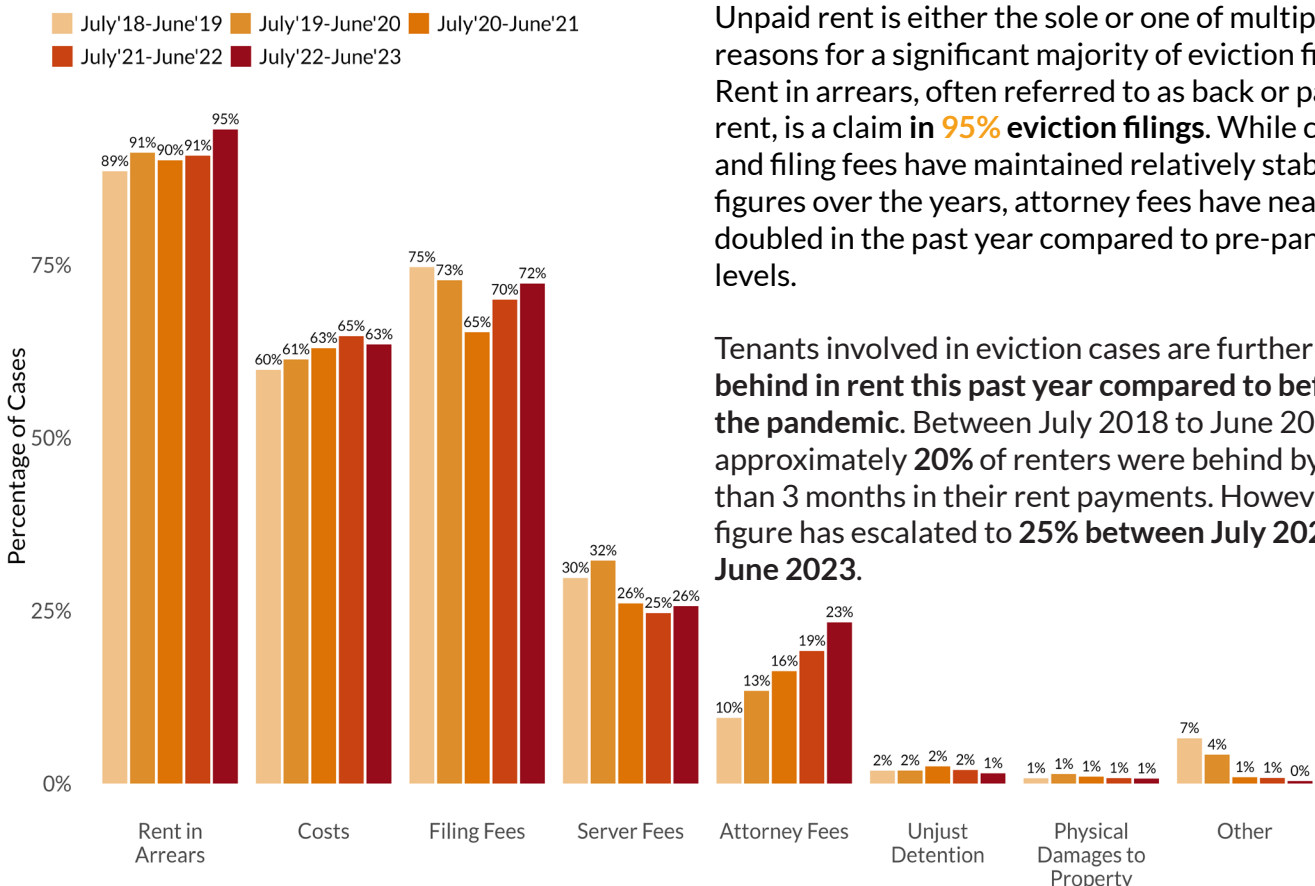


MOST EVICTIONS CASES INVOLVE BACK RENT

FIGURE 7: JUDGMENT AWARD CATEGORIES

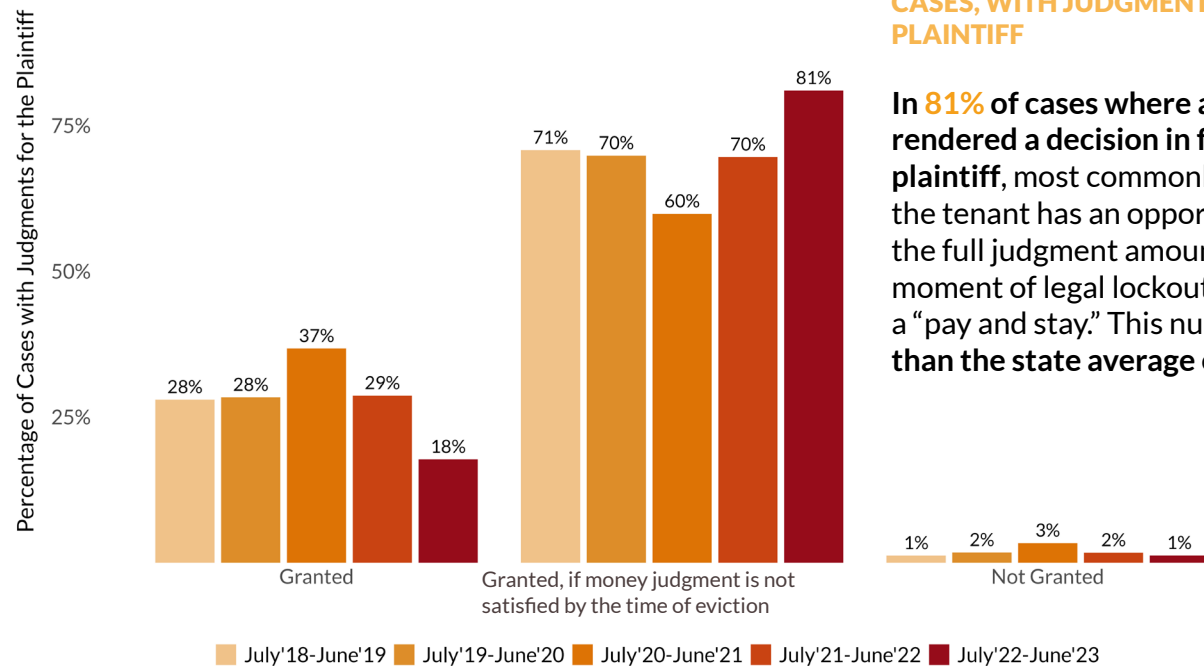
Unpaid rent is either the sole or one of multiple reasons for a significant majority of eviction filings. Rent in arrears, often referred to as back or past due rent, is a claim in **95%** eviction filings. While costs and filing fees have maintained relatively stable figures over the years, attorney fees have nearly doubled in the past year compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Tenants involved in eviction cases are further behind in rent this past year compared to before the pandemic. Between July 2018 to June 2019, approximately **20%** of renters were behind by more than 3 months in their rent payments. However, this figure has escalated to **25%** between July 2022 and June 2023.

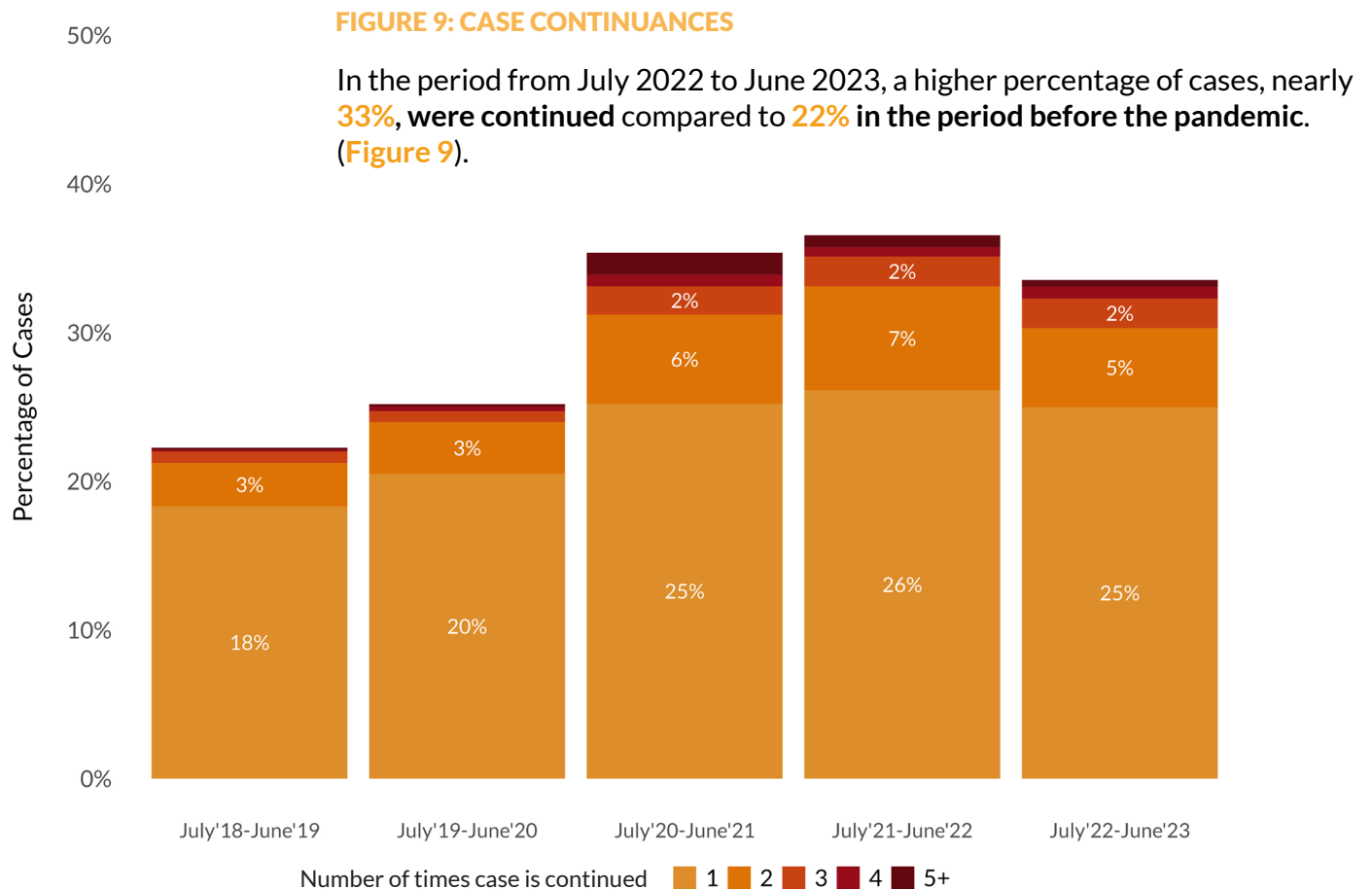


Note: Montgomery County has witnessed a significant surge in rent prices, with a 23.81% increase from July 2018 to June 2023. This rise in rent costs has coincided with a 31% increase in eviction filings during the same time. While it's important to note that high rates of eviction cases involving backlogged rent have been an ongoing issue, the substantial increase in both rent prices and eviction filings highlights the growing housing affordability crisis in the area.

81% OF JUDGMENTS FOR PLAINTIFF PROVIDE A SMALL WINDOW FOR TENANTS TO PAY BACK RENT AND AVOID EVICTION



MORE CASES ARE RECEIVING CONTINUANCES



APPENDIX 1

TABLE 1: EVICTION FILINGS, FILING RATES AND RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY ZIP CODE

ZIP CODE	CITY	CASES (JULY'22-JUNE'23)	FILING RATE	RENTER HOUSEHOLDS
19401	Norristown	1541	17%	9,233
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19462	Plymouth Meeting	169	14%	1,218
19454	North Wales	148	6%	2,387
19095	Wyncote	138	10%	1,318
19038	Glenside	120	7%	1,753
19468	Royersford	120	5%	2,620
19438	Harleysville	110	6%	1,908
19002	Ambler	105	4%	2,510
19040	Hatboro	95	4%	2,241
19405	Bridgeport	83	8%	1,038
19004	Bala Cynwyd	81	9%	867
19006	Huntingdon Valley	63	3%	2,055
19001	Abington	62	5%	1,218
19426	Collegeville	60	4%	1,472
18969	Telford	50	4%	1,204
19422	Blue Bell	45	3%	1,459
19003	Ardmore	38	2%	2,003
18054	Green Lane	34	10%	333
18964	Souderton	30	2%	1,438
18041	East Greenville	29	5%	569
19034	Fort Washington	23	4%	595
19473	Schwenksville	18	2%	853
19075	Oreland	16	5%	353
19072	Narberth	14	1%	1,175
19444	Lafayette Hill	14	1%	1,251
18073	Pennsburg	13	3%	458
19525	Gilbertsville	13	3%	463

APPENDIX 1

ZIP CODE	CITY	CASES (JULY'22-JUNE'23)	FILING RATE	RENTER HOUSEHOLDS
19025	Dresher	12	3%	398
19012	Cheltenham	10	3%	330
18076	Red Hill	9	2%	416
19031	Flourtown	7	2%	409
19041	Haverford	6	1%	900
19096	Wynnewood	5	0%	1,460
18074	Perkiomenville	4	7%	57
19066	Merion Station	4	4%	114
18915	Colmar	3	3%	92
19453	Mont Clare	3	1%	291
19085	Villanova	2	3%	73
19435	Frederick	1	13%	8

APPENDIX 2

TABLE 2: EVICTION FILINGS, AND PERCENTAGE SHARE OF CASES BY MDJ

MDJ	JUDGE	CASES (JULY'22-JUNE'23)	PERCENTAGE SHARE OF CASES
38103	Cerski, Christopher J	750	9%
38116	Hunsicker, Margaret	745	9%
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38112	Kropp Sr., Edward C.	402	5%
38115	Ashe, Denise	312	4%
38105	Price, Juanita A.	305	4%
38209	Barnes, Todd N.	271	3%
38113	Griffis, Jodi L.	241	3%
38102	Madden, R. Emmett	227	3%
38114	Leo, Paul N.	223	3%
38118	Duffy, Andrea	204	3%
38122	Nesbitt, Harry J. 3 rd	201	2%
38123	Lukens, Deborah A.	198	2%
38124	Augustine, Albert J.	180	2%
38208	Friedenberg, Jay S.	162	2%
38104	Kessler, John D.	146	2%
38119	Welsh, Richard H.	139	2%
38121	Leonard, Suzan	127	2%
38110	Zaffarano, Patricia	120	1%
38120	Rebar, Cathleen K.	107	1%
38202	Coggins, Maureen C.	95	1%
38204	Zucker, Karen Eisner	89	1%
38107	Quinn, Michael P	49	1%
38203	Saylor, Maurice H.	35	0
38108	McGill, Katherine E.	32	0
38106	Schireson, Henry	10	0

SOURCES

The eviction data presented in this report was sourced from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) for cases filed between June 2018 and June 2023. This dataset contains information available in publicly accessible docket sheets; such as the number of cases filed, the amounts of rent arrears awarded to landlords, judgment outcomes, and more. These data can be analyzed at the state, county, and ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) levels.

To provide context and a broader perspective, data on renter households were also integrated into the analysis. This supplementary information was procured from the 5-year American Community Survey (ACS), with the most recent available dataset being from 2021.

This report is part of a larger statewide report that can be found [here](#).



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