

ORDER OF LIMITED ACCESS FOR **EVICTION** FILINGS

THE ISSUE:

Thousands of Pennsylvanians carry eviction filing records who have never been evicted.

In Pennsylvania, **eviction filings are publicly accessible and remain on a tenant's record** regardless of the outcome of that filing, including when a tenant is found not at fault by the court.

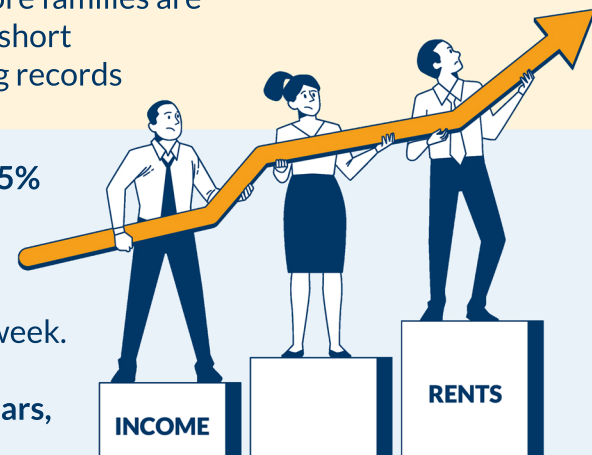
Because eviction filings can automatically remove potential tenants from a pool of applicants, **tenants with a record are forced to seek housing of last resort that is managed by less reputable landlords**, in disrepair, unhealthy, less affordable, and increases the risk of future eviction and housing instability.



WHY **NOW**:

With average wages lagging far behind housing costs, eviction filings are now returning to pre-pandemic levels even as unemployment decreases. More families are being barred from accessing housing that is in increasingly short supply with no remedy to alleviate a long past eviction filing records

- From 2001 – 2019, the median renter income in PA rose 5% while rents increased 16%.
- Over 1 million Pennsylvanians are working in positions that do not pay enough for rent when working 40 hours a week.
- Pennsylvania has the lowest unemployment rate in 47 years,



Pennsylvania continues to improve upon the highly successful Clean Slate law to seal minor criminal records and open both employment and housing opportunities for those with long past offenses. **In keeping with the precedent for granting second chances, it is only fair that the Commonwealth provide a civil legal remedy that will help vulnerable Pennsylvania's access the basic need for housing.**

- In Pennsylvania, misdemeanors are sealed after 7 years and felonies after 10 years.
- Bankruptcy filings and missed payments are removed from credit reports after 7 years.
- State law provides no remedy to limit access to eviction filings.



Housing Alliance
of Pennsylvania

THE PROPOSAL:

Legislation is being considered to provide an **Order of Limited Access** for eviction filings.

Under the bill, an eviction case record must be placed under “limited access” (meaning it is no longer publicly available) once either of the following happens first:

- **Seven years** have passed since the case was filed,
- Or the court issues a decision in **favor of the defendant** (tenant).

POTENTIAL **IMPACT**:

Eviction records can be the start of the cycle of poverty, not just for adults but also for their children.

The policy would place not only the cases that were ruled in favor of the tenant under limited access (**8,781 cases since 2018**), but also all **116,126 cases from 2018** that have reached the seven-year mark, along with thousands of cases from earlier years.

Going forward, tens of thousands of additional eviction filings would be placed under limited access each year.



Housing Alliance
of Pennsylvania

February 2026

email us at info@housingalliancepa.org

1501 Cherry St.
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-576-7044

