

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**Table of Contents**

Table of Contents .....	1
Definitions 7	
Rule 1 – Objective .....	10
1.1 Objective .....	10
Rule 2 – Making a claim .....	10
2.1 Starting an Application for Dispute Resolution .....	10
2.2 Identifying issues on the Application for Dispute Resolution .....	11
2.3 Related issues .....	11
Filing an application.....	11
2.4 Submit an Application for Dispute Resolution .....	11
2.4.1 Communications and party contact information .....	11
2.5 Documents that must be submitted with an Application for Dispute Resolution. .....	11
2.6 Point at which an application is considered to have been made .....	12
2.7 One or more respondents .....	12
2.8 Maximum amount of monetary claim .....	12
2.9 No divided claims.....	12
2.10 Joining applications.....	12
Making a cross-application for Dispute Resolution.....	13
2.11 Filing an Application for Dispute Resolution to counter a claim.....	13
2.12 Identify file being countered .....	13
2.13 Point at which a cross-application is considered to have been made .....	13
2.14 Scheduling a Cross-Application for Dispute Resolution .....	13
Rule 3 – Serving the application and submitting and exchanging evidence .....	14
3.0.1 Digital submission of evidence .....	14
3.0.2 Restrictions on evidence format, size, or amount .....	14
3.0.3 Paper evidence .....	14
3.0.4 Party must maintain exact copy of evidence .....	14
3.0.5 Residential Tenancy Branch will not return copies.....	14
3.0.6 Conversion of the format of evidence .....	14

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

3.0.7	Quality of evidence .....	14
3.1	Documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package .....	15
3.1.1	Indicating service of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package..	15
3.1.2	Reinstating a proceeding adjourned under Rule 3.1.1 .....	15
3.1.3	Applications excluded from rules 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.....	15
3.2	Repealed and replaced by Rule 10.....	16
3.3	Evidence for Cross-Application for Dispute Resolution.....	16
3.4	If a respondent avoids service .....	16
3.5	Proof of service required at the dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference .....	16
3.6	Evidence must be relevant.....	16
3.7	Evidence must be organized, clear and legible.....	16
3.7.1	Redacting information from evidence.....	17
3.8	Original evidence .....	17
3.9	Physical evidence .....	17
3.10	Digital evidence.....	17
3.10.1	Description and labelling of digital evidence .....	18
3.10.2	Digital evidence uploads .....	18
3.10.3	Digital evidence submitted directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch or through Service BC .....	18
3.10.4	Digital evidence served to other parties .....	18
3.10.5	Confirmation of access to digital evidence .....	19
3.10.6	Sharing settings when using a File Hosting Service .....	19
3.11	Unreasonable delay .....	19
3.12	Willful or recurring failure .....	20
3.13	Applicant evidence provided in single package.....	20
3.14	Evidence not submitted at the time of Application for Dispute Resolution ....	20
3.15	Respondent's evidence provided in single package .....	20
3.16	Respondent's proof of service.....	20
3.17	Consideration of new and relevant evidence .....	21
3.18	Evidence not received by the arbitrator or case facilitator.....	21
3.19	Submitting evidence after the hearing starts .....	21

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

Rule 4 – Amending an Application for Dispute Resolution .....	21
4.1 Amending an Application for Dispute Resolution .....	21
4.2 Amending an application at the hearing .....	22
4.2.1 Removing claims made in the application at the hearing .....	22
4.3 Time limits for amending an application .....	22
4.4 Paying additional fee when amending a claim .....	22
4.5 Accepting an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution .....	22
4.6 Serving an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution .....	22
4.7 Objecting to a proposed amendment .....	23
Rule 5 – Before the hearing or conference.....	23
5.0.1 Withdrawal of an Application for Dispute Resolution.....	23
Rescheduling .....	24
5.1 Rescheduling a dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference .....	24
5.2 If agreement to reschedule a dispute resolution hearing cannot be obtained	24
5.2.1 If agreement to reschedule a facilitated settlement conference cannot be obtained.....	24
Summons to attend or produce evidence for hearings.....	25
5.3 Application for a summons.....	25
5.4 When a request for a summons may be made .....	25
5.5 Witness compensation .....	25
Rule 6 – Pertaining to the hearing in general .....	25
6.1 Arbitrator’s role.....	25
6.2 What will be considered at a dispute resolution hearing .....	25
6.3 Format of dispute resolution hearing.....	26
6.4 A party may request that the hearing be held in a specific format.....	26
6.5 Opportunity to be heard on a request for a specific format .....	26
6.6 The standard of proof and onus of proof.....	26
6.7 Party may be represented or assisted .....	27
6.8 Proof of authority to act.....	27
6.9 Communication with the arbitrator .....	27
6.10 Interruptions and inappropriate behaviour at the dispute resolution hearing.	27
Recording of hearings .....	27

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

6.11 Recording of Teleconference Hearings..... 27

6.12 Use of Recordings ..... 27

6.13 Restricted Use of Recordings ..... 28

Rule 7 – During the hearing ..... 28

7.1 Commencement of the dispute resolution hearing..... 28

7.2 Delay in the start of a hearing ..... 28

7.3 Consequences of not attending the hearing..... 28

7.4 Evidence must be presented..... 28

7.4.1 Settlement discussions will not be considered as evidence ..... 28

Introductory matters ..... 28

7.5 Introduction to the dispute resolution hearing ..... 28

7.6 Identification of people present at a dispute resolution hearing ..... 28

7.7 Preliminary matters ..... 29

Adjourning a hearing ..... 29

7.8 Adjournment after the dispute resolution hearing begins ..... 29

7.9 Criteria for granting an adjournment ..... 29

7.10 Mandatory attendance ..... 29

7.11 Refusing a request for adjournment..... 29

Amending an Application for Dispute Resolution at the Hearing ..... 30

7.12 Amending an application at the hearing ..... 30

7.12.1 Removing claims made in the application at the hearing ..... 30

7.13 Objecting to a proposed amendment ..... 30

Adding additional parties ..... 30

7.14 Request that another person be added to a proceeding ..... 30

7.15 Determining that another person be added as a party ..... 30

7.16 Making orders regarding service ..... 31

7.17 Issuing orders affecting an added party ..... 31

7.18 Notice to materially affected tenant(s)..... 31

Presentation of evidence at the hearing ..... 31

7.19 Presentation of evidence..... 31

7.20 Order of presentation ..... 31

7.21 Witnesses’ attendance at the dispute resolution hearing ..... 31

7.22 Exclusion of witnesses and others ..... 32

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

Questions regarding evidence.....	32
7.23 Cross-examination .....	32
7.24 Questions asked through the arbitrator .....	32
7.25 Questions by the arbitrator.....	32
Rule 8 – Conclusion of a dispute resolution hearing .....	32
8.1 Ending the dispute resolution hearing.....	32
8.2 Reconvening the dispute resolution hearing .....	32
8.3 Concluding the dispute resolution proceeding .....	33
8.4 Decision and orders based on a settlement.....	33
8.5 Dispute resolution hearing ended without the parties reaching agreement....	33
8.6 Service of order.....	33
8.7 Original decision .....	33
8.8 Original order .....	33
Rule 9 – Miscellaneous .....	33
9.1 Non-compliance will not stop or nullify a proceeding .....	33
9.2 Conflicts between the Rules of Procedure and the Act.....	33
9.3 Effective date of these Rules of Procedure.....	33
9.4 Continued application of the former version of the Rules of Procedure .....	34
Rule 10 - Expedited Hearings .....	34
10.1 Director’s powers if a dispute qualifies for an expedited hearing.....	34
10.1.1 Application of Rule 10.....	34
10.1.2 Other applications.....	34
10.1.3 No reasonable grounds for application under Rule 10.1.1.....	35
10.2 Applicant’s evidence for an expedited hearing .....	35
10.3 Serving the notice of dispute resolution proceeding package .....	35
10.4 Respondent’s evidence for an expedited hearing .....	35
10.5 Time limit for respondent’s evidence .....	35
10.6 Late evidence.....	35
10.7 Amending an application for an expedited hearing .....	36
10.8 Cross-applications will be heard separately .....	36
10.9 Proof of Service.....	36
10.10 A party may request that the expedited hearing be held in a specific format .	36
Rule 11 – Proceedings for Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures.....	36

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

11.1 Documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package .....	36
11.2 Evidence not submitted at the time of Application for Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures .....	37
11.3 Respondent’s evidence for an Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures Proceeding .....	37
11.4 Applicant must submit documentation related to ineligibility criteria .....	37
11.5 Written submissions by respondents .....	37
Rule 12 – Facilitated Settlement Process.....	37
Overview of Facilitated Settlement Process .....	38
12.1 Applications that will generally be prioritized for the facilitated settlement process .....	38
12.1.1 Applications that will not be considered for the facilitated settlement process ..	38
12.2 Case facilitator’s role .....	38
12.3 Consequences of not attending the conference .....	38
Conduct of Facilitated Settlement Process.....	38
12.4 A party may request that the conference be held in a specific format .....	38
12.5 Party may be represented or assisted .....	39
12.6 Proof of authority to act .....	39
12.7 Communications with the parties during the facilitated settlement process....	39
12.8 Interruptions and inappropriate behaviour at the facilitated settlement conference.....	39
12.9 Case facilitator can schedule additional facilitated settlement conferences ...	39
Recordings of Facilitated Settlement Conferences .....	39
12.10 Recording of Facilitated Settlement Conferences .....	39
12.11 Use of Recordings.....	40
12.12 Restricted Use of Recordings.....	40
Evidence in the facilitated settlement process.....	40
12.13 Application of Rule 3 .....	40
12.14 Evidence not provided or received by the case facilitator before the facilitated settlement conference .....	40
Amending and Modifying an Application for Dispute Resolution in the Facilitated Settlement Process .....	40
12.15 Amending an application .....	40

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

12.16 Opportunity to add party or revise claims during facilitated settlement conference..... 40

12.17 Claims not named in the Application for Dispute Resolution ..... 41

12.18 Updates to application moved to a hearing ..... 41

Agreement-Based Activities during Facilitated Settlement Process ..... 41

12.19 Agreements made during facilitated settlement process ..... 41

12.19.1 Outstanding claims in application for dispute resolution ..... 41

12.19.2 Outstanding claims in cross-application..... 41

12.20 Direct resolution of claims by case facilitator..... 41

12.21 Dismissals of Applications..... 42

Resolution due to lack of participation..... 42

12.22 Applicant does not attend facilitation conference ..... 42

12.23 Respondent does not attend facilitation conference..... 42

Moving an application to a dispute resolution hearing..... 42

12.24 Authority to move application for dispute resolution for hearing at any time... 42

12.25 Unresolved claims following facilitated settlement conference..... 43

12.26 Case facilitator can assist parties prepare for dispute resolution hearing..... 43

Changes to Rules of Procedure ..... 43

Appendix: Applications that will generally be prioritized for the facilitated settlement process (Rule 12.1)..... 47

**Definitions**

- Act** the *Residential Tenancy Act* and/or *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act*, as applicable.
- Adjournment** the determination by the director that a dispute resolution proceeding will be reconvened at a later date, either at the request of one or both of the parties, or on the director’s own initiative.
- Agent** a person appointed by a party to act on that party’s behalf.
- Applicant** a landlord or tenant who applies for dispute resolution by completing an Application for Dispute Resolution, having it accepted by the Residential Tenancy Branch and paying any required fee.
- Arbitrator** an independent decision-maker delegated by the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch to conduct dispute resolution proceedings and make final and binding decisions. In these Rules,

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

this term is also used to refer to an adjudicator, who is delegated by the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch to conduct certain types of dispute resolution proceedings and make final and binding decisions.

<b>Case Facilitator</b>	an independent decision-maker delegated by the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch to assist the parties to an application for dispute resolution to resolve their dispute.
<b>Cross-application</b>	an Application for Dispute Resolution made in response to an existing, related Application for Dispute Resolution.
<b>Days<sup>1</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) If the time for doing an act in relation to a Dispute Resolution proceeding falls or expires on a holiday, the time is extended to the next day that is not a holiday.</li><li>b) If the time for doing an act in a government office (such as the Residential Tenancy Branch or Service BC) falls or expires on a day when the office is not open during regular business hours, the time is extended to the next day that the office is open.</li><li>c) In the calculation of time expressed as clear days, weeks, months, or years, or as "at least" or "not less than" a number of days, weeks, months, or years, the first and last days must be excluded.</li><li>d) In the calculation of time not referred to in subsection (c), the first day must be excluded and the last day included.</li></ul>
<b>Decision</b>	a conclusion or determination of the arbitrator or case facilitator which legally resolves the matters outlined in the Application for Dispute Resolution, including orders, if necessary to implement the decision.
<b>Dispute resolution hearing</b>	a process during which an arbitrator will give the parties to the dispute an opportunity to present evidence and arguments and to question the other party either by teleconference, in-person, or by written submissions. In these Rules, this is also referred to as a "hearing".
<b>Dispute resolution proceeding</b>	a legal process initiated by a landlord or a tenant by filing an Application for Dispute Resolution for the purpose of resolving one or more issues in dispute, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) a facilitated settlement process in which a case facilitator assists the parties to resolve their dispute by reaching an agreement;</li><li>b) a proceeding conducted by an arbitrator that resolves disputes without a formal hearing, and after which the arbitrator makes a decision and/or order (referred to as a "direct request"); and</li><li>c) a formal dispute resolution proceeding at which an arbitrator will give the parties to the dispute an opportunity to present evidence</li></ul>

---

<sup>1</sup> This definition applies whether or not an act can be carried out using an online service.



Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

and argument and to question the other party, and after which the arbitrator makes a decision and/or order.

At the discretion of the director, a dispute resolution proceeding may be conducted by conference call, through written submissions or in person, or any combination of these methods.

<b>Director of the Residential Tenancy Branch</b>	the person appointed under section 8 of the Act to assist landlords and tenants to resolve disputes about issues that are under the jurisdiction of the Act. When “director of the Residential Tenancy Branch” is used in these Rules, the Rule should be read as applying only to the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch and not to delegates of the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch.
<b>Director</b>	the person appointed under section 8 of the Act to assist landlords and tenants to resolve disputes about issues that are under the jurisdiction of the Act, and includes those individuals to whom a power, duty or function of this person has been delegated under section 9.1(1) of the Act. The director has delegated their authority to resolve disputes to arbitrators and case facilitators. When “director” is used in these Rules, the Rule should be read as applying to the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch as well as arbitrators and case facilitators. When the Rule only applies to either arbitrators or case facilitators, the specific position title will be used.
<b>Evidence</b>	any type of proof presented by the parties at a dispute resolution proceeding in support of the case, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• written documents, such as the tenancy agreement, letters, copies of emails, receipts, pictures and the sworn or unsworn statements of the witnesses;</li><li>• photographs, video recordings, audio recordings; and</li><li>• oral statements of the parties or witnesses given under oath or affirmation.</li></ul>
<b>Facilitated Settlement Conference</b>	a meeting between the parties to an application for dispute resolution as part of the facilitated settlement process during which the case facilitator assists the parties to resolve their dispute. In these Rules, the facilitated settlement conference is also referred to as a “conference.”
<b>Facilitated Settlement Process</b>	a process during which a case facilitator assists the parties to an application for dispute resolution to resolve their dispute. As part of this process, the Residential Tenancy Branch schedules a facilitated settlement conference.
<b>Party</b>	the applicant or respondent named on the Application for Dispute Resolution or added to the application by an arbitrator, and an officer representing a business named in the application, but does not

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

include witnesses, family members, and other persons not named on the application. “Party” may include multiple applicants or respondents.

- Reasons** the grounds and conclusions on which an arbitrator has based a decision, including both findings of fact and law.
- Relevant** evidence is relevant if it relates to or bears upon the matter at hand or tends to prove or disprove an alleged fact. Argument is relevant if it relates to or bears upon the matter at hand.
- Respondent** the landlord or tenant against whom the Application for Dispute Resolution has been made; sometimes called the “other party.”
- Schedule** the act of the Residential Tenancy Branch, at the time an application is made, designating a time, date, and place for the dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference to be commenced, including a determination whether the hearing or conference will be conducted by conference call, through written submissions, or in person.
- Reschedule* is the act of the Residential Tenancy Branch designating a different time, date, and place for the dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference to commence or be reconvened, including a determination whether the rescheduled hearing or conference will be conducted by conference call, through written submissions, or in person.
- Serve** the formal legal manner of giving a party required documents and evidence as set out in the Act.
- Substituted Service** an alternative method of service authorized by an arbitrator where the party has made reasonable efforts to serve but has been unable to serve documents, notices, or decisions in accordance with the Act.

## Rule 1 – Objective

### 1.1 Objective

The objective of the Rules of Procedure is to ensure a fair, efficient, and consistent process for resolving disputes for landlords and tenants.

## Rule 2 – Making a claim

### 2.1 Starting an Application for Dispute Resolution

To make a claim, a person must complete and submit an Application for Dispute Resolution.

## **2.2 Identifying issues on the Application for Dispute Resolution**

The claim is limited to what is stated in the application.

See also Rule 6.2 [*What will be considered at a dispute resolution hearing*].

## **2.3 Related issues**

Claims made in the application must be related to each other. See also Rule 6.2 [*What will be considered at a dispute resolution hearing*].

## **Filing an application**

### **2.4 Submit an Application for Dispute Resolution**

Applications for Dispute Resolution must be submitted through the Online Application for Dispute Resolution or to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office with the required fee or fee waiver application. Applicants who submit an Online Application for Dispute Resolution and choose to pay the fee or submit a fee waiver application in person must complete payment within three days of submitting the application. This three-day period for completing payment is not an extension of any statutory timelines for making an application.

#### **2.4.1 Communications and party contact information**

If an Application for Dispute Resolution is made by multiple applicants, those applicants must nominate one applicant to be the primary applicant to:

- a) start the dispute resolution proceeding, and
- b) receive communications from the Residential Tenancy Branch and be responsible for sharing each communication with all other applicants.

Each Application for Dispute Resolution requires a primary applicant, regardless of whether it has been joined with other applications in a single dispute resolution proceeding under Rule 2.10.

### **2.5 Documents that must be submitted with an Application for Dispute Resolution**

To the extent possible, the applicant must submit the following documents at the same time the application is submitted:

- a detailed calculation of any monetary claim being made;
- a copy of the Notice to End Tenancy, when the applicant seeks an order of possession or to cancel a Notice to End Tenancy; and
- copies of all other documentary and digital evidence to be relied on in the proceeding, subject to Rule 3.17 [*Consideration of new and relevant evidence*].

When submitting applications using the Online Application for Dispute Resolution, the applicant must upload the required documents with the application or submit them to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office within three days of submitting the Online Application for Dispute Resolution.

## **Applicant's Evidence for Expedited Hearing**

See Rule 10 [*Expedited Hearings*] for submitting documents related to applications under *Residential Tenancy Act* sections 33, 54 or 56 or *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act* section 27, 47 or 49.

### **2.6 Point at which an application is considered to have been made**

The Application for Dispute Resolution has been made when it has been submitted and either the fee has been paid or when the fee waiver application has been submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office. The three-day period for completing payment under Rule 2.4 is not an extension of any statutory timelines for making an application.

If payment is not completed or if the fee waiver application is not submitted within three days as required, the application will be considered abandoned. To pursue the claims, the applicant must submit a new application—this does not provide an extension of time for any statutory timelines.

### **2.7 One or more respondents**

An applicant(s) may name more than one respondent in the Application for Dispute Resolution.

### **2.8 Maximum amount of monetary claim**

An applicant who has a claim:

- under sections 51 (1) or (2), 51.1, 51.3, and 51.4 of the *Residential Tenancy Act* and sections 44 (1) or (2) and 44.1 of the *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act* amounting to more than \$65,000, or
- for debts and damages amounting to more than \$35,000

may amend their application to abandon the part of the claim that exceeds \$65,000 or \$35,000, as applicable, so that the balance of the claim may be dealt with through a dispute resolution proceeding.

Despite Rule 7.12 [*Amending an application at the hearing*], the respondent's consent is not required for an applicant to abandon the part of their claim that exceeds \$65,000 or \$35,000, as applicable. However, the respondent can object to the amendment under Rule 7.13 [*Objecting to a proposed amendment*].

### **2.9 No divided claims**

An applicant may not divide a claim.

### **2.10 Joining applications**

Applications for Dispute Resolution may be joined and dealt with under the same dispute resolution proceeding so that the dispute resolution proceeding will be fair, efficient, and consistent. In considering whether to join applications, the Residential Tenancy Branch will consider the following criteria:

- a) whether the applications pertain to the same residential property or residential properties which appear to be managed as one unit;

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

- b) whether all applications name the same landlord;
- c) whether the remedies sought in each application are similar; or
- d) whether it appears that the arbitrator will have to consider the same facts and make the same or similar findings of fact or law in resolving each application.

## **Making a cross-application for Dispute Resolution**

### **2.11 Filing an Application for Dispute Resolution to counter a claim**

To respond to an existing, related Application for Dispute Resolution, respondents may make a cross-application by filing their own Application for Dispute Resolution.

The issues identified in the cross-application must be related to the issues identified in the application being countered or responded to.

A party submitting a cross-application is considered the cross-applicant and must apply as soon as possible and so that the respondent to the cross-application receives the documents set out in Rule 3.1 [*Documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package*] not less than 14 days before the hearing or conference and so that the service provisions in Rule 3.16 [*Respondent's evidence provided in single package*] can be met.

### **2.12 Identify file being countered**

A cross-applicant making a cross-application must identify the application they are responding to.

### **2.13 Point at which a cross-application is considered to have been made**

A cross-application has been made when it has been submitted and either the fee has been paid or when the fee waiver application has been submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office. The three-day period for completing payment under Rule 2.4 is not an extension of any statutory timelines for making an application.

If payment is not completed or if the fee waiver application is not submitted within three days as required, the application will be considered abandoned. To pursue the claims, the applicant must submit a new application—this does not provide an extension of time for any statutory timelines.

### **2.14 Scheduling a Cross-Application for Dispute Resolution**

When the requirements of Rules 2.11, 2.12 and 2.13 have been met, and it is possible to satisfy Rule 3.3 [*Evidence for cross-Application for Dispute Resolution*], the Residential Tenancy Branch will schedule the cross-application hearing with the same arbitrator for the same date and time as the hearing for the matter being responded to.

When the original application has been set down for a facilitated settlement conference, the Residential Tenancy Branch will schedule the cross-application facilitated settlement conference with the same case facilitator for the same date and time as the conference for the matter being responded to.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

Cross-applications filed in relation to an application scheduled for an expedited hearing will be heard separately and not at the same time as the expedited hearing. See Rule 10 for more information on expedited hearings.

## **Rule 3 – Serving the application and submitting and exchanging evidence**

### **3.0.1 Digital submission of evidence**

Where possible, parties should submit evidence to the Residential Tenancy Branch digitally. If digital submission is not possible, a party may submit paper evidence to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office in accordance with Rule 3.03.

### **3.0.2 Restrictions on evidence format, size, or amount**

The Residential Tenancy Branch may impose restrictions on the format, size, or amount of evidence submitted or exchanged during the dispute resolution proceeding.

### **3.0.3 Paper evidence**

If parties are unable to submit evidence digitally in accordance with Rule 3.0.1, parties submitting paper evidence to be relied on in the dispute resolution proceeding should submit copies to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office unless the director specifically requests original evidence under Rule 3.8.

### **3.0.4 Party must maintain exact copy of evidence**

A party who submits evidence must keep an exact copy of the evidence they submitted for not less than two years after the date on which the dispute resolution proceeding, including any reviews, concludes.

### **3.0.5 Residential Tenancy Branch will not return copies**

The Residential Tenancy Branch will not return copies of evidence submitted during the dispute resolution proceeding .

### **3.0.6 Conversion of the format of evidence**

The Residential Tenancy Branch may:

- a) convert evidence into an electronically or digitally stored format; and
- b) deem the converted evidence as an accurate representation of the original.

### **3.0.7 Quality of evidence**

If evidence submitted is not in an acceptable format or quality to support a fair and appropriate dispute resolution proceeding, the director may require the person who submitted the evidence to resubmit it in a different format or resubmit exact copies.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**3.1 Documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package**

The applicant must, within three days of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package being made available by the Residential Tenancy Branch or within a different period specified by the director, serve each respondent with copies of the following:

- a) the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding provided to the applicant by the Residential Tenancy Branch, which includes the Application for Dispute Resolution;
- b) the Respondent Instructions for Dispute Resolution;
- c) any fact sheets provided by the Residential Tenancy Branch; and
- d) any other evidence submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office with the Application for Dispute Resolution, in accordance with Rule 2.5 [*Documents that must be submitted with an Application for Dispute Resolution*].

See Rule 10 for documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package for an Expedited Hearing and the timeframe for doing so.

See Rule 11 for additional documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package for an application for an additional rent increase for capital expenditures and the timeframe for doing so.

**3.1.1 Indicating service of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package**

The applicant must, within two days of the date by which they have been instructed to serve the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package, indicate to the Branch that the applicant served the respondent in accordance with Rule 3.1, or the Branch may adjourn the proceeding.

**3.1.2 Reinstating a proceeding adjourned under Rule 3.1.1**

If a proceeding is adjourned under Rule 3.1.1, the applicant may, within 5 days of the adjournment, request, in the manner specified by the director, that the proceeding be reinstated. If the applicant does not request the proceeding be reinstated within 5 days of the date of adjournment, the applicant may be deemed to have withdrawn their application under Rule 5.01.

**3.1.3 Applications excluded from rules 3.1.1 and 3.1.2**

Rules 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 do not apply to applications for dispute resolution:

- Made under section 43(3) of the RTA and section 36(3) of the MHPTA.
- To cancel a Notice to End Tenancy issued under sections 46 to 49.1 of the RTA and sections 39 to 42 of the MHPTA.
- Made under section 49.2 of the RTA.
- Submitted under Rule 2.11 to counter a claim.
- Subject to Rule 10 – Expedited Hearings.

### **3.2 Repealed and replaced by Rule 10**

### **3.3 Evidence for Cross-Application for Dispute Resolution**

Evidence supporting a cross-application must:

- be submitted at the same time as the application is submitted, or within three days of submitting an Online Application for Dispute Resolution;
- be served on the other party at the same time as the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package for the cross-application is served; and
- be received by the other party and the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office not less than 14 days before the hearing or conference.

### **3.4 If a respondent avoids service**

If a respondent appears to be avoiding service or cannot be found, the applicant may apply to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office for an order for substituted service.

An application for substituted service must show that the applicant made reasonable attempts to serve the respondent or provide evidence that shows the other party is unlikely to receive material if served according to the Act.

An application for substituted service that is made at the hearing may result in an adjournment.

An application for substituted service made at the conference may result in the case facilitator scheduling an additional conference.

### **3.5 Proof of service required at the dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference**

During the hearing or conference, the applicant must be prepared to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the director that each respondent was served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package and all evidence as required by the Act and these Rules of Procedure.

If the applicant cannot demonstrate that each respondent was served as required by the Act and the Rules of Procedure, the director may adjourn the application or dismiss it with or without leave to reapply.

### **3.6 Evidence must be relevant**

All evidence must be relevant to the claim(s) being made in the Application(s) for Dispute Resolution.

The director has the discretion to decide whether evidence is or is not relevant to the issues identified on the application and may decline to consider evidence that they determine is not relevant.

### **3.7 Evidence must be organized, clear and legible**

All documents to be relied on as evidence must be clear and legible.



## Residential Tenancy Branch Rules of Procedure

To ensure a fair, efficient, and effective process, identical documents and photographs, identified in the same manner, must be served on each respondent and uploaded to the Online Application for Dispute Resolution or submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office.

For example, photographs must be described in the same way, in the same order, such as: “Living room photo 1 and Living room photo 2”.

To ensure procedural fairness and efficiency, the director has the discretion to not consider evidence if the director determines it is not readily identifiable, organized, clear and legible.

### **3.7.1 Redacting information from evidence**

Parties can redact information from evidence submitted if the information is not relevant to the matters of dispute. For example, if a landlord applies for a tenant to cover the cost of a repair, the landlord may submit a receipt of expenses related to the repair. The landlord may redact any expenses on the receipt that do not pertain to the repair that is the matter of dispute. Similarly, a party can redact confidential information not relevant to the matter of dispute.

To ensure procedural fairness, evidence provided to the Residential Tenancy Branch and the other party must be the same. If a party redacts information from evidence, the redactions should be reflected in the evidence provided to both the Residential Tenancy Branch and the other party.

Parties should be aware that redacting too much information could result in the director exercising their discretion to not consider the evidence. Rules related to evidence, like Rule 3.6 [*Evidence must be relevant*] and Rule 3.7 [*Evidence must be organized, clear, and legible*], still apply to evidence from which a party has redacted information. In addition, the director has the authority to determine the relevance, necessity, and appropriateness of evidence under Rule 7.17 [*Presentation of evidence*]. When deciding whether to redact information or what information to redact, parties should ensure that the evidence is clear and legible, and that the director can discern the relevance and necessity of the evidence.

### **3.8 Original evidence**

At any time during the dispute resolution proceeding, the parties must be prepared to supply an original of any document if requested to do so by the director.

The director may direct that the original be placed into evidence, rather than a copy, or may accept as evidence a legible copy of the document.

### **3.9 Physical evidence**

No physical evidence will be accepted.

### **3.10 Digital evidence**

Digital evidence may include photographs, audio recordings, video recordings or electronic versions of printable documents in an accepted format.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**3.10.1 Description and labelling of digital evidence**

To ensure a fair, efficient, and effective process, where a party submits digital evidence, identical digital evidence and an accompanying description must be submitted through the Online Application for Dispute Resolution or Dispute Access Site, directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch or through a Service BC Office and be served on each respondent.

A party submitting digital evidence must:

- include with the digital evidence:
  - a description of the evidence;
  - identification of photographs, such as a logical number system and description;
  - a description of the contents of each digital file;
  - a time code for the key point in each audio or video recording; and
  - a statement as to the significance of each digital file;
- submit the digital evidence through the Online Application for Dispute Resolution system under 3.10.2, or directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch or a Service BC Office under 3.10.3; and
- serve the digital evidence on each respondent in accordance with 3.10.4.

**3.10.2 Digital evidence uploads**

Parties who submit evidence using the Residential Tenancy Branch Online Application for Dispute Resolution or Dispute Access Site must enter the information required under Rule 3.10.1 in the “Details and description” field when uploading evidence. The system will restrict evidence uploads to accepted formats and in accordance with file size restrictions pursuant to Rule 3.0.2.

**3.10.3 Digital evidence submitted directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch or through Service BC**

Parties who submit digital evidence to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office must provide the information required under Rule 3.10.1 using *Digital Evidence Details* (form RTB-43).

Parties who submit digital evidence under this Rule must do so by providing a copy of the evidence on a memory stick, compact disk, or DVD, or using a method requested by the Residential Tenancy Branch or Service BC.

**3.10.4 Digital evidence served to other parties**

Parties who serve digital evidence on other parties must provide the information required under Rule 3.10.1 using *Digital Evidence Details* (form RTB-43).

Parties who serve digital evidence to the Residential Tenancy Branch and paper evidence to other parties must provide the same documents and photographs, identified in the same manner in accordance with Rule 3.7.

## Residential Tenancy Branch Rules of Procedure

The party providing digital evidence must provide the other party with a copy of the evidence in a manner that is accessible to the other party. Devices and formats for serving digital evidence on another party include:

- on a memory stick, compact disk, or DVD;
- by sending a copy of the evidence by email if the other party provided an email address as an address for service; or
- by providing a link to a copy of the evidence stored on a File Hosting Service (e.g., Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive).

Regardless of the device or format used, the evidence must be served in accordance with section 88 of the *Residential Tenancy Act* or section 81 of the *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act*

### **3.10.5 Confirmation of access to digital evidence**

The format of digital evidence must be accessible to all parties. For evidence submitted through the Online Application for Dispute Resolution, the system will only upload evidence in accepted formats or within the file size limit in accordance with Rule 3.0.2.

Before the hearing or conference, a party providing digital evidence to the other party must confirm that the other party has playback equipment or is otherwise able to gain access to the evidence.

Before the hearing or conference, a party providing digital evidence to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office must confirm that the Residential Tenancy Branch has playback equipment or is otherwise able to gain access to the evidence.

If a party or the Residential Tenancy Branch is unable to access the digital evidence, the director may determine that the digital evidence will not be considered.

If a party asks another party about their ability to gain access to a particular format, device or platform, the other party must reply as soon as possible, and in any event so that all parties have seven days (or two days for an expedited hearing under Rule 10 and fifteen days for an application under Rule 11), with full access to the evidence and the party submitting and serving digital evidence can meet the requirements for filing and service established in Rules 3.1, 3.2, 3.14 and 3.15.

### **3.10.6 Sharing settings when using a File Hosting Service**

To maintain the integrity of evidence stored on a File Hosting Service, the party providing a link to a copy of the evidence must ensure the settings are set such that parties who were provided the link can only view and download the evidence, not edit the evidence. Information on how to change sharing settings is available on the [Residential Tenancy Branch website](#).

If the party providing the link does not use the correct sharing settings, the evidence may or may not be considered.

### **3.11 Unreasonable delay**

Evidence must be served and submitted as soon as reasonably possible.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

If the director determines that a party unreasonably delayed the service of evidence, the director may refuse to consider the evidence.

**3.12 Willful or recurring failure**

The director may refuse to accept evidence if they determine that there has been a willful or recurring failure to comply with the Act, Rules of Procedure or an order made during the dispute resolution proceeding, or if, for some other reason, the acceptance of the evidence would prejudice the other party or result in a breach of the principles of procedural fairness.

**3.13 Applicant evidence provided in single package**

Where possible, copies of all of the applicant's available evidence should be submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office and served on the other party in a single complete package.

An applicant submitting any subsequent evidence must be prepared to explain why the evidence was not submitted with the Application for Dispute Resolution in accordance with Rule 2.5 [Documents that must be submitted with an Application for Dispute Resolution] or Rule 10 [*Expedited Hearings*].

**3.14 Evidence not submitted at the time of Application for Dispute Resolution**

Except for evidence related to an expedited hearing (see Rule 10) and an additional rent increase for capital expenditures application (see Rule 11), documentary and digital evidence that is intended to be relied on must be received by the respondent and the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office not less than 14 days before the hearing or conference.

In the event that a piece of evidence is not available when the applicant submits and serves their evidence, the director will apply Rule 3.17.

**3.15 Respondent's evidence provided in single package**

Where possible, copies of all of the respondent's available evidence should be submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch online through the Dispute Access Site or directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch Office or through a Service BC Office. The respondent's evidence should be served on the other party in a single complete package.

The respondent must ensure evidence that the respondent intends to rely on is served on the applicant and submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch as soon as possible. Except for evidence related to an expedited hearing (see Rule 10) and an additional rent increase for capital expenditures application (see Rule 11), and subject to Rule 3.17, the respondent's evidence must be received by the applicant and the Residential Tenancy Branch not less than seven days before the hearing or conference.

See also Rules 3.7 and 3.10.

**3.16 Respondent's proof of service**

During the hearing or conference, the respondent must be prepared to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the director that each applicant was served with all their evidence as required by the Act and these Rules of Procedure.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**3.17 Consideration of new and relevant evidence**

Evidence not provided to the other party and the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office in accordance with the Act or Rules 2.5 [*Documents that must be submitted with an Application for Dispute Resolution*], 3.1, 3.2, 3.10.5, 3.14 3.15, and 10 may or may not be considered depending on whether the party can show to the arbitrator that it is new and relevant evidence and that it was not available at the time that their application was made or when they served and submitted their evidence.

The arbitrator has the discretion to determine whether to accept documentary or digital evidence that does not meet the criteria established above provided that the acceptance of late evidence does not unreasonably prejudice one party or result in a breach of the principles of procedural fairness.

Both parties must have the opportunity to be heard on the question of accepting late evidence.

If the arbitrator decides to accept the evidence, the other party will be given an opportunity to review the evidence. The arbitrator must apply Rule 7.8 [*Adjournment after the dispute resolution hearing begins*] and Rule 7.9 [*Criteria for granting an adjournment*].

**3.18 Evidence not received by the arbitrator or case facilitator**

The arbitrator may adjourn a dispute resolution hearing to receive evidence if a party can show that the evidence was submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office for the proceeding within the required time limits but was not received by the arbitrator before the dispute resolution hearing.

**3.19 Submitting evidence after the hearing starts**

No additional evidence may be submitted after the dispute resolution hearing starts, except as directed by the arbitrator. In providing direction, the arbitrator will:

- a) specify the date by which the evidence must be submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office and whether it must be served on the other party; and
- b) provide an opportunity for the other party to respond to the additional evidence, if required.

In considering whether to admit documentary or digital evidence after the hearing starts, the arbitrator must give both parties an opportunity to be heard on the question of admitting such evidence.

## **Rule 4 – Amending an Application for Dispute Resolution**

**4.1 Amending an Application for Dispute Resolution**

An applicant may amend a claim by:

- completing an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution form; and

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

- filing the completed Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution form and supporting evidence on the Dispute Access site or with the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office.

An amendment may add to, alter, or remove claims made in the original application.

As stated in Rule 2.3 [*Related issues*], unrelated claims contained in an application may be dismissed with or without leave to reapply.

See also Rule 3 [*Serving the application and submitting and exchanging evidence*].

Amendments to applications for expedited hearings may only be made at the hearing. See Rule 10.7 [*Amending an application for an expedited hearing*].

Applications that are proceeding through the facilitated settlement process may only be amended as specified in Rules 12.15 to 12.18.

## **4.2 Amending an application at the hearing**

Moved to Rule 7.12.

### **4.2.1 Removing claims made in the application at the hearing**

Moved to Rule 7.12.1.

## **4.3 Time limits for amending an application**

Amended applications and supporting evidence should be submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office as soon as possible and in any event early enough to allow the applicant to comply with Rule 4.6.

## **4.4 Paying additional fee when amending a claim**

Repealed effective January 8, 2016.

## **4.5 Accepting an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution**

The Residential Tenancy Branch or Service BC will accept an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution form submitted in accordance with these Rules of Procedure.

## **4.6 Serving an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution**

As soon as possible, copies of the Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution form and supporting evidence must be produced and served upon each respondent by the applicant in a manner required by section 89 of the *Residential Tenancy Act* or section 82 of the *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act* and these Rules of Procedure.

The applicant must be prepared to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the director that each respondent was served with the Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution form and supporting evidence as required by the Act and these Rules of Procedure.

In any event, a copy of the amended application and supporting evidence should be served on the respondents as soon as possible and must be received by the respondent(s) not less than 14 days before the hearing.

See also Rule 3 [*Serving the application and submitting and exchanging evidence*].

#### 4.7 Objecting to a proposed amendment

Moved to Rule 7.13.

## Rule 5 – Before the hearing or conference

### 5.0.1 Withdrawal of an Application for Dispute Resolution

#### How to withdraw an application for dispute resolution

An applicant may withdraw an application for dispute resolution by notifying the Residential Tenancy Branch and providing a legible copy of any required documents, in one of the following ways:

- any time before the hearing or conference, withdrawing the application through the [Online Application for Dispute Resolution](#) and either emailing any required documents to [HSRTO@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HSRTO@gov.bc.ca) including the file number in the subject line (“Withdrawal documents: file #”) or providing hard copies of any required documents to any Service BC Office or the Residential Tenancy Branch Office. Applications to dispute a notice to end tenancy or for adjourned hearings or review hearings may not be withdrawn online;
- any time before the hearing or conference, notifying the Residential Tenancy Branch by telephone and providing hard copies of any required documents to any Service BC Office or the Residential Tenancy Branch Office;
- any time before the hearing or conference, attending any Service BC Office or the Residential Tenancy Branch Office in person and providing a copy of any required documents; or
- at least one week before the hearing or conference, emailing the Residential Tenancy Branch at [HSRTO@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HSRTO@gov.bc.ca), including the file number in the subject line (“Withdrawal: file #”), and attaching a copy of the required documents, if any.

If your dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference is scheduled for less than one week away, the email may not be processed in time. This could result in the director making a final and binding decision in the matter. If your dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference is scheduled for less than one week away, contact the Residential Tenancy Branch by phone or visit any Service BC Office or the Residential Tenancy Branch Office in person.

#### Withdrawing an application to dispute a notice to end tenancy

Where a tenant has applied to dispute a landlord’s notice to end tenancy, the applicant tenant requires the written consent of the landlord to withdraw their application.

Required documents:

- the respondent landlord’s written consent to the withdrawal

#### Withdrawing an application after the hearing has begun and is adjourned

Where a participatory hearing (a hearing that is scheduled to take place in person, by telephone or by videoconference) has begun but is adjourned by an arbitrator for continuation at a later date, a party seeking to withdraw that application must provide evidence of the other party’s consent to the withdrawal and that the parties have

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

resolved all matters at issue in the application through a written agreement, such that continuation of the hearing is no longer necessary.

Although the arbitrator will issue a final decision in the matter under Rule 8.7 [*Original decision*], no orders reflecting the terms of the settlement will be issued under Rule 8.4 [*Decision and orders based on settlement*].

Required documents:

- the other party's written consent to the withdrawal
- the written agreement signed by both parties, setting out the parties' agreed resolutions to each of the matters at issue in the application

### **Withdrawing a review hearing**

If a review hearing has been granted, the party who made the Application for Review Consideration may withdraw the review hearing at any time before the scheduled review hearing.

Required documents:

- where the decision or order at issue relates to a notice to end tenancy, the other party's written consent to the withdrawal of the application

### **Withdrawing all other types of applications**

In all other circumstances, where possible the applicant must provide the other party with written notice of the withdrawal of their application for dispute resolution.

## **Rescheduling**

### **5.1 Rescheduling a dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference**

The Residential Tenancy Branch will reschedule a dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference if signed written consent from both the applicant and the respondent is received by the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office not less than three days before the scheduled date for the dispute resolution hearing or facilitated settlement conference.

### **5.2 If agreement to reschedule a dispute resolution hearing cannot be obtained**

When agreement to reschedule a hearing cannot be reached, a party or the party's agent may make a request at the hearing to adjourn the hearing under rule 7.8 [*Adjournment after the dispute resolution hearing begins*].

#### **5.2.1 If agreement to reschedule a facilitated settlement conference cannot be obtained**

In exceptional circumstances, a case facilitator may grant requests made at the facilitated settlement conference to reschedule the facilitated settlement conference.



## Summons to attend or produce evidence for hearings

### 5.3 Application for a summons

On the written request of a party or on an arbitrator's own initiative, the arbitrator may issue a summons requiring a person to attend a dispute resolution proceeding or produce evidence. A summons is only issued in cases where the evidence is necessary, appropriate, and relevant. A summons will not be issued if a witness agrees to attend or agrees to provide the requested evidence.

A request to issue a summons must be submitted, in writing, to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office, and must:

- state the name and address of the witness;
- provide the reason the witness is required to attend and give evidence;
- describe efforts made to have the witness attend the hearing;
- describe the documents or other things, if any, which are required for the hearing; and
- provide the reason why such documents or other things are relevant.

### 5.4 When a request for a summons may be made

A written request for a summons should be made as soon as possible before the time and date scheduled for a dispute resolution hearing.

In circumstances where a party could not reasonably make their application before a hearing, the arbitrator will consider a request for a summons made at the hearing.

### 5.5 Witness compensation

When an arbitrator issues a summons at the request of a party, the party who has requested the summons must provide the witness with compensation for the reasonable cost of giving that evidence.

When an arbitrator issues a summons on their own initiative, compensation is not required.

## Rule 6 – Pertaining to the hearing in general

### 6.1 Arbitrator's role

The arbitrator will conduct the dispute resolution proceeding in accordance with the Act, the Rules of Procedure, and principles of procedural fairness.

### 6.2 What will be considered at a dispute resolution hearing

The hearing is limited to matters claimed on the application unless the arbitrator allows a party to amend the application.

The arbitrator may use their discretion to dismiss unrelated claims with or without leave to reapply in accordance with Rule 2.3 [*Related issues*]. For example, if a party has applied to cancel a Notice to End Tenancy or is seeking an order of possession, the

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

arbitrator may decline to hear other claims that have been included in the application and the arbitrator may dismiss such matters with or without leave to reapply.

**6.3 Format of dispute resolution hearing**

A dispute resolution hearing may be held at the discretion of the Residential Tenancy Branch:

- a) by telephone conference call;
- b) in person;
- c) in writing;
- d) by video conference or other electronic means; or
- e) any combination of the above.

**6.4 A party may request that the hearing be held in a specific format**

A party may submit a request that a hearing be held in a format other than telephone conference call.

A party must complete and submit a *Request for Alternate Dispute Resolution Hearing or Facilitated Settlement Conference Format (RTB-36)* to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office with supporting documentation as soon as possible and in any event, not less than 30 days before the hearing date.

A party can submit a *Request for Alternate Dispute Resolution Hearing or Facilitated Settlement Conference Format (RTB-36)* and supporting documentation less than 30 days before the hearing if they provide an explanation and supporting documentation for why the request is being submitted late.

Unless the director orders otherwise, if an application that was moved to a dispute resolution hearing under Rule 12.24 was previously granted an alternate facilitated settlement conference format under Rule 12.4, the same format will be used for the dispute resolution hearing. The party does not need to submit another *Request for Alternate Dispute Resolution Hearing or Settlement Conference Format (RTB-36)*.

There are different timelines for requests for an alternate hearing format for expedited hearings and for facilitated settlement conferences. See Rule 10.10 [*A party may request that the expedited hearing be held in a specific format*] and Rule 12.4 [*A party may request that the settlement conference be held in a specific format*].

**6.5 Opportunity to be heard on a request for a specific format**

When a party requests that a hearing be held in a format other than the one set by the Residential Tenancy Branch, the Residential Tenancy Branch will give the other party an opportunity to make submissions on the format of the hearing.

**6.6 The standard of proof and onus of proof**

The standard of proof in a dispute resolution hearing is on a balance of probabilities, which means that it is more likely than not that the facts occurred as claimed.

The onus to prove their case is on the person making the claim. In most circumstances this is the person making the application. However, in some situations the arbitrator

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

may determine the onus of proof is on the other party. For example, the landlord must prove the reason they wish to end the tenancy when the tenant applies to cancel a Notice to End Tenancy.

**6.7 Party may be represented or assisted**

A party to a dispute resolution hearing may be represented by an agent or a lawyer and may be assisted by an advocate, an interpreter, or any other person whose assistance the party requires in order to make their presentation.

**6.8 Proof of authority to act**

If an agent attends on behalf of the party, the agent should be prepared to provide proof of their authority to represent a party.

**6.9 Communication with the arbitrator**

Direct communication with the arbitrator is restricted to the hearing or when otherwise instructed by the arbitrator.

See also Rule 3.19 [*Submitting evidence after the hearing starts*].

**6.10 Interruptions and inappropriate behaviour at the dispute resolution hearing**

Disrupting the hearing will not be permitted. The arbitrator may give directions to any person in attendance at a hearing who is rude or hostile or acts inappropriately. A person who does not comply with the arbitrator's direction may be excluded from the dispute resolution hearing and the arbitrator may proceed in the absence of that excluded party.

## **Recording of hearings**

**6.11 Recording of Teleconference Hearings**

The Residential Tenancy Branch's teleconference system automatically records audio for all dispute resolution hearings. Persons are prohibited from recording dispute resolution hearings themselves; this includes any audio, photographic, video, or digital recording.

**6.12 Use of Recordings**

The Residential Tenancy Branch may use recordings for quality assurance and training purposes.

A party may request a copy of their recording. A party may also provide written authorization allowing another person, including a transcription company, to request a copy of their recording.

Arbitrators will not listen to a recording when making a decision on an application for a review consideration, clarification, or correction, except where it would result in a breach of the principles of procedural fairness not to listen to it.

### **6.13 Restricted Use of Recordings**

Parties and their authorized representatives must not alter, copy, distribute, or publish a recording unless authorized in writing by the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch.

## **Rule 7 – During the hearing**

### **7.1 Commencement of the dispute resolution hearing**

The dispute resolution hearing will commence at the scheduled time unless otherwise set by the arbitrator.

### **7.2 Delay in the start of a hearing**

In the event of a delay of a start of a conference call hearing, each party must stay available on the line to commence the hearing for 30 minutes after the time scheduled for the start of the hearing.

In the event of a delay of a face-to-face hearing, unless otherwise advised, the parties must remain available to commence the hearing at the hearing location for 30 minutes after the time scheduled for the start of the hearing.

### **7.3 Consequences of not attending the hearing**

If a party or their agent fails to attend the hearing, the arbitrator may conduct the dispute resolution hearing in the absence of that party, or dismiss the application, with or without leave to re-apply.

### **7.4 Evidence must be presented**

Evidence must be presented by the party who submitted it, or by the party's agent.

If a party or their agent does not attend the hearing to present evidence, any written submissions supplied may or may not be considered.

#### **7.4.1 Settlement discussions will not be considered as evidence**

If an application for dispute resolution is moved from the facilitated settlement process to a hearing under Rule 12.24 [*Authority to move application for dispute resolution for hearing at any time*], the arbitrator will not consider any evidence presented by a party that relates to confidential discussions held during the settlement conference.

## **Introductory matters**

### **7.5 Introduction to the dispute resolution hearing**

At the beginning of the dispute resolution hearing, the arbitrator will explain how the dispute resolution hearing will proceed and answer any relevant questions the parties may have about the hearing process.

### **7.6 Identification of people present at a dispute resolution hearing**

Each participant must identify all people who are present with them at the start and anyone who joins them at any time during a hearing.

### **7.7 Preliminary matters**

At the start of the hearing, the arbitrator will consider any preliminary matters.

Preliminary matters include, but are not limited to, questions of jurisdiction, substituted service, adjournment, adding a related matter, amending the application, and summoning a witness to provide evidence.

## **Adjourning a hearing**

### **7.8 Adjournment after the dispute resolution hearing begins**

At any time after the dispute resolution hearing begins, the arbitrator may adjourn the dispute resolution hearing to another time.

A party or a party's agent may request that a hearing be adjourned.

The arbitrator will determine whether the circumstances warrant the adjournment of the hearing.

### **7.9 Criteria for granting an adjournment**

Without restricting the authority of the arbitrator to consider other factors, the arbitrator will consider the following when allowing or disallowing a party's request for an adjournment:

- the oral or written submissions of the parties;
- the likelihood of the adjournment resulting in a resolution;
- the degree to which the need for the adjournment arises out of the intentional actions or neglect of the party seeking the adjournment;
- whether the adjournment is required to provide a fair opportunity for a party to be heard; and
- the possible prejudice to each party.

### **7.10 Mandatory attendance**

If the dispute resolution hearing is adjourned, the arbitrator will order the parties to attend on the date when the dispute resolution hearing will be reconvened.

If a party does not attend the reconvened hearing at the scheduled time, the arbitrator may commence, continue, and conclude the hearing. Pursuant to Rule 7.3, the arbitrator may issue a decision and order in the absence of a party.

### **7.11 Refusing a request for adjournment**

If the arbitrator determines that an adjournment should not be granted, the dispute resolution hearing will proceed as scheduled.

When a request for adjournment is refused, reasons for refusing the request will be provided in the written decision.

## **Amending an Application for Dispute Resolution at the Hearing**

### **7.12 Amending an application at the hearing**

An application can be amended at the hearing only in circumstances:

- that can reasonably be anticipated, such as when the amount of rent owing has increased since the time the Application for Dispute Resolution was made, or
- where the applicant requests an amendment to their application and the respondent consents to the amendment.

If an amendment to an application is sought at a hearing, an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution need not be submitted or served.

#### **7.12.1 Removing claims made in the application at the hearing**

If an applicant requests that their application be amended to remove a claim at the hearing and the respondent consents to the amendment, the arbitrator's decision will record that the claim was withdrawn and the applicant can submit a new Application for Dispute Resolution for the withdrawn claim, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties.

### **7.13 Objecting to a proposed amendment**

A respondent may raise an objection at the hearing to an Amendment to an Application for Dispute Resolution on the ground that the respondent has not had sufficient time to respond to the amended application or submit evidence in reply.

The arbitrator will consider such objections and determine if the amendment would prejudice the other party or result in a breach of the principles of procedural fairness. The arbitrator may hear the application as amended, dismiss the application with or without leave to reapply, or adjourn the hearing to allow the respondent an opportunity to respond.

## **Adding additional parties**

### **7.14 Request that another person be added to a proceeding**

In exceptional circumstances, a party may make an oral request at the hearing to add another party.

### **7.15 Determining that another person be added as a party**

At the request of a party under Rule 7.12, the arbitrator will decide whether a person will be added as a party.

In addition, the arbitrator may unilaterally determine that another person should be added as a party.

The newly added party will be added to the proceedings without the need for further revision of the Application for Dispute Resolution.

All Rules of Procedure apply to the newly added party, with the exception of Rules establishing timeframes for the exchange of evidence.

As soon as possible after a party is added to a proceeding, the original applicant(s) and respondent(s) must serve their evidence on the newly added party.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

The newly added party must, as soon as possible, serve their evidence on the original applicant(s) and respondent(s) and submit it to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office, and in any event not less than seven days before the reconvened hearing.

**7.16 Making orders regarding service**

The arbitrator may make orders in relation to service of necessary documents on a newly added party, such as a copy of the Application for Dispute Resolution, a copy of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package and information about the dispute resolution proceeding.

**7.17 Issuing orders affecting an added party**

When a party has been added to a proceeding under Rule 7.13 and has been served with notice of the proceeding, the arbitrator may issue decisions and orders affecting that party whether or not they participate in the hearing.

**7.18 Notice to materially affected tenant(s)**

The arbitrator may determine, in accordance with the Act, that a tenant may be materially affected by the decision or an order reached through a dispute resolution proceeding. When such a determination is made, the arbitrator may adjourn the dispute resolution hearing to allow the materially affected tenant an opportunity to participate in the proceeding.

The arbitrator will direct the applicant and/or the respondent to serve the affected tenant with a copy of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding for the adjourned dispute resolution proceeding which includes the Application for Dispute Resolution and copies of all relevant evidence.

## **Presentation of evidence at the hearing**

**7.19 Presentation of evidence**

Each party will be given an opportunity to present evidence related to the claim. The arbitrator has the authority to determine the relevance, necessity, and appropriateness of evidence.

See Rule 3 [*Serving the application and submitting and exchanging evidence*].

**7.20 Order of presentation**

The applicant will present their case and evidence first unless the arbitrator decides otherwise, or when the respondent bears the onus of proof.

One instance when the respondent bears the onus of proof is where a tenant applies to cancel a Notice to End Tenancy. In such a case, the hearing will begin with the landlord presenting first unless the arbitrator decides otherwise.

**7.21 Witnesses' attendance at the dispute resolution hearing**

Parties are responsible for having their witnesses available for the dispute resolution hearing.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

A witness must be available until they are excused by the arbitrator or until the dispute resolution hearing ends.

**7.22 Exclusion of witnesses and others**

The arbitrator may exclude witnesses from the dispute resolution hearing until called to give evidence.

The arbitrator may, when they consider it appropriate to do so, exclude any other person from the dispute resolution hearing.

**Questions regarding evidence**

**7.23 Cross-examination**

When evidence given at a hearing is disputed by a party, the arbitrator may allow the party an opportunity to question:

- the other party's evidence; and/or
- the other party's witness with respect to their testimony.

**7.24 Questions asked through the arbitrator**

Each party may be required to ask questions through the arbitrator:

- in order to ensure the relevancy of evidence; or
- if a party presents rude, improper, or irrelevant questions when given the opportunity to directly question another party.

**7.25 Questions by the arbitrator**

The arbitrator may ask questions of a party or witness if necessary:

- to determine the relevancy or sufficiency of evidence;
- to assess the credibility of a party or a witness; or
- to otherwise assist the arbitrator in reaching a decision.

**Rule 8 – Conclusion of a dispute resolution hearing**

**8.1 Ending the dispute resolution hearing**

The arbitrator determines when the hearing has ended.

The arbitrator has the discretion to receive additional evidence after the hearing has ended.

See also Rule 3.19 [*Submitting evidence after the hearing starts*].

**8.2 Reconvening the dispute resolution hearing**

At the arbitrator's discretion, the hearing may be reconvened prior to concluding the proceeding.



Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**8.3 Concluding the dispute resolution proceeding**

The proceeding concludes with the issuance of a final and binding decision and/or order(s).

**8.4 Decision and orders based on a settlement**

Where the parties have reached a settlement in the hearing, the arbitrator will end the proceeding by recording the settlement in the form of a decision and/or order(s) that reflects the terms of the settlement.

**8.5 Dispute resolution hearing ended without the parties reaching agreement**

After the end of a dispute resolution hearing in which the parties have not reached a settlement, the arbitrator will make a final and binding decision.

**8.6 Service of order**

If the arbitrator sets conditions for service of a decision or order, the decision or order will set those conditions out.

**8.7 Original decision**

The Residential Tenancy Branch will provide an original decision, signed by pen or through electronic means to the primary applicant and the first respondent listed on the application, for sharing with the other applicant(s)/respondent(s), or as otherwise determined during the hearing.

The Residential Tenancy Branch will send the decision by email if an email address is provided unless a party requests a different method at the hearing.

**8.8 Original order**

The Residential Tenancy Branch will provide a sufficient number of original orders, signed by pen or through electronic means, to the recipient of the order to permit service and enforcement through the court.

If the applicant is the recipient of the order, the Residential Tenancy Branch will send the orders to the applicant by email if an email address is provided unless the applicant requests a different method at the hearing.

## **Rule 9 – Miscellaneous**

**9.1 Non-compliance will not stop or nullify a proceeding**

Failure to comply with these Rules of Procedure will not in itself stop or nullify a proceeding, a step taken, or any decision or order made in the proceeding.

**9.2 Conflicts between the Rules of Procedure and the Act**

Where the Act and the Rules of Procedure conflict, the Act applies.

**9.3 Effective date of these Rules of Procedure**

These Rules of Procedure take effect at the date and time specified in the footer of this document and apply to Applications for Dispute Resolution made on or after the specified date and time, and to the dispute resolution proceedings that are commenced by those applications.

#### **9.4 Continued application of the former version of the Rules of Procedure**

The version of the Rules of Procedure that were in effect immediately prior to the date and time specified in the footer of this document continue in effect and will apply to:

- a) Applications for Dispute Resolution that were made prior to the date and time specified in the footer of this document.
- b) Applications for Dispute Resolution that were made prior to the date and time specified in the footer of this document and amended after these Rules of Procedure came into effect, except to the extent that the director determines that the application of the former Rules of Procedure would prejudice the party who applied for dispute resolution or would result in a breach of the principles of procedural fairness.

In determining the extent to which of these Rules of Procedure should be applied, the director must allow each of the parties the opportunity to make submissions about the extent of prejudice that might result from an application of these Rules of Procedure or the former Rules.

### **Rule 10 - Expedited Hearings**

If any time limit in this rule conflicts with the time limit in another rule, the time limit in this rule applies to the expedited hearing.

#### **10.1 Director's powers if a dispute qualifies for an expedited hearing**

If an application for dispute resolution falls under the sections set out in Rule 10.1.1. or the director grants a request for an expedited hearing under Rule 10.1.2, the director may

- make an order specifying the method(s) of service the applicant or respondent must use;
- make an order specifying earlier time limits than those set out in this rule or any other rule; and
- set the matter down to be heard on a date that is earlier than would normally be required to accommodate the time limits established under these rules in cases of extreme urgency.

##### **10.1.1 Application of Rule 10**

Rule 10 automatically applies to applications for dispute resolution made under sections 33, 54 and 56 of the RTA, and sections 27, 47 and 49 of the MHPTA.

##### **10.1.2 Other applications**

Notwithstanding Rule 10.1.1, the director may hear an application for dispute resolution made under another section of the RTA or MHPTA on an expedited basis, if, in the director's opinion, there is an imminent danger to the health and safety of a landlord or tenant.

### **10.1.3 No reasonable grounds for application under Rule 10.1.1**

Under section 62(4)(a) of the RTA or section 55(4)(a) of the MHPTA, the director can dismiss an application for dispute resolution if there are no reasonable grounds for the application. Section 59(2)(b) of the RTA and section 52(2)(b) of the MHPTA, require an application for dispute resolution to include full particulars of the dispute.

If an applicant submits an application for dispute resolution under sections 33, 54, or 56 of the RTA or sections 27, 47, or 49 of the MHPTA, the director may dismiss the application if the particulars set out in the application do not disclose reasonable grounds to establish the section in issue is applicable.

### **10.2 Applicant's evidence for an expedited hearing**

An applicant must submit all evidence that they intend to rely on at the hearing with their application for dispute resolution.

### **10.3 Serving the notice of dispute resolution proceeding package**

The applicant must, within one day of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package being made available by the Residential Tenancy Branch, serve each respondent with copies of all of the following:

- the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding provided to the applicant by the Residential Tenancy Branch;
- the Respondent Instructions for Dispute Resolution;
- an Order of the director respecting service;
- the Expedited Dispute Resolution Process Fact Sheet (RTB-114E) provided by the Residential Tenancy Branch; and
- evidence submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch online or in person, or through a Service BC Office with the Application for Dispute Resolution, in accordance with Rule 10.2 [*Applicant's Evidence Relating to an Expedited Hearing*].

### **10.4 Respondent's evidence for an expedited hearing**

Copies of all evidence that the respondent intends to rely on at the hearing must be submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch online through the Dispute Access Site or directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch Office or through a Service BC Office. The respondent's evidence must be served on the other party in a single complete package.

### **10.5 Time limit for respondent's evidence**

The respondent must ensure evidence they intend to rely on at the hearing is served on the applicant and submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch as soon as possible and at least two days before the hearing.

### **10.6 Late evidence**

If a piece of evidence is not available when the applicant or respondent submits and serves their evidence, the arbitrator will apply Rule 3.17.

### **10.7 Amending an application for an expedited hearing**

An application for an expedited hearing may only be amended at the hearing. Requests to amend an application made prior to the hearing will be denied.

### **10.8 Cross-applications will be heard separately**

An application for dispute resolution to counter a claim scheduled under Rule 10 will be set down for a separate hearing.

### **10.9 Proof of Service**

An applicant must provide proof of service by submitting RTB 9 Proof of Service – Notice of a Dispute Resolution form one day after serving the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package and at least two days before the hearing. If the applicant fails to do this, the arbitrator may, at the hearing, dismiss the application, reschedule the hearing, or adjourn it to a later date.

### **10.10 A party may request that the expedited hearing be held in a specific format**

A party may submit a request that an expedited hearing be held in a format other than telephone conference call.

An applicant must complete and submit a *Request for Alternate Hearing Format (RTB-36)* to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office with supporting documentation within 3 days of the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding being made available by the Residential Tenancy Branch. A respondent must complete and submit a *Request for Alternate Hearing Format (RTB-36)* with supporting documentation within 3 days of receiving the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding or being deemed to have received the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding.

A party can submit a *Request for Alternate Hearing Format (RTB-36)* and supporting documentation after the deadlines set out above if they provide an explanation and supporting documentation for why the request is being submitted late.

## **Rule 11 – Proceedings for Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures**

This Rule applies only to dispute resolution proceedings for a landlord application for an additional rent increase for capital expenditures under s. 23.1 of the Residential Tenancy Regulation (Regulation). Rules 1 to 9 also apply unless otherwise noted.

### **11.1 Documents that must be served with the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package**

In addition to the documents specified in Rule 3.1, the applicant must serve each respondent with the Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures fact sheet (RTB-151).

### **11.2 Evidence not submitted at the time of Application for Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures**

Notwithstanding Rule 3.14, evidence the applicant intends to rely on at the hearing must be received by the respondent and the Residential Tenancy Branch not less than 30 days before the hearing.

### **11.3 Respondent's evidence for an Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures Proceeding**

The respondent's evidence should be submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch online through the Dispute Access Site or directly to the Residential Tenancy Branch Office or through a Service BC Office. The respondent's evidence should be served on the other party in a single complete package.

The evidence that the respondent intends to rely on at the hearing must be served on the applicant and submitted to the Residential Tenancy Branch as soon as possible. Notwithstanding Rule 3.15, and subject to Rule 3.17, the respondent's evidence must be received by the applicant and the Residential Tenancy Branch not less than 15 days before the hearing.

See also Rules 3.7 and 3.10.

### **11.4 Applicant must submit documentation related to ineligibility criteria**

Applicants must submit with their application any documents in their possession at the time they made their application that relate to the maintenance of the major system or component that was repaired or replaced (e.g., maintenance records).

Additionally, applicants must submit as evidence any documents in their possession at the time they made their application related to payments they have received or are entitled to receive from other sources for installing, repairing, or replacing a major component or system.

### **11.5 Written submissions by respondents**

Notwithstanding Rule 7.4 [*Evidence must be presented*], if a respondent or their agent provides written submissions as part of a dispute resolution proceeding, the arbitrator will consider the submissions regardless of whether the respondent or their agent attends the hearing.

## **Rule 12 – Facilitated Settlement Process**

This Rule applies only to applications for dispute resolution that the director has scheduled for the facilitated settlement process. Rules 1 to 5 also apply to these applications unless otherwise noted.

## Overview of Facilitated Settlement Process

### 12.1 Applications that will generally be prioritized for the facilitated settlement process

The director will generally prioritize scheduling the applications for dispute resolution specified in the Appendix for the facilitated settlement process unless, in the director's opinion, the parties are unlikely to reach a settlement agreement.

The Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package will set out whether an application has been scheduled for the facilitated settlement process and will set out the date and time of the facilitated settlement conference.

#### 12.1.1 Applications that will not be considered for the facilitated settlement process

The director of the Residential Tenancy Branch is permitted to definitively exclude certain matters from the facilitated settlement process in these Rules. The following applications for dispute resolution will go directly to a hearing or direct request:

- Made under section 43(3) of the RTA and section 36(3) of the MHPTA.
- Made under section 49.2 of the RTA.
- Made under section 59(6) of the RTA.
- Scheduled for a direct request.
- Subject to Rule 10 – Expedited Hearings.

### 12.2 Case facilitator's role

The case facilitator will conduct the facilitated settlement process in accordance with the Act, the Rules of Procedure, and principles of procedural fairness. In addition, the case facilitator may issue directions, instructions, and orders to assist parties to resolve their disputes in a timely, flexible, and accessible manner.

### 12.3 Consequences of not attending the conference

If a party or their agent fails to attend the conference, the case facilitator may conduct the conference in the absence of that party. This could include issuing a final and binding decision under Rules 12.22 and 12.23 with respect to one or more of the issues or claims in dispute.

## Conduct of Facilitated Settlement Process

### 12.4 A party may request that the conference be held in a specific format

A party may submit a request that a conference be held in a format other than telephone conference call.

A party must complete and submit a *Request for Alternate Dispute Resolution Hearing or Facilitated Settlement Conference Format (RTB-36)* to the Residential Tenancy Branch directly or through a Service BC Office with supporting documentation as soon as possible.

### **12.5 Party may be represented or assisted**

A party may be represented by an agent or a lawyer and may be assisted by an advocate, an interpreter, or any other person whose assistance the party requires to equitably participate in facilitated settlement discussions.

### **12.6 Proof of authority to act**

If an agent attends on behalf of the party, the agent should be prepared to provide proof of their authority to represent a party.

### **12.7 Communications with the parties during the facilitated settlement process**

The case facilitator can communicate with the parties at any point in the facilitated settlement process. The case facilitator can communicate privately with one party at a time during the conference to assist the parties in reaching a facilitated settlement agreement.

Direct communication with the case facilitator is restricted to the facilitated settlement conference or when otherwise initiated by the case facilitator.

Communications made during the facilitated settlement process are confidential and must not be disclosed in any other dispute resolution proceeding.

### **12.8 Interruptions and inappropriate behaviour at the facilitated settlement conference**

Disrupting the conference will not be permitted. The case facilitator may give directions to any person who is rude or hostile or acts inappropriately. A person who does not comply with the case facilitator's direction may be excluded from the conference and the case facilitator may proceed in the absence of that excluded party. If a case facilitator excludes a party from the conference, the case facilitator can resolve the dispute under Rules 12.22 and 12.23.

### **12.9 Case facilitator can schedule additional facilitated settlement conferences**

The case facilitator can schedule additional facilitated settlement conferences if, in the case facilitator's opinion, it is likely that the parties will reach a settlement agreement if they participate in additional facilitated settlement conferences.

## **Recordings of Facilitated Settlement Conferences**

### **12.10 Recording of Facilitated Settlement Conferences**

The Residential Tenancy Branch's teleconference system automatically records audio for all facilitated settlement conferences. Private discussions between the case facilitator and each party are not recorded. Persons are prohibited from recording facilitated settlement conferences themselves; this includes any audio, photographic, video, or digital recording.

### **12.11 Use of Recordings**

The Residential Tenancy Branch may use recordings for quality assurance and training purposes.

A party may request a copy of their recording. A party may also provide written authorization allowing another person, including a transcription company, to request a copy of their recording. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, a person may only request a recording 20 days after the dispute resolution proceeding has concluded. The fact that a party intends to apply for review consideration, clarification or correction is not considered an extraordinary circumstance.

### **12.12 Restricted Use of Recordings**

Parties and their authorized representatives must not alter, copy, distribute, or publish a recording unless authorized in writing by the director of the Residential Tenancy Branch.

## **Evidence in the facilitated settlement process**

### **12.13 Application of Rule 3**

Rule 3 [*Serving the application and submitting and exchanging evidence*] applies to applications for dispute resolution scheduled for the facilitated settlement process, except for Rules 3.17-3.19.

### **12.14 Evidence not provided or received by the case facilitator before the facilitated settlement conference**

During the facilitated settlement conference, it may become clear that new and relevant evidence exists or that evidence a party submitted was not received by the case facilitator. The case facilitator may schedule an additional facilitated settlement conference under Rule 12.9 so the parties can provide the evidence if, in the case facilitator's opinion, the evidence could help reach a settlement agreement.

## **Amending and Modifying an Application for Dispute Resolution in the Facilitated Settlement Process**

### **12.15 Amending an application**

An application proceeding through the facilitated settlement process cannot be amended before the facilitated settlement conference. Requests to amend an application made prior to the conference will be denied.

### **12.16 Opportunity to add party or revise claims during facilitated settlement conference**

During the facilitated settlement conference, the case facilitator can

- provide an opportunity for a party to add a party to the dispute,
- permit a party to add, revise, or withdraw a claim to the dispute, and
- set out the steps to add a party or claim to the dispute



Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

if, in the case facilitator's opinion, doing so will assist the parties in resolving one or more of the claims.

**12.17 Claims not named in the Application for Dispute Resolution**

Despite Rule 2.2 [*Identifying issues on the Application for Dispute Resolution*], parties can include terms in their agreement related to issues that were not claimed in the application or added to the dispute under Rule 12.16.

For clarity, the case facilitator can only resolve claims under Rules 12.22 and 12.23 that are named in the application for dispute resolution.

**12.18 Updates to application moved to a hearing**

If any claims in an application for dispute resolution are moved to a hearing under Rule 12.24, the parties can amend the application and submit additional evidence prior to the dispute resolution hearing pursuant to Rules 3 to 5.

**Agreement-Based Activities during Facilitated Settlement Process**

**12.19 Agreements made during facilitated settlement process**

If the parties reach a resolution by agreement on one or more of the claims named in the application for dispute resolution, the case facilitator will record the terms of the agreement in the form of a written decision and/or order(s) that reflect the terms of agreement.

**12.19.1 Outstanding claims in application for dispute resolution**

If the parties reach an agreement under Rule 12.19 to resolve only some of the claims named in the application for dispute resolution, the case facilitator will usually ask the applicant whether they would like to withdraw the outstanding claims. If the applicant would like to withdraw any outstanding claims, the case facilitator will record this in the decision or order issued under Rule 12.19. If the applicant indicates that they do not want to withdraw the outstanding claims, the case facilitator will move those claims to a hearing under Rule 12.25.

**12.19.2 Outstanding claims in cross-application**

If the respondent made a cross-application and an agreement under Rule 12.19 resolved only some of the claims named in the cross-application, the case facilitator will usually ask the respondent whether they would like to withdraw any outstanding claims in the same manner as with the applicant under Rule 12.19.1.

**12.20 Direct resolution of claims by case facilitator**

If the parties agree, they can ask the case facilitator to issue a final and binding decision on one or more issues or claims in the dispute.

A case facilitator will usually only issue a final and binding decision in situations where the relevant facts of the claims or the issues are not disputed.

### **12.21 Dismissals of Applications**

A case facilitator may dismiss all or part of an application for dispute resolution under section 62(4) of the RTA (section 55(4) of the MHPTA). This can include circumstances where there is no legal authority to resolve the dispute under the Act (e.g., it is outside the jurisdiction of the Act, the application is defective) and the application is frivolous or an abuse of the dispute resolution process.

A case facilitator will only dismiss an application where the principles of procedural fairness do not require a hearing.

If there is disagreement about the relevant facts, the case facilitator will usually not make a decision to dismiss an application.

## **Resolution due to lack of participation**

### **12.22 Applicant does not attend facilitation conference**

If an applicant fails to attend the facilitated settlement conference, the case facilitator may consider the application for dispute resolution abandoned and may dismiss the application with or without leave to reapply.

### **12.23 Respondent does not attend facilitation conference**

If a respondent fails to attend the facilitated settlement conference, the case facilitator may issue a final decision for one or more of the claims made in an application for dispute resolution based solely on the evidence submitted by the applicant.

A case facilitator will usually only issue a final and binding decision in the absence of the respondent in circumstances where:

- the applicant can prove that they served the Notice of Dispute Resolution Proceeding Package or evidence to the other party under Rule 3.5, and
- on the basis of the evidence made available to the director, it is clear:
  - that there is no legal authority to resolve the dispute under the Act (e.g., it is outside the jurisdiction of the Act, the application is defective), or
  - what the outcome of the dispute will be if it were to proceed to a hearing.

## **Moving an application to a dispute resolution hearing**

### **12.24 Authority to move application for dispute resolution for hearing at any time**

At any point after an application is placed into the facilitated settlement process, the assigned case facilitator can move an application for dispute resolution to a hearing with an arbitrator if, in the case facilitator's opinion, the parties are unlikely to resolve their dispute by agreement, or the dispute is otherwise not suitable for facilitation.

If the case facilitator decides to move an application to a hearing, the case facilitator will inform the parties that the facilitated settlement process has ended, confirm the outstanding claims, and provide guidance to the parties to prepare for the hearing.

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**12.25 Unresolved claims following facilitated settlement conference**

The case facilitator will move any claims that were not resolved during the facilitated settlement conference for a dispute resolution hearing.

**12.26 Case facilitator can assist parties prepare for dispute resolution hearing**

If the case facilitator moves an application for dispute resolution to a hearing, the case facilitator can assist parties in preparing for the hearing, including by:

- sharing information about the Act and Rules of Procedure;
- providing guidance on the types and quality of evidence generally helpful to that type of application for dispute resolution;
- sharing information about how to request an order for substituted service of documents for the hearing under Rule 3.4; and
- sharing information about how to request a summons for a party to attend or produce evidence for the hearing under Rule 5.3.

**Changes to Rules of Procedure**

Section	Change	Notes	Effective Date
4.4	rep	Repealed pursuant to Order in Council 828.	2016-01-08, 4:00 p.m.
5.0.1	am	Addition of “where possible” to section on Withdrawing all other types of applications	2017-09-27
9.4, b	del	Deleted “cross-applications made on or after September 23, 2017 in response to an application that was made before September 23, 2017”	2017-09-27
2.5	del	Deleted reference to s. 56 of the <i>Residential Tenancy Act</i> and s. 49 of the <i>Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act</i> , added a reference to Rule 3.2	2018-01-24
10	new	Rule 10 added	2019-05-24
3.2	del	Repealed	2019-05-24
Page 6	am	Clarification to definition of Days	2020-02-03, 4:30 pm
6.4	am	Updated requirements	2020-08-07
6.11 -6.13	am	Recording of Hearings	2022-04-25
4.1	am	Amendment on DMS	2022-08-29
2.5	am	Changed “should” to “must.”	2023-02-17
3.1	am	Added clarity that arbitrator can extend timeline to serve Notice of Hearing Package	2023-02-17

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

3.7.1	new	Redacting information from evidence	2023-02-17
3.10.3	am	Adding information on digital evidence methods for submitting to the RTB	2023-02-17
3.10.4	am	Adding information on sharing digital evidence with another party.	2023-02-17
3.10.5	am	Removed content on sharing digital evidence with another party (see Rule 3.10.4).	2023-02-17
3.10.6	new	Information on sharing settings for file hosting service	2023-02-17
3.15	am	Added reference to Rule 11	2023-02-17
11	new	Rules for Additional Rent Increase for Capital Expenditures process	2023-02-17
all	am	Minor grammatical corrections made throughout	2023-02-17
Definitions	am	Minor change to “Adjournment” definition	2023-03-14
10.1.1-10.1.3	new	New rules setting out grounds for an expedited hearing and grounds for refusing an expedited hearing	2023-09-13
10.2-10.4, 10.9	am	Minor revisions to clarify rules	2023-09-13
4.2	am	Clarified the circumstances in which an application can be amended at the hearing	2023-10-03
4.2.1	new	Removing claims at the hearing	2023-10-03
6.4	am	Extended deadline to request an alternate hearing format	2023-10-03
10.10	new	Established specific deadline to request an alternate hearing format for expedited hearings	2023-10-03
Definitions	new	Created new definitions for “Case Facilitator,” “Dispute resolution hearing,” “Director of the Residential Tenancy Branch,” “Director,” “Facilitated settlement conference,” and “Facilitated settlement process.”  Amended definitions of “dispute resolution proceeding,” “decision,” and “schedule” to	2024-04-08

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

		reflect the implementation of the facilitated settlement process.	
2.3	am	Moved “arbitrators may use their discretion to dismiss unrelated claims with or without leave to reapply to Rule 6.2.	2024-04-08
2.4, 2.6, 2.13	am	Changed “documents” to “application”	2024-04-08
2.5	am	Removed “as” before “the application is submitted” to make a minor grammatical revision	2024-04-08
2.8, 2.10	am	Changed “removed by the arbitrator” to “dealt with under the same dispute resolution proceeding”	2024-04-08
2.11, 3.3, 3.5, 3.10.5, 3.15, 3.16, 5, 5.0.1, 5.1	am	Added “or conference” after “hearing” to reflect facilitated settlement process	2024-04-08
2.14	am	Added provision clarifying cross-applications and facilitation	2024-04-08
3.1.1	am	Added a comma after “3.1”	2024-04-08
3.1.3, 3.1.7, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.7.1, 3.8, 3.10.5, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 4.6	am	Changed “arbitrator” to “director”	2024-04-08
3.5	am	Added provision clarifying director’s authority when applicant does not prove service	2024-04-08
3.10.4	am	Changed “provided” to “served” in last paragraph	2024-04-08
4.1	am	Added provision clarifying that applications scheduled for facilitation can only be amended as specified in Rules 12.15 to 12.18.	2024-04-08
4.2	rep	Moved to Rule 7.12	2024-04-08

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

4.2.1	rep	Moved to Rule 7.12.1	2024-04-08
4.7	rep	Moved to Rule 7.13	2024-04-08
5.2	am	Minor grammatical revision (changed “the” to “a” in the title)	2024-04-08
5.2.1	new	Added provision specifying what happens if parties to application scheduled for facilitation cannot agree to reschedule	2024-04-08
6.2	am	Amended to include language from Rule 2.3	2024-04-08
6.4	am	Updated name of Form RTB-36	2024-04-08
6.8	am	Amended to shift onus to agent to be prepared to provide their authority to represent a party	2024-04-08
7.12-7.13	new	Rules moved from Rules 4.2, 4.2.1, and 4.7.	2024-04-08
7.14-7.25	am	Renumbered to reflect new Rules 7.12-7.13	2024-04-08
9.3-9.4	am	Amended to include provisions around the application of previous and current versions of the Rules	2024-04-08
12	new	Rules for facilitated settlement process	2024-04-08
Appendix	new	Applications that will be prioritized for facilitated settlement process	2024-04-08
6.12	am	Removal of 20 day wait for hearing recording	2024-05-06
8	am	Removal of written decision to allow for an oral decision	2024-05-06
2.8	am	Added \$65,000 monetary limit for certain claims in response to legislative changes	2024-07-18
7.4.1	new	Added to clarify that content of settlement conferences cannot be used as evidence during a hearing	2024-07-18
12.7	am	Clarified that communications are confidential in facilitated settlement process	2024-07-18
12.24	am	Amended title of rule to correct grammatical error (added “for”)	2024-07-18

Change notations  
am = text amended or changed  
del = text deleted  
rep = rule repealed  
new = new section added

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

**Appendix: Applications that will generally be prioritized for the facilitated settlement process (Rule 12.1)**

Type	Reason	RTA Section	MHPTA Section
To dispute or request an order of possession in relation to a notice to end tenancy:	for cause.	47	40
	due to end of employment with the landlord.	48	41
	for the landlord's use of the property.	49	42
	because the tenant ceases to qualify for the unit.	49.1	N/A
To request an order:	ending a tenancy because the rental unit or site is uninhabitable or the tenancy agreement is otherwise frustrated	56.1(a)	49.1(a)
To request an order of possession for the landlord because:	the rental unit is uninhabitable or the tenancy agreement is frustrated	56.1(b)	49.1(b)
	the tenant gave a notice to end tenancy	55(2)(a)	48(2)(a)
	the tenant is required to vacate the rental unit at the end of the term	55(2)(c)	48(2)(c)
	the landlord and tenant have agreed in writing that the tenancy has ended	55(2)(d)	48(2)(d)
To request a monetary order:	for compensation for damages or loss	7(1)	7(1)
	to recover unpaid rent from the tenant	26	20
	for the tenant to pay to repair the damage that they, their pets, or their guests caused	32(3)	26(3)
	for the landlord to pay back the cost of emergency repairs the tenant made	33(5)	27(5)
	for the landlord to compensate the tenant related to a section 49 notice to end tenancy	51	N/A
	for the landlord to compensate the tenant 12-months' rent related to a fixed term tenancy agreement with a requirement to vacate	51.1	N/A
	for the landlord to compensate the tenant 12-months' rent if the landlord did not give the tenant a right of first refusal	51.3	N/A
	for the landlord to compensate the tenant related to a section 49.2 order	51.4	N/A

Residential Tenancy Branch  
Rules of Procedure

	for the landlord to compensate the tenant related to a section 42 notice to end tenancy	N/A	44.1
To request an order:	that the landlord provide a service or facility	27(1)	21(1)
	for the rent payable to be reduced	27(2)(b)	21(2)(b)
	to suspend or set conditions on the landlord's right to enter the rental unit or site	29	23
	that the landlord allow the tenant or their guest access to the rental unit or site	30(1)	24(1)
	for the landlord to complete repairs	32(1)	26(1)
	for the tenant to change the locks to the rental unit	31(3)	N/A
	allowing the tenant to assign or sublet because the landlord unreasonably withheld consent	34, 65(1)(g)	28, 58(1)(g)
	that the landlord return all or a portion of the security deposit to the tenant	38, 38.1	N/A
	for the landlord to comply with the Act, regulations, or a tenancy agreement	62(3)	55(3)
	requiring the landlord to return the tenant's personal property	65(1)(e)	58(1)(e)
	for the tenant to follow manufactured home park rules	N/A	13(2)(g)
To dispute a rent increase		Part 3	Part 4