

DEFENDANT INSTRUCTIONS

For a Residential Eviction Action Filed in the Justice Court

File the Answer

- 1) Bring **three** copies of the answer form to the court identified in the summons and complaint and pay the appropriate filing fees.
- 2) You must provide a copy of your answer and any attachments filed with the court to the plaintiff(s) or plaintiff's attorney.

Initial appearance in court:

- 3) At the initial appearance (the date provided on the summons for you to appear in court) the court will call the case and identify the parties. The court will determine if the representatives are properly authorized to represent the parties to the action. *RPEA Rule 11(a)*.
- 4) The court may enter a default judgment against you if you fail to appear in person or through counsel. *RPEA Rule 13(b)(3)*.
- 5) If the complaint is contested, the court will order a trial on the merits. *RPEA 11(b)(1)*.