



THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
OF MICHIGAN

MICHAEL F. SAPALA  
CHIEF JUDGE

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**DOCKET DIRECTIVE 2000 – 9**

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

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SUBJECT: PROCEEDINGS REGARDING ABANDONED HOUSING PROGRAM

This Docket Directive applies to all verified complaints and accompanying requests for ex parte orders for publication and posting filed in the Third Judicial Circuit Court related to or arising out of the Abandoned Housing Program initiated by Wayne County. The following procedures will apply to batch complaint filings, minimum diligent inquiry efforts and respective manner of service of process for complaints and amended complaints filed after October 24, 2000.

1. Each filed Verified Complaint and Request for Ex Parte Order for Publication and posting shall include allegations verifying, at minimum, the following diligent inquiry efforts with respect to named defendants:

Completion of a title search of the records of the Register of Deeds, as well as a search of Wayne County property tax records, to identify and locate the defendants with ownership interest in the subject properties and their last known address.

On the basis of this information, forwarding a Request for Change of Address or Box Holder Information inquiry letter to the U.S. Postmaster.

On the basis of this information, conducting Westlaw Credit Bureau checks and Internet searches through Ancestry.com, Yahoo.com, Switchboard.com and Teldir.com.

2. Each Verified Complaint and Request for Ex Parte Order for Publication and posting will also include allegations verifying that:

Service of process by certified mail at the last known address of defendant(s), as ascertained through diligent inquiry efforts described above, will be issued by Plaintiffs to run concurrently with the period for publication and posting.

Any unknown, unnamed claimants, owners, assigns, heirs, or designees not identified through diligent efforts conducted at the time of filing of the verified complaints, cannot be ascertained at the time of filing by reasonable efforts and cannot be served by certified mail.

Publication of the actions in the Detroit Legal News on unnamed, unknown, owners, claimants, heirs, devisees or assignees and Posting of the Verified Complaint and Ex Parte Order on each subject property will not only constitute service of process on any unnamed, unknown, . . . defendants, but will also further effectuate and supplement service by certified mail on known defendants.

The described and proposed manner of service of process is reasonably calculated to give the defendants actual notice of the proceedings and an opportunity to be heard.

3. One Ex Parte Order for Publication and Posting shall be entered for and pertain to each batch of complaints filed. The Ex Parte Order shall pertain to all known defendants and their unknown, unnamed claimants, owners, devisees, heirs, or assignees. The Order shall identify all known defendants and their last known address, respective case numbers and subject property addresses, for all verified complaints included in the batch filing.
4. One affidavit evidencing publication and posting shall be entered for and pertain to each batch filing. The affidavit shall list all defendants and their last known address, respective case numbers and subject property addresses, with respect to each case included in the batch filing.
5. Upon the subsequent filing of a motion for default judgment on any of the identified cases, any and all diligent inquiry efforts shall be

specifically detailed in an affidavit pertaining to each such case and shall otherwise be in conformity with applicable court rules.



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Michael F. Sapala  
Chief Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit Court of Michigan

Date: November 8, 2000