A STORY FROM LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP EVICTION COURT

June 18, 2022 Judge Patrick Chavis

Young African American woman probably in her 30’s, working for Helping Hands (was in scrubs) asked for transfer of judgment to another party…her partner who signed the initial lease along with her. Her wages are being garnished, $200/mo. Her balance owed $2300. Each month, in Indiana, 8% interest is added to the total garnishment owed. Woman’s salary is $650/bimonthly.

Because her partner was physical and verbally abusive, she moved out in 2016 with her 2 little girls for their safety. Her partner continued living in the apartment, but not paying rent. The judgment was held against her because she had signed the lease and her partner cannot be located. Since then, she has been struggling to be cooperative with court expectations. She requested the court find the partner, since he is also responsible for monies due, but was told that it is not the responsibility of the court, but hers.

She requested garnishes be reduced to $40/mo. She is working as much as she can, including overtime, but her child care ends at 3 p.m.

Conclusions: Judge acknowledged that with 2 people signing a lease and only one paying the garnishment, that is a difficult situation. Dr. Fran Quigley, attorney with her that day, recommended she file bankruptcy, for then this situation would end. The judgment will continue.

Submitted by Sally Peters, Housing Justice Task Force, Meridian Street UMC