

Eviction Filings Dip to Lowest Level in More than a Decade

NJ Spotlight

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Michelle Pallak

McCarter & English is stepping up to fill some of the gap in assistance. Last month, the firm announced it was establishing a pro bono fellowship to help Newark residents with their legal issues. For the first year of the program, at least, the attorney will represent tenants facing eviction and work to educate tenants about their rights.

"We believe that our focus on the rights of tenants can make a real difference for Newark families," said Michelle Pallak, the firm's pro bono director, adding this position is likely the first in the nation to focus on a city. "Landlords file tens of thousands of eviction proceedings against tenants in Newark and surrounding communities every year. Only a tiny fraction of those tenants have legal representation, and we intend to change that."

"This newly created position will allow our attorneys and staff to continue to make meaningful contributions that improve the lives of Newark residents by helping to avoid the disruption that evictions bring to families," said Robert Mintz, managing partner of the firm's Newark office, adding that the firm created the position as a result of discussions with Newark Mayor Ras Baraka.

"We are very grateful that the firm is teaming with us to protect the rights of some of Newark's most at-risk residents, tenants waging unequal battles against landlords unjustly seeking evictions," Baraka said.