

New 2026 Law Alert: SB 1384 and Commercial Evictions

Effective January 1, 2026, AB 1384 introduces a procedural change aimed at reducing delays in commercial unlawful detainer (eviction) cases. While the law does not change the substantive rights of landlords or tenants, it aims to reduce a procedural bottleneck that can delay an eviction through a tenant's initial challenge to the allegations in an unlawful detainer complaint.

The Issue Before AB 1384

Before AB 1384, commercial eviction cases could stall at the outset when a tenant filed an early legal motion to challenge the allegations of the lawsuit – irrespective of the merits or legitimacy of such allegations. Courts were not required to hear those motions within a defined timeframe, which often resulted in weeks or months of delay simply because of the tenant's challenge to the complaint –undercutting the expedited nature of commercial unlawful detainers.

What the New Law Does

AB 1384 establishes clearer court deadlines for early motions in commercial unlawful detainer cases:

- ◇ Courts must schedule a hearing on a tenant's legal challenge to a landlord's unlawful detainer complaint within 5–7 court days after the motion is filed.
- ◇ Any continuance must be set no later than 10 days after the initial hearing, unless the parties agree otherwise.

What This Means for Property Managers and Owners

For commercial property owners and property managers, AB 1384 helps prevent procedural delays at the start of an eviction case by ensuring that any challenge to the complaint does not significantly delay the case.

2026 Takeaway

HLG *Horner Law Group, PC* ATTORNEYS AT LAW

While proper notice and filing requirements remain critical to the viability of a successful commercial eviction, AB 1384 aims to ensure that unlawful detainer lawsuits are not unnecessarily delayed and remain expedited legal proceedings.

For questions regarding commercial landlord-tenant matters, including unlawful detainers, lease enforcement, or compliance with new 2026 laws, contact Paymon Hifai of Horner Law Group.