



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

**IN RE: PROCEDURES FOR
PHASED REOPENING DURING
COVID-19 PUBLIC EMERGENCY**

AMENDED GENERAL ORDER 20-06

Upon consideration of the continuation of the Continuity of Operations Plan (“COOP”) implemented on March 18, 2020, in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, to more closely align with the District Court operations and maintain access for the public, and in light of further guidance from the State of California Public Health Officer,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

1. Bankruptcy Intake in Los Angeles and Santa Ana Courthouses Are Open.
The Intake area of the United States Bankruptcy Court at the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Los Angeles will continue to be open to accept in-person filings. **In addition, the Intake area of the Ronald Reagan Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Santa Ana will reopen to the public on Monday, September 14, 2020 to accept in-person filings.** All other Intake areas in the other Divisions remain closed pending further information on COVID-19 risk factors in those counties.

- 1 a. Face Coverings. Anyone not wearing a face covering
2 without an approved medical exemption or anyone not
3 observing posted social distancing rules may be refused service.
- 4 b. Public Computers and Electronic Kiosks. At the discretion
5 of the Clerk of Court, public computers and electronic kiosks
6 may be disabled until methods can be developed to reduce
7 any spread of infection through their use.
- 8 c. Cash Payments. Cash will not be accepted for filing or copying fees
9 unless an exception is made by the Clerk of Court.
- 10 2. Limited Emergency In-Person Hearings. In-person access to the United
11 States Bankruptcy Court will generally not be permitted except for the filing
12 Intake areas of the Los Angeles and Santa Ana courthouses. Bankruptcy
13 Judges will continue to hear matters remotely through telephonic or video
14 services, except a judge may order an in-person hearing where necessary
15 in an emergency.
- 16 3. Self-Represented Filings. Individuals filing bankruptcy without an attorney
17 may file in person at the United States Bankruptcy Court in downtown
18 Los Angeles or Santa Ana, by mail, or through the court's Electronic
19 Self-Representation module. The Court's existing electronic filing program
20 for self-represented debtors (eSR) is now authorized to accept both Chapter 7
21 and 13 petitions. All Chapter 7 and 13 petitions not filed in person shall be
22 filed through eSR or by mail. Any other chapter must be filed through
23 CM/ECF with an attorney or mailed to the Court. Please view the Court's
24 website for more information specific to self-represented parties at
25 <https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-without-an-attorney>. Parties requiring
26 assistance or guidance may contact the Court at (855) 460-9641.
- 27 4. Signatures and Filing Fees. If a bankruptcy case is submitted through
28 eSR or by mail, the debtor must mail the required signatures and the required

1 filing fee within 10 days, or the case will be dismissed. Please view the
2 Court's website for more information specific to self-represented parties
3 at <https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-without-an-attorney>. All petitions
4 from self-represented parties are automatically granted a fee installment
5 so that the full required filing fee is due no later than 10 days after the filing
6 of the petition. For petitions filed through eSR, an application for a fee waiver
7 must be mailed to the Court within five (5) days of the electronic petition filing,
8 on the form available on the website at [https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/forms/
9 application-individuals-pay-filing-feeinstallmentsapplication-have-chapter-7-
10 filing-fee](https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/forms/application-individuals-pay-filing-feeinstallmentsapplication-have-chapter-7-filing-fee). For petitions filed in person or by mail, an application for a fee
11 waiver shall be submitted with the petition. The Court will issue an Order on
12 the Fee Waiver Application within five (5) days. If a fee waiver or installment
13 order is entered in a specific case, it will supersede this Amended General
14 Order requiring the full fee within 10 days. If the requisite fee and/or signatures
15 are not mailed within 10 days, the Court will dismiss the case without a hearing.

- 16 5. Social Security Number Statements. A self-represented litigant filing a
17 voluntary bankruptcy case must include the signed "Statement About
18 Your Social Security Numbers" (Official Form 121) with the initial filing
19 when mailing the documents (F.R.B.P. 1007(f)). When filing a voluntary
20 bankruptcy case through the Court's eSR program, the signed "Statement
21 About Your Social Security Numbers" form must be mailed to the Court
22 within 10 days of filing or the case will be dismissed. Please view the
23 Court's website for more information specific to self-represented parties
24 at <https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-without-an-attorney>.
- 25 6. Mediations. Mediations may resume and are in the discretion of the mediator
26 as to whether to proceed in person or remotely.
- 27 7. Judges' or Courtesy Copies. Except for documents over 25 pages,
28 including exhibits, the requirement to deliver judges' copies of documents

1 to chambers (LBR 5005-2(d)) continues to be temporarily suspended –
2 including delivery via U.S. mail, personal delivery, or any other means.
3 Documents over 25 pages should still be provided unless the judge’s
4 specific updated instructions have waived that requirement. Parties are
5 reminded that the judge and chambers’ staff do not receive electronic
6 notices of filings, and therefore, (a) for documents that are filed late,
7 and (b) for matters that are either (i) not set for hearing or (ii) not the
8 subject of an electronically uploaded order (LOU), parties must contact
9 the chambers of the presiding judge and advise chambers of the filing.

10 8. Signatures. Local Bankruptcy Rule 9011-1 does not require in-person
11 contact as it permits an attorney to receive a signature page by electronic
12 means. Nothing in the rule precludes the filing of a signature page that
13 has been received by facsimile, pdf, text or photo. This signature can
14 be filed separately in whatever format is reasonably possible so that
15 there is a clear indication that the signor has read and is signing the actual
16 document filed.

17 a. In light of the difficulty of obtaining any paper files during
18 this emergency, the requirement of LBR 9011-1(d) to maintain
19 a wet signature for five (5) years is temporarily suspended and the
20 attorney should maintain the electronic transmission of the client
21 to file the document in whatever format is reasonable at this time.

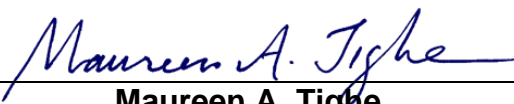
22 b. If there is a situation where a client cannot transmit a signature
23 electronically either due to lack of required technology or internet
24 access, etc., the attorney should so explain the circumstances
25 with the filing, verify that permission was obtained from the client
26 to sign the document on their behalf, and obtain the signature
27 as soon as possible after the filing through another means.

28

1 9. Phased Reopening Plans. The Court's COOP will remain in place and
2 be modified gradually as necessary. Details of these modifications will be
3 posted on the Court's website and communicated to staff as they are
4 implemented.

5
6 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

7 DATED: September 11, 2020

8
9 
10 _____
11 **Maureen A. Tighe**
12 Chief Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28