

Entered: December 21st, 2022

Signed: December 21st, 2022

**SO ORDERED**



*David E. Rice*  
DAVID E. RICE  
U. S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

In re: \*  
ADDRESSING COVID-19 PANDEMIC \* Miscellaneous Proceeding Nos.  
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS \* 20-90006 & 16-90000  
\* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 22-03 ADDRESSING COVID-19 PANDEMIC RELATED  
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS 20-05, 20-07, 20-12 AND 20-13**

Several Administrative Orders promulgated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic remain active or have not otherwise been expressly rescinded,<sup>1</sup> including the following (copies of which are appended hereto):

- Administrative Order 20-05, Addressing Signatures on Electronic Filings;
- Administrative Order 20-07, Addressing the Prohibition Against Recording Telephonic or Video Hearings;
- Administrative Order 20-12, Authorizing the Pilot Electronic Document Submission System (EDSS); and
- Administrative Order 20-13, Authorizing Certain Fees in Chapter 13 Cases Related to Work Necessitated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> Other Administrative Orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic have been rescinded and are no longer active. These include Administrative Orders 20-02, 20-03, 20-06, 20-08, 20-09, 20-10, 20-14, 20-15 and 20-16.

The United States District Court for the District of Maryland has entered Standing Order 2022-05 regarding the Court's COVID-19 mitigative measures. Effective January 3, 2023, the Bankruptcy Court thus will enter Phase Four of its recovery plan, and return to nearly full and unrestricted operations.

The Court has considered the continued need for the remaining active pandemic related Administrative Orders outside of the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, and has determined that (i) some of the existing Administrative Orders should continue for an interim period, and (ii) one of the Administrative Orders is no longer necessary.

Therefore, it is, by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland, hereby:

ORDERED, Administrative Order 20-05, Addressing Signatures on Electronic Filings, remains active pending future consideration by the Bench of amendments to Local Bankruptcy Rule 1002-1; and it is further

ORDERED, Administrative Order 20-07, Addressing the Prohibition Against Recording Telephonic or Video Hearings, remains active pending future consideration by the Bench of amendments to Local Bankruptcy Rule 5073-1; and it is further

ORDERED, Administrative Order 20-12, Authorizing the Pilot Electronic Document Submission System (EDSS), remains active with the continued pilot of the EDSS, pending further consideration by the Bench following implementation of the Electronic Self Representation (eSR) module for Chapter 7 case filings; and it is further

ORDERED, Administrative Order 20-13, Authorizing Certain Fees in Chapter 13 Cases Related to Work Necessitated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, is RESCINDED.

**END OF ORDER**

**SO ORDERED**



*Thomas J. Catliota*  
THOMAS J. CATLIOTA  
U.S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

In re: \*  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCEDURES \* Miscellaneous Proceeding No.  
\* 20-90006  
\* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 20-05**  
**ADDRESSING SIGNATURES ON ELECTRONIC FILINGS**

The Governor of Maryland has declared a state of emergency concerning the spread of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities have advised taking precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus. Limiting in-person meetings or conferences for the purpose of obtaining signatures to documents is consistent with the objective of limiting public contact to essential matters.

Therefore, it is, by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland, hereby

ORDERED, the requirement that all petitions, lists, schedules, statements, and amendments thereto must be “verified” in Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 1008 are met, and the documents may be electronically filed, if the debtor’s attorney either:

- (1) obtains the original, physical signature prior to filing; or
- (2) chooses to file the document electronically without the original signature in his/her

possession, provided that such electronic filing constitutes a certification by the attorney that the debtor has signed it and that, at the time of filing, the filing attorney is in possession of an image format or other facsimile of the document, including the signature page received either electronically (including by email or text) or by facsimile machine from the debtor. If the document is filed electronically by the filing attorney without the original signature in his/her possession, it shall be filed by placing “/s/ *Debtor’s Name*” where the signature occurs (as currently allowed), but such filing constitutes a representation and certification that before filing the attorney transmitted the entire document to the debtor for review and signature, communicated with the debtor regarding the substance and purpose of the document, received the signature page back from the debtor electronically, and received express authorization to file the document; and it is further

ORDERED, the requirements in the Local Bankruptcy Rules of obtaining, maintaining or producing an “original signature,” and the requirement of a “signature” in 28 U.S.C. §1746, are met if the attorney complies with this Order; and it is further

ORDERED, a petition or Chapter 13 plan verified and filed in accordance with paragraph (1) or (2) of this Order shall be deemed to be signed by the debtor for purpose of Local Bankruptcy Rules 1002-1(a)(1) and 3015-1(c); and it is further

ORDERED, this Order is effective upon entry and until further order of the Court.

**END OF ORDER**

**SO ORDERED**



  
**THOMAS J. CATLIOTA**  
U.S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

In re: \*  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCEDURES \* Miscellaneous Proceeding No.  
\* 20-90006  
\* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 20-07  
ADDRESSING THE PROHIBITION AGAINST  
RECORDING TELEPHONIC OR VIDEO HEARINGS**

In response to the current state of emergency concerning the spread of COVID-19, and the need to maintain proper and safe distancing among individuals, this Court may be required to conduct hearings by telephone or video conference. The United States District Court for the District of Maryland entered Order, *Covid-19 Pandemic Procedures*, Misc. No. 20-146, on March 26, 2020, (the “Order”) extending that Court’s prohibition on recording or transmitting court proceedings to include any court proceeding conducted by remote audio or video conferencing and further ordering that no person or device may record any court proceeding without the express permission of the Chief Judge, other than official court reporters and official electronic recorders employed by the Court. Local Bankruptcy Rule 5073-1 of this Court prohibits any court proceeding from being photographed, video recorded, audio recorded, broadcasted, televised, or otherwise transmitted, and the Rule applies to telephonic hearings and

video hearings. In furtherance of Local Bankruptcy Rule 5073-1 and in light of the current state of emergency, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland has determined it is advisable to emphasize and order that the same prohibition as entered by the District Court applies to this Court.

Accordingly, it is, by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland, ORDERED, that no person or device, other than official electronic recorders employed by the Court, may record any court proceeding, whether conducted in court, on telephone, or by video conference, without the express permission of the presiding judge in a particular case or the Chief Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court; and it is further

ORDERED, for the sake of clarity, Local Bankruptcy Rule 5073-1 applies to all court proceedings whether conducted in court, by telephone, or by video conference.

**END OF ORDER**

Entered: May 22nd, 2020  
Signed: May 22nd, 2020

**SO ORDERED**



*[Signature]*  
**THOMAS J. CATLIOTA**  
U.S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

In Re:

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCEDURES

MISCELLANEOUS  
PROCEEDING NO. 20-90006

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**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 20-12 AUTHORIZING PILOT  
ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT SUBMISSION SYSTEM**

In response to the current state of emergency declared by the Governor of Maryland over the spread of the coronavirus known as COVID-19, and recognizing the need to maintain safe distancing among individuals and to take precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus, the Court has significantly altered court operations. This includes reducing accessibility of the Greenbelt and Baltimore courthouses by non-court personnel. Beginning March 16, 2020, and until further notice there is no in-person public access to the Clerk’s Office. The Clerk’s Office remains open to the public through telephone access and drop boxes located in the lobby of each courthouse. CM/ECF continues to be available for electronic filing.

Considering the limited accessibility of the Greenbelt and Baltimore courthouses by non-attorney individuals for the purpose of filing bankruptcy cases or filing documents, pleadings or other papers in pending bankruptcy cases, the Court has developed a pilot Electronic Document

Submission System (EDSS). EDSS will allow non-attorney individuals to securely submit documents to the Court electronically in portable document format (PDF). Authorizing implementation of the pilot EDSS during the ongoing state of emergency and while the Court maintains significantly limited operations is a necessary and important response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, it is, by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland, hereby ORDERED as follows:

1. The Court authorizes the use of EDSS on a pilot basis. The Clerk is directed to implement the pilot EDSS in order to accept through EDSS, from unrepresented individuals only, the electronic submission of new bankruptcy case filings and the filing of documents, pleadings or other papers in pending bankruptcy cases;

2. The EDSS Administrative Procedures, attached to this Administrative Order, are adopted and shall apply to every bankruptcy case, filing, pleading, or other paper submitted using EDSS;

3. The EDSS Administrative Procedures supplement, and to the extent necessary, modify, existing Administrative Order 03-02 Adopting Case Management/Electronic Case Filing Procedure (as amended 12/1/2016); and

4. Authorization for the pilot EDSS may be modified by further Order of this Court as necessary, or terminated when the pilot EDSS is no longer necessary for Court operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**END OF ORDER**



## **Electronic Document Submission System**

### **Administrative Procedures**

#### **I. General Requirements**

All parties appearing before the Court must comply with the applicable Rules and Statutes, including Fed. R. Bankr. P. 5005, and all applicable Court orders including the Administrative Order that authorizes document submission via the Electronic Document Submission System.

##### **A. Electronic Submission**

“Electronic submission” means uploading a pleading or document from the user’s computer using the Court’s Electronic Document Submission System (“EDSS” or “System”) to file that pleading or document in the Court’s case file. Unless otherwise provided in these Administrative Procedures (“Procedures”), the Court’s Local Bankruptcy Rules (“LBR”), or Court order, sending a document or pleading to the Court via e-mail does not constitute electronic filing.

##### **B. Official Case File**

Except as otherwise provided by these Procedures or other applicable laws or rules, the Clerk’s Office will not maintain a paper file in any case assigned to the Case Management/Electronic Case File (CM/ECF) System. The official court record is the CM/ECF System.

#### **II. Using The Electronic Document Submission System**

A. If a document submitted using EDSS is received, accepted, processed, and placed on the public docket by the Clerk’s Office, such document shall be deemed officially filed as of the date and time submitted. When added to the docket, the date and time of filing indicated on the docket will match the date and time that the document was submitted using EDSS.

B. An individual or entity using EDSS must provide both a valid email address and valid telephone number.

C. The Clerk’s office will send an e-mail confirming the receipt of the uploaded document, and the individual or entity using EDSS consents to receipt of this information via email.

### **III. Electronic Submission and Service of Documents**

#### **A. Document Legibility and Formatting**

Documents must be verified for legibility before being submitted via EDSS. Illegible documents will not be accepted for filing.

Documents can only be submitted in a flattened .PDF format. Whenever possible, documents should be electronically created and not scanned in.

#### **B. File/Document Size Limitations**

Whenever possible, and with the exception of signature pages, all papers must be compiled into a single file. EDSS can accept up to five files per pleading. Each file cannot exceed 3 MB.

#### **C. Timeliness of Electronic Submission**

Submitting a document electronically does not change the filing deadline for that document. The Filing must be completed before midnight Eastern Time to be considered filed on that day.

#### **D. Service**

Submitting a document using EDSS does not constitute service of that document. Parties must comply with applicable rules of service (See Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7004, 7005; Fed. R. Civ. P. 4, 5; Local Bankruptcy Rule 9013-4, and the Administrative Order that authorizes document submission via the EDSS).

#### **E. Document Retention Periods**

A person submitting a document through EDSS must maintain the original signed document for a period of three years after the bankruptcy case is closed. The original must be made available upon request of the Court.

#### **F. Signatures**

The original signature pages must be scanned and uploaded through EDSS. A person submitting an image of a signed document through EDSS must maintain the original signed document for a period of three years after the bankruptcy case is closed.

G. Fees Payable to the Clerk's Office

Certain filings require the payment of fees, including filing a new case and certain types of motions. Anyone submitting a document using EDSS must pay all required fees. Fees must be paid in person (when the Clerk's Office is open during normal business hours), via the court's drop boxes located in each courthouse, or through the mail. Debtors may only pay filing fees with cash (accepted in person only not by mail or the court's drop boxes), cashier's check, or money order. Cashier's checks and money orders must be made payable to the "Clerk, United States Court." The Clerk's Office cannot accept personal checks from debtors or third-party checks. The failure to timely submit any required fee may result in the denial of any motion or other relief requested or dismissal of the case.

H. Orders and Notices Issued by the Court

The Clerk's Office will electronically file all signed orders and all notices. Except for debtors participating in Debtor Electronic Bankruptcy Noticing (DeBN), notice to debtors generally will be given in paper format.

I. Creditor Matrix

If filing a petition, the creditor matrix can be completed and submitted using the Court's creditor matrix tool available at <http://www.mdb.uscourts.gov/creditematrix/login>. If not using the Court's tool, the creditor matrix must comply with the formatting requirements set forth in these Procedures.

J. Correcting Documents Filed in Error

If a document is incorrectly submitted in a case, the individual must amend or withdraw the document submitted in error. No changes to a document can be made once transmission is made and the transaction is accepted by the EDSS.

K. Privacy Protection for Electronically Submitted Documents

Any person submitting a document through EDSS must comply with the privacy protection requirements of Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9037 and LBR 9037-1.

**SO ORDERED**



*Thomas J. Catliota*  
THOMAS J. CATLIOTA  
U.S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

In Re: \*  
\*  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCEDURES \* MISCELLANEOUS  
\* PROCEEDING NO. 20-90006  
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**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 20-13 AUTHORIZING CERTAIN FEES IN CHAPTER 13  
CASES RELATED TO WORK NECESSITATED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The COVID-19 pandemic and the corresponding health and economic challenges faced by the citizens of Maryland have led this Court to recognize and implement a number of substantive and procedural changes for parties involved in bankruptcy cases in this District. Among other things, this Court’s Administrative Order 20-10: (i) establishes interim procedures for motions to modify confirmed Chapter 13 plans under 11 U.S.C. § 1329(d) (§ 1113(b)(1)(C) of the CARES Act; such plan modifications are referred to herein as “CARES Act Plan Modification(s)”), and (ii) temporarily amended its procedures relating to Chapter 13 motions to suspend plan payments or temporarily vacate wage orders for up to four months (collectively, “Payment and Wage Motions”). In reviewing the various potential relief needed by debtors in Chapter 13 cases, the Court finds it appropriate and warranted to temporarily supplement Section 4 of Appendix F of this Court’s Local Rules.

Therefore, it is, by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland, hereby ORDERED that Section 4 of Appendix F shall be supplemented as follows:

- E. A flat fee in the amounts and on the conditions as follows —
- (1) A flat fee, not to exceed \$500.00, for the filing of a motion to approve a CARES Act Plan Modification.
  - (2) A flat fee, not to exceed \$300.00 for an additional one year or \$600.00 for an additional two years (prorated for any portion of such additional period), for the attorney's additional work on behalf of the debtor during the extended period permitted by any Order approving a CARES Act Plan Modification in a case in which the attorney was engaged pursuant to the terms of Section 4(B) of Appendix F.
  - (3) For matters not covered by Sections 4(E)(1) and (2), a flat fee, not to exceed \$500.00 for any one filing or \$1,000.00 for all other eligible filings in any given case, relating to the preparation and filing of Payment and Wage Motions or any other paper that an attorney certifies relates to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the debtor.
  - (4) Any attorney entering into a fee arrangement or otherwise charging fees in reliance on this subsection shall file a supplement to the attorney's Rule 2016 disclosure explaining the amount and nature of the subject fee and, if required above, certifying the circumstances surrounding the subject fee, within 7 days of entering into such fee agreement or charging such fee.

Nothing in this Administrative Order prevents an attorney from seeking the approval of a different or additional fee in accordance with Section 7 of Appendix F of this Court's Local Rules.

This Administrative Order may be modified as necessary or terminated by further Order of this Court.

**- End of Order -**