

PRIVACY POLICY PROVISIONS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2003

Privacy amendments to the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure will take effect December 1, 2003, barring Congressional action. The amendments allow the court to collect a debtor's full Social Security number but display only the last four digits. The current requirements (i.e., full Social Security number to appear where it is required, etc.) remain in effect before that date.

As amended, Bankruptcy Rule 1005 requires that the petition contain only the last four digits of individual debtors' Social Security numbers. Amendments to Rule 1007 will require debtors to submit a verified statement containing the full nine-digit number. The new Statement of Social Security Number will not be filed in the case or become part of the case file available to the public at the court or over the internet. Debtors will still be required to provide any other taxpayer identification numbers in full because numbers such as an Employer Identification Number (EIN) do not implicate individual privacy.

Creditors, trustees, and the U.S. Trustee will receive the full Social Security number on their copies of the 341 notices. Copies of these notices retained for the official court record will show only the last four digits of the number.

CM/ECF will be upgraded to comply with the new privacy provision requirements. The Clerk's Office will not redact or otherwise correct a filed document. Attorneys should be in contact with bankruptcy software providers to inquire about updates to their document preparation software.

Any procedural changes or changes in forms anticipated by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana will be published via the website and will also be available at the intake counter.

Additional information regarding the new privacy requirements is available on the Federal Rulemaking page of the Judiciary's website at <http://www.uscourts.gov/rules>. Click on "Pending Rules Amendments Awaiting Final Action," and then select "Amendments Submitted to the Judicial Conference (Sept. 2002)."