

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

IN THE MATTER OF

TEMPORARY MODIFICATION OF
LOCAL RULE 9011-1(B)(2)

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GENERAL ORDER 2020-4

GENERAL ORDER TEMPORARILY MODIFYING LOCAL RULE 9011-1(B)(2)

Effective immediately and until further Court Order, in conjunction with General Order 2020-2, and in light of the directives from the President of the United States and the Governor of Louisiana as well as the guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and local health officials regarding social distancing in response to the outbreak of the Coronavirus/COVID 19, the Court temporarily modifies the requirement of Local Rule 9011-1(B)(2) as follows (modification in bold):

B. Signature on Documents; Retention of Original Documents

1. Documents requiring the signature of the debtor(s), such as petitions, lists, schedules, statements, etc., must be filed electronically and must indicate a signature (*e.g.*, “/s/ John Doe”). Amendments, pleadings, affidavits, and other documents that contain original signatures or that require verification under FRBP 1008 or an unsworn declaration as provided in 28 U.S.C. § 1746 must be filed electronically and must indicate a signature (*e.g.*, “/s/ John Doe”).
2. The original signed document must be retained by the attorney or record or the party originating the document for a period of not less than five (5) years after the case is closed. Upon request, the original document must be provided to other parties or the court for review. **The electronic filing by an attorney of a document requiring the signature of the debtor(s) may be filed without the original signature in his or her possession provided that such electronic filing constitutes a certification by the debtor’s attorney that (i) the debtor’s attorney transmitted the entire document to the debtor(s) for review and signature, communicated with the**

debtor regarding the substance and purpose of the document, and received express authorization from the debtor(s) to file the document; and (ii) the debtor has signed the document and that, at the time of filing, the debtor's attorney is in possession of an image format or other facsimile of the document, including the signature page received either electronically (including by e-mail or text) or by facsimile machine from the debtor(s). The debtor's attorney must file a certification within thirty (30) days of filing the document that he or she has received the debtor's original signature and will maintain it in accordance with this section.

The Court modifies Local Rule 9011-1(B)(2) with the intent of curbing the need for in-person meetings between attorneys and their clients and encourages attorneys to meet with clients telephonically or by video-conferencing.

DATED: March 18, 2020.

FOR THE COURT:



MEREDITH S. GRABILL
UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE