

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

IN THE MATTER OF

HYBRID MODEL PLAN FOR  
CONDUCT OF HEARINGS

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GENERAL ORDER 2021-2

**GENERAL ORDER IMPLEMENTING HYBRID MODEL PLAN FOR  
CONDUCT OF HEARINGS**

Effective October 4, 2021, the Court hereby terminates the Protocol Period identified in *Amended General Order 2020-2 Adopting Hearing Protocols That May Be Implemented Under Certain Public Health And Safety Conditions* issued by this Court on May 4, 2020, and revokes the protocols outlined in that Order regarding the manner in which the Court conducts hearings in all bankruptcy cases and proceedings in this District. Beginning October 4, 2021, this Court adopts the attached Hybrid Model Plan, which will be implemented to conduct hearings in all bankruptcy cases and proceedings in this District as the Court, practitioners, and parties continue to adapt to ongoing concerns and risks associated with the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and its variants.

This General Order supersedes General Orders 2020-2 and 2020-5. As necessary, the Court will tailor the application of provisions of the Hybrid Model Plan in any individual case.

**SO ORDERED.**

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 22nd day of September, 2021.



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MEREDITH S. GRABILL  
UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

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

**HYBRID MODEL PLAN FOR CONDUCT OF HEARINGS**

**A. Purpose of the Hybrid Model Plan for Conduct of Hearings**

This Hybrid Model Plan provides instruction regarding the manner in which the Court will conduct hearings in all bankruptcy cases and proceedings in this District going forward as the Court, practitioners, and parties continue to adapt to ongoing concerns and risks associated with the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and its variants. The Court intends to ensure due process while minimizing attendance costs, maximizing the Court's flexibility to address the specific needs of individual cases, and safeguarding the health and safety of Court staff, practitioners, and parties.

**B. Safety Precautions**

All individuals attending in-person hearings in this Court must adhere to applicable General Orders issued by the United States District Court governing conduct and safety protocols required to enter the federal building located at 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, Louisiana. Those Orders can be found at: <https://www.laed.uscourts.gov/>.

**C. Technology Improvements**

Audio of all court proceedings will continue to be broadcast through the Court's Teleconference Line, 1-888-684-8852; Access Code 9318283. Once the dial-in process is completed, you will be connected live to the courtroom. Once you are connected, you will be able to hear persons speaking in the courtroom and other persons on the call addressing the Court. Parties in interest participating telephonically are instructed to place their line on mute either by pressing the "mute" button on your telephone, or by pressing \*6. To unmute your line, press the

“mute” button on your telephone, or \*6 again. Do not unmute your line until you need to address the Court. Once you are finished speaking, you must mute your line again.

Video evidentiary hearings and trials will occur only when specifically ordered by the Court and will be broadcast via the Zoom for Government platform. The courtroom has been equipped with additional cameras focused on the lectern, gallery, and witness stand.

#### **D. Section 341 Meetings of Creditors**

Meetings of creditors conducted by the United States Trustee’s Office, the Standing Chapter 13 Trustee’s Office, and/or Panel Chapter 7 Trustees pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341 will be held in the manner prescribed by those offices. Parties and counsel are responsible for monitoring the Web sites hosted and communications generated by those offices for information regarding the manner in which § 341 meetings of creditors will be held.

#### **E. Conduct of Hearings: Chapter 13 Hearings<sup>1</sup>**

1. Wednesday Motion Day: All matters that are considered on regularly scheduled Wednesday chapter 13 motion days beginning at 9:00 a.m. will continue to be heard **VIA TELEPHONE ONLY** until further notice. This includes motions and claim objections filed by the Chapter 13 Standing Trustee, debtors, and creditors, as well as confirmation hearings. This docket will continue to be organized and called by the last name of the Debtor’s attorney, with pro se matters being called first.
2. Section 362(c)(3) & (4) Motions: Evidentiary hearings to consider motions to extend or impose the automatic stay are regularly scheduled on two Mondays per month at 2:00 p.m. Debtors and debtors’ counsel, as well as any party in interest

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<sup>1</sup> For the dates and times of all regularly scheduled hearings in the Court, please consult the Court’s Web site at <https://www.laeb.uscourts.gov/judges-info/hearing-dates/judge-meredith-s-grabill-motion-days>.

who intends to cross-examine the debtor(s), must appear **IN PERSON**. Any other party in interest may present legal argument pro se (individuals only) or through counsel admitted to practice in this Court via the Court's Teleconference Line without leave of Court.

3. Section 362(d) Motions: Hearings to consider motions to lift or modify the automatic stay are regularly scheduled on two Mondays per month at 2:30 p.m. and will continue to be heard **VIA TELEPHONE ONLY** until further notice.

#### **F. Conduct of Hearings: Chapters 7 and 11 Hearings**

1. Wednesday Motion Day: Unless otherwise ordered, parties in interest and their counsel may attend regularly scheduled chapter 7/11 motions days Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. either **IN PERSON** or **VIA TELEPHONE** without leave of Court.
2. Section 524(c) Applications: Evidentiary hearings to consider chapter 7 debtors' applications to reaffirm debts are regularly scheduled on two Mondays per month at 9:00 a.m. Debtors, debtors' counsel, as well as any party in interest who intends to cross-examine the debtor(s), must appear **IN PERSON**. Any other party in interest may present legal argument pro se or through counsel admitted to practice in this Court via the Court's Teleconference Line.

#### **G. Conduct of Hearings: Adversary Proceedings and Contested Matters**

1. Unless otherwise ordered, parties in interest and their counsel may attend and present legal argument at any non-evidentiary hearing **IN PERSON** or **VIA TELEPHONE** without leave of Court.
2. Unless otherwise ordered, trials and evidentiary hearings must be attended **IN PERSON** by witnesses and litigants intending to present or challenge evidence.

Any party in interest may present legal argument pro se (individuals only) or through counsel admitted to practice in this Court or monitor the trial/evidentiary hearing via the Court's Teleconference Line.

3. Upon consent of all parties and/or with prior Court approval, individual witnesses and/or litigants intending to present or challenge evidence may appear and participate in trials and evidentiary hearings via videoconference/teleconference.

#### **H. Conduct of Hearings: Complex Cases**

1. Omnibus Hearing Dates: Unless otherwise ordered, parties in interest and their counsel may attend regularly scheduled Omnibus Hearing Dates either **IN PERSON** or **VIA TELEPHONE** without leave of Court.
2. The above-listed procedures governing the conduct of hearings in adversary proceedings and contested matters are applicable to such proceedings related to complex cases.

#### **I. Exhibits**

All exhibits to be presented at trial or an evidentiary hearing must be submitted electronically prior to the trial or evidentiary hearing per instructions issued via Orders in individual cases. All exhibits will be presented electronically through Zoom For Government, and will be visible when in person in the courtroom and, when applicable, visible to any party in interest with access to the Zoom stream.