

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT

WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA
JOHN M. SHAW UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE
800 LAFAYETTE STREET, SUITE 3900
LAFAYETTE, LA 70501

JOHN W. KOLWE
CHIEF JUDGE

PH: 337-262-6383

June 30, 2020

Lafayette/Lake Charles
Bankruptcy Bar

Re: COVID-19: Continued Use of Telephonic Hearings

To Whom It May Concern:

On June 5, 2020, the Court entered an Order of Modification of Order Establishing Protocols for Court Operations During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, General Order 2020-3-3. Under this Order, the Protocol Period will terminate on June 30, 2020. This Order also made provisions for each presiding judge to establish procedures and guidelines for conducting hearings and trials after the protocol period ends.

Due to the continuing high number of new COVID-19 infections in the Lafayette and Lake Charles areas, the Court will continue conducting all hearings telephonically until further notice. The following are the procedures and guidelines which are applicable to all counsel participating in the telephonic hearings:

1. Only attorneys will be allowed to participate in regularly scheduled Chapter 7, 11, 12 and 13 or Adversary hearings. Should a debtor or any other witness dial-in to the court system for a particular hearing during the regularly scheduled hearing, the hearing on that matter will be terminated and continued to another date and time.
2. If an attorney requires an appearance by a debtor or any other witness, he or she must contact chambers by email, copying all counsel involved in the particular matter, *preferably three business days prior to the hearing date*, and arrangements will be made for a special setting to conduct the hearing by phone, video, or in person (if in person, all participants will be required to abide by strict protocols to ensure everyone's safety).
3. It is important that all participants have access to a clear telephone line. Additionally, all participants must mute their phone until their matter is called.
4. Participants that call in from a cell phone that causes issues with the sound quality of the hearings will have their cases rescheduled for a later time.
5. Participants may NOT participate by speakerphone.
6. Do NOT place your telephone on hold and do NOT turn the volume down on your phone without also muting your line.
7. If you dial in to a hearing, please remember that you are participating in a court proceeding and are bound by the normal rules of courtesy and attention.

8. Each time you address the Court, please state your name. This is important in the event a transcript of the hearing becomes necessary.

We have been conducting telephonic hearings for more than three months now, and for the most part they seem to be an effective and efficient way to allow matters to progress during these unprecedented times. If you have any issues or concerns concerning the use of telephonic hearings please do not hesitate to contact my Judicial Assistant, Karen Hess, or Law Clerk, Stuart Welch.

With kind personal regards,

I am very truly yours,



John W. Kolwe
U. S. Bankruptcy Judge