



CLERK, U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

ENTERED

THE DATE OF ENTRY IS ON
THE COURT'S DOCKET

The following constitutes the ruling of the court and has the force and effect therein described.

Signed April 20, 2020

United States Bankruptcy Judge

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

IN RE:

CONTINUED COURT OPERATIONS
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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GENERAL ORDER
2020-08

This Order extends General Order 2020-05. In its continuing effort to address the health and safety of the public, Court employees, staff of other entities with whom Court personnel interact, and litigants and counsel who appear before the Court during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Court ORDERS as follows:

1. Court hearings during the month of May 2020 (except for motions to extend or impose the stay, trials in adversary proceedings, and contested matters requiring lengthy hearings) will go forward in the manner set forth below, subject to the usual rules for cancellation where parties settle, have agreed orders, or seek continuances.

2. **Video and Telephone Hearings.** With certain exceptions set forth in paragraph 3 below, hearings during the month of May will generally be conducted by either: (a) videoconference; or (b) telephonically. Each judge, in his or her discretion, will decide whether the hearing will be video versus mere telephonic. For example, in certain hearings where live witnesses are not

necessary, the court may decide that a mere telephonic hearing suffices. Additionally, in the case of video hearings, it is generally possible and permissible for a person who wishes to appear merely by telephone, and not by video, to do that if he or she prefers. The one exception is for witnesses. Witnesses must testify by video. The courtroom deputy for each judge will coordinate with the parties as to whether a hearing will be by video or telephonic.

3. **Live Hearings.** On rare occasion, the court may hold live hearings. This will generally be handled on a case by case basis and will require a motion by a party for a live hearing. In such situations, all persons should wear face masks. The court may deny entry into the courtroom to any person without a mask. The court will enforce appropriate social distancing during live hearings. In the case of live hearings, parties will still be permitted to participate by video or telephonically (with witnesses being required to be on video, if not in the courtroom).

4. **Motions to Extend or Impose the Stay.** For motions to extend or impose the stay, whether currently on file or filed prior to June 1, 2020, debtor's counsel shall submit bridge orders after the objection deadline has passed and the Court will, in most cases, sign bridge orders on these motions and set/reset them for hearing after June 1, 2020. If there are timely objections on file to these motions, the Court reserves discretion to decline to issue a bridge order (or only issue a very brief bridge order) and specially set the motion for hearing prior to June 1, 2020.

5. **Adversary Trials and Lengthy Contested Matters.** For trials in adversary proceedings and contested matters requiring lengthy hearings, parties should contact the appropriate courtroom deputy and each judge will handle those on a situation by situation basis.

6. Unless extended, this Order will remain in effect through June 1, 2020, and will then expire.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

###END OF ORDER###