**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT**

**FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**Telephonic Appearance Procedures**

**for Bankruptcy Judge Lena M. James**

All hearings before the Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of North Carolina will be scheduled as in-person hearings, however, due to the current surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the Delta variant, parties may appear by telephone for uncontested and non-evidentiary hearings.

The Court expects parties and attorneys to appear in person at hearings except in the circumstances described below for telephonic appearances.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Telephonic Appearances**

Telephone appearances may be requested by calling or emailing the Courtroom Deputy for Judge James, Traci-Michelle Phillips, at (336)-397-7789 or at traci-michelle\_phillips@ncmb.uscourts.gov. **Requests must be made before 5:00pm on the day prior to the scheduled hearing date**. The Court, in exercising its discretion, may in certain rare circumstances, request the party attend by video means, in which case the hearing may be rescheduled for a later date. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, **the following types of matters MAY NOT be attended telephonically:**

1. *Trials and Evidentiary Hearings*
2. *Contested Hearings*
3. *Testimony of any kind*
4. *Questioning of Witnesses*
5. *Chapter 11 Confirmation Hearings, § 363 Sale Hearings*

For all cases and matters, individuals who merely intend to listen and will not be participating need not request to appear by telephone.

Unless otherwise indicated in the notice or in the Courtroom Deputy’s response to a request, parties will appear telephonically by calling (866) 434-5269 and entering access code 2732206#. Again, only parties that have requested and received permission to attend hearings telephonically will be allowed to remain on the line.

It is strongly encouraged that all counsel accessing the hearing telephonically utilize either a headset or handset. Parties should leave their phones on mute until their respective case is called. The Court reserves the right to mute or disconnect any participant whose faulty connection and/or audio quality disrupts the hearing or renders the communication incomprehensible.

1. Judge James will also allow for some parties to appear virtually through Zoom for Government, in specific circumstances. The procedures for requesting and participating in a Zoom for Government hearing can be found in the document entitled “Zoom Appearance Procedures for Zoom Eligible Hearings for Bankruptcy Judge Lena. M. James,” available on the Court’s website at <http://www.ncmb.uscourts.gov/content/lena-m-james>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)