United States Bankruptcy Administrator



Middle District of North Carolina

101 South Edgeworth Street

Greensboro, North Carolina 27401

March 26, 2020

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Chapter 7 341 Meetings of Creditors: Temporary Policies and Procedures**

The President of the United States has proclaimed that the worldwide pandemic Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak that has reached the United States constitutes a national emergency, and the Governor has declared a state of emergency for the State of North Carolina. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities have advised taking precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus and slow the spread of the disease, and several North Carolina counties have issued “stay at home” orders as a precautionary measure.

Based on the above, the U.S. Bankruptcy Administrator for the Middle District of North Carolina is implementing the following temporary policies and procedures with respect to all Chapter 7 Section 341 meetings of creditors, which policies and procedures will take effect immediately.

**All Chapter 7 341 meetings scheduled for March 20, 2020 and March 27, 2020 will be continued to the Trustee’s next 341 hearing date.**

**All Chapter 7 341 meetings will be conducted telephonically until further notice, beginning on March 30, 2020. Formal notices will be sent by the Court and properly served on all parties on the matrix setting out the call-in number and code for the telephonic hearing.** **Updated 341 calendars specifying a call-in time for each case will be posted on the Court’s calendar webpage prior to the 341 meeting.**

Debtors and their counsel as well as any creditors or interested parties wishing to appear at a 341 meeting should **not** report to the physical location of the originally scheduled 341 meeting but should instead make plans to appear remotely by phone. Counsel may request debtors appear at their offices, at their own discretion.

The Trustee and/or a member of the Bankruptcy Administrator’s staff will be present at the originally scheduled location and host the meetings by conference call. A call-in number and access code will be provided to all parties via the formal notice referenced above.

To minimize foreseeable problems and unnecessary delay, counsel are encouraged to assist in implementing the following phone etiquette guidelines, which will be required of all parties:

1. **Mute** the call while your meeting is not being held. Do not place the call on hold.
2. Speak clearly.
3. Limit all background noise while your meeting is being held.
4. No speaker phone unless two or more persons are appearing on the same line, i.e., debtor and counsel or joint-filing debtors.
5. Debtors without phone access should appear for the telephonic meeting at their counsel’s office.
6. Debtors and counsel are to be at a set location, and not in transit, so that full attention can be given to the questions being asked.
7. Only debtors and their counsel as well as creditors or interested parties will be allowed on the call, i.e., no “moral support” or supplementary answers to be provided by friends or family.
8. Any telephonic appearances by debtors without their counsel also present on the call will result in a continuance.

To make the telephonic process as efficient as possible and to enable the Trustee to verify the identity of the debtor(s), a copy of the debtor’s driver’s license or government issued picture ID **MUST** be sent to the Trustee by email or secure document portal, per the Trustee’s instructions, by 12:00 noon two business (2) days prior to the 341 meeting. Debtors should have that ID documentation available during the telephonic examination.

Trustees will provide Debtors with instructions on how to submit ID and a statement of post-341 continuing duties prior to the 341 meeting.

These temporary policies and procedures do not otherwise affect a debtor’s obligation to submit all other necessary documents to the Court and the Trustee. Debtors should provide the Trustee with DSO information prior to the meeting.

Thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation in implementing these temporary changes.