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**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

**IN RE: PROCEDURES FOR
PHASED REOPENING DURING
COVID-19 PUBLIC EMERGENCY**

GENERAL ORDER 20-06

Upon consideration of the continuation of the Continuity of Operations Plan (“COOP”) implemented on March 18, 2020, in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and to more closely align with the District Court operations and maintain access for the public,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

1. Bankruptcy Intake Area in Roybal Building Will Remain Open. The Intake area of the United States Bankruptcy Court at the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse will continue to be open to accept in-person filings in light of the difficulty many self-represented litigants have in accessing electronic filings and the increasing economic difficulties faced by many during this pandemic.
 - a. Face Coverings. Anyone not wearing a face covering without an approved medical exemption or anyone not observing posted social distancing rules may be refused service.

1 b. Public Computers and Electronic Kiosks. At the discretion
2 of the Clerk of Court, public computers and electronic kiosks
3 may be disabled until methods can be developed to reduce
4 any spread of infection through their use.

5 c. Cash Payments. Cash will not be accepted for filing or copying fees
6 unless an exception is made by the Clerk of Court.

7 2. No In-Person Hearings. No physical access to the United States Bankruptcy
8 Court will be permitted except for the filing intake area of the Edward R.
9 Roybal Federal Building and no in person hearings will be held in any matter,
10 until further notice. Judges will continue to hear matters remotely through
11 telephonic or by video service.

12 3. Self-Represented Filings. Individuals filing bankruptcy without an attorney
13 may file in person at the United States Bankruptcy Court at the Edward R.
14 Roybal Federal Building, by mail, or through the Court's Electronic Self-
15 Representation module. The Court's existing electronic filing for self-
16 represented debtors (eSR) is now authorized to accept both Chapter 7
17 and 13 petitions. All Chapter 7 and 13 petitions not filed in person at the
18 Edward R. Roybal Federal Building shall be filed through eSR or mail.
19 Any other chapter must be filed through CM/ECF with an attorney or
20 mailed to the Court. Please view the Court's website for more information
21 specific to self-represented parties at [https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-](https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-without-an-attorney)
22 [without-an-attorney](https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-without-an-attorney). Parties requiring assistance or guidance may contact
23 the Court at (855) 460-9641.

24 4. Signatures and Filing Fees. If a bankruptcy case is submitted through
25 eSR or mail, the debtor must mail the required signatures, and the required
26 filing fee within 10 days, or the case will be dismissed. The signatures
27 and fees required are explained in more detail on the Court's website under
28 the "Don't Have an Attorney" tab at <https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing->

1 [without-an-attorney](https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/forms/application-individuals-pay-filing-fee-installmentsapplication-have-chapter-7-filing-fee). All petitions from self-represented parties are
2 automatically granted a fee installment so that the full required filing fee
3 is due no later than 10 days after the filing of the petition. For petitions
4 filed through eSR, an application for a fee waiver must be mailed within
5 five (5) days of the electronic petition filing, on the form available on the
6 website at [https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/forms/application-individuals-pay-](https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/forms/application-individuals-pay-filing-fee-installmentsapplication-have-chapter-7-filing-fee)
7 [filing-fee-installmentsapplication-have-chapter-7-filing-fee](https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/forms/application-individuals-pay-filing-fee-installmentsapplication-have-chapter-7-filing-fee). For petitions filed
8 by mail or in person, an application for a fee waiver shall be submitted
9 with the petition. The Court will issue an Order on the Fee Waiver Application
10 within five (5) days. If a fee waiver or installment order is entered in a specific
11 case, it will supersede this General Order requiring the full fee within 10 days.
12 If the requisite fee or signatures are not mailed within 10 days, the Court will
13 dismiss the case without a hearing.

14 5. Social Security Number Statements. A self-represented litigant filing a
15 voluntary bankruptcy case must include the signed “Statement About Your
16 Social Security Numbers” (Official Form 121) with the initial filing when mailing
17 the documents (F.R.B.P. 1007(f)). When filing a voluntary bankruptcy case
18 through the Court’s eSR program, the signed “Statement About Your Social
19 Security Numbers” form must be mailed to the court within 10 days of filing
20 or the case will be dismissed. All self-represented filing instructions are
21 explained in more detail on the Court’s website under the “Don’t Have an
22 Attorney” tab at <https://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/filing-without-an-attorney>.

23 6. Mediations. Mediations may resume and are in the discretion of the mediator
24 as to whether to proceed in person or remotely.

25 7. Judges’ or Courtesy Copies. Except for documents over 25 pages,
26 including exhibits, the requirement to deliver judges’ copies of documents
27 to chambers (LBR 5005-2(d)) continues to be temporarily suspended –
28 including delivery via U.S. mail, personal delivery, or any other means.

1 Documents over 25 pages should still be provided unless the judge's
2 specific updated instructions have waived that requirement. Parties are
3 reminded that the judge and chambers' staff do not receive electronic
4 notices of filings, and therefore, (a) for documents that are filed late,
5 and (b) for matters that are either (i) not set for hearing, or (ii) not the
6 subject of an electronically uploaded order (LOU), parties must contact
7 the chambers of the presiding judge and advise chambers of the filing.

8 8. Signatures. Local Bankruptcy Rule 9011-1 does not require in-person
9 contact as it permits an attorney to receive a signature page by electronic
10 means. Nothing in the rule precludes the filing of a signature page that
11 has been received by facsimile, pdf, text or photo. This signature can
12 be filed separately in whatever format is reasonably possible so that
13 there is a clear indication that the signor has read and is signing the actual
14 document filed.

15 a. In light of the difficulty of obtaining any paper files during
16 this emergency, the requirement of LBR 9011-1(d) to maintain
17 a wet signature for five (5) years is temporarily suspended and
18 the attorney should maintain the electronic transmission of the client
19 to file the document in whatever format is reasonable at this time.

20 b. If there is a situation where a client cannot transmit a signature
21 electronically either due to lack of required technology or internet
22 access, etc., the attorney should so explain the circumstances
23 with the filing, verify that permission was obtained from the client
24 to sign the document on their behalf, and obtain the signature
25 as soon as possible after the filing through another means.

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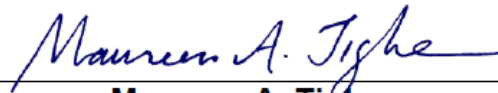
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1 9. Phased Reopening Plans. The Court's COOP will remain in place and
2 be modified gradually as necessary. Details of these modifications will be
3 posted on the Court's website and communicated to staff as they are
4 implemented.

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6 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

7 DATED: August 7, 2020

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11 **Maureen A. Tighe**
12 Chief Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court
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