

United States Bankruptcy Court
Central District of California

Maureen A. Tighe, Chief Judge
Kathleen J. Campbell, Executive Officer / Clerk of Court



CHIEF JUDGE TIGHE NAMED “2021 JUDGE OF THE YEAR” BY CENTRAL DISTRICT CONSUMER BANKRUPTCY ATTORNEY ASSOCIATION

On November 4, 2021, the Central District Consumer Bankruptcy Attorney Association (*cdcbaa*) will name Chief Judge Maureen A. Tighe the “2021 Judge of the Year” at the annual Calvin Ashland Awards Dinner. The celebration and dinner will be held at the Skyview Ballroom on the 21st floor of the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Universal City, CA. The *cdcbaa* has posted a flyer on the event at the following [link](#).

HYBRID COURTROOMS NOW AVAILABLE DISTRICTWIDE

New technology has been installed in all courtrooms where appearance via video is permitted. To facilitate the simultaneous appearances of in-person and remote participants, new cameras and equipment were added which join the judge, lectern and witness stand to a ZoomGov hearing. Additionally, to accommodate the display of a paper-based impeachment document or demonstrative exhibit, a document camera was added to the lectern. The document camera enables any paper-based document or exhibit displayed under the camera to be seen on the new monitors within the courtroom as well as in the ZoomGov hearing. Please see the [Zoom Video Hearing Guide and Training for Participants](#) and [Zoom training videos](#) for tips on a successful Zoom video hearing experience, preparing, pre-circulating and staging electronic exhibits, and presenting both paper-based and electronic exhibits. The new “hybrid” technologies allow the court to adjust to an ever-changing environment through increased flexibility with how the judge can conduct hearings and potential appearance options for participants.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONSIDER WHAT OUR AMERICAN COMMUNITY ASKS OF US IN ANNUAL CIVICS CONTEST

On June 25, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court and the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California hosted a virtual awards ceremony for the winners of the Central District’s Civic Contest. The theme of this year’s civic contest for high school students was “What Does Our American Community Ask of Us?”

The Central District received over 200 entries for this year’s contest. The first, second, and third place winners were recognized during the virtual reception and received cash prizes. These winners were automatically entered to compete in the Ninth Circuit Civics Contest. The Central District Lawyer Representatives and the Attorney Admission Fund provided valuable funding for this year’s contest.



Judge Sandra Klein kicked off the ceremony with opening remarks and would later announce the winners of the essay and video competition. Chief Judge Maureen Tighe introduced the other judges and special guests in attendance. The winning essays and videos have been posted on the contest website <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest/>.

JUDGE DEBORAH J. SALTZMAN PROFILED IN DAILY JOURNAL

On August 17, the Daily Journal published a profile of Judge Deborah J. Saltzman. The article describes what attracted Judge Saltzman to the legal practice of bankruptcy, her pragmatic approach to resolving issues, and patience with those who appear before her.

The profile briefly follows Judge Saltzman's path to judgeship, including receiving her first bankruptcy project while working as a summer associate at a law firm and attending the University of Virginia School of Law. "The most interesting part of bankruptcy — whether it's corporate bankruptcy or consumer bankruptcy — is that it's really this set of tools to solve a complicated set of problems for a company or for an individual," Judge Saltzman noted.



Attorney Reed H. Olmstead, who appeared before Judge Saltzman in a Chapter 13 case that took over 4 years to reach confirmation noted "she had the patience to do that. ... A lot of other judges wouldn't have let the case go on." Olmstead further commented, "As long as you're making progress ... and not just wasting everybody's time, she will give you the opportunity to get things done."



CHIEF JUDGE MAUREEN A. TIGHE PROFILED IN DAILY JOURNAL

On September 15, the Daily Journal published a profile of Chief Judge Maureen A. Tighe. The article focuses on how Chief Judge Tighe and the Court overcame many challenges related to the pandemic.

The profile covers Chief Judge Tighe's efforts to survey local bankruptcy attorneys on remote hearings remaining in place post-pandemic, review issues related to Chapter 11 bankruptcies, and put in place measures to better serve self-represented parties. "If we're going to be a court that's there for the people, you have to figure out how they can get lawyers or figure out how they can understand the system without lawyers so they can use the laws that are there for them," Chief Judge Tighe noted.

The article also references how Chief Judge Tighe encouraged feedback from the bankruptcy community on the challenges facing the court during the pandemic. Jeffrey J. Hagen is an attorney in Woodland Hills who noted, "I applaud the fact that she didn't simply dictate what she wanted or what the judges collectively wanted but actively sought our input."

ELECTRONIC SELF-REPRESENTATION NOW AVAILABLE FOR CHAPTER 13

As of September 1, Self-Represented Litigants (SRLs) will have the option of completing a chapter 13 bankruptcy petition through electronic Self-Representation (eSR), increasing remote access to the Court during the pandemic. eSR is an online tool to help individuals complete a bankruptcy petition when they have decided to file bankruptcy without an attorney. Individuals filing for bankruptcy without an attorney are still responsible for knowing and following all of the legal requirements.

The Court's data shows that individuals who are represented by an attorney are more likely to confirm a chapter 13 plan and receive a discharge. The Central District Consumer Bankruptcy Attorney Association (*cdcbaa*) has developed a list of attorneys who will assist SRLs who have already filed a Chapter 13 bankruptcy, if necessary. The attorney list is provided to the SRL upon filing in the confirmation email that follows the eSR submission, to further promote attorney representation



eSR was initially provided for chapter 7 bankruptcy petitions only, eSR has been used by SRLs since 2014. For more information about using eSR, visit the Court's eSR page: www.cacb.uscourts.gov/esr.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Monday, October 11 - Columbus Day

Thursday, November 11 - Veterans Day

Thursday, November 25 - Thanksgiving Day

Friday, December 24 - Christmas Day (Observed)

Friday, December 31 - New Year's Day (Observed)

To view the 2021 Federal Holiday Public Notice on the Court's website click [here](#).

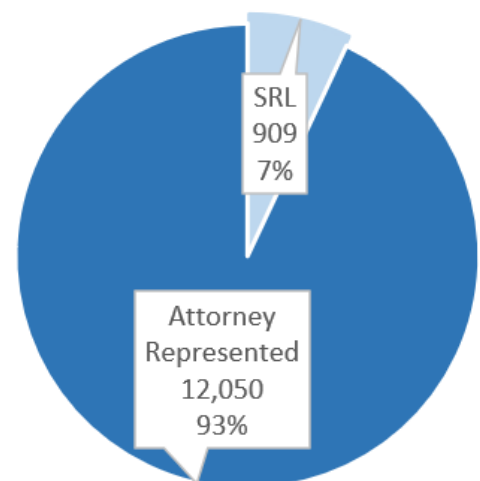
BANKRUPTCY STATISTICS

The data below represents filings year to date thru September 30, 2021. Statistics based on internal filings

Divisional Filings YTD	Ch 7	Ch 11	Ch 13	Total	% change from previous YTD
Los Angeles	6869	138	812	7819	-15.36%
Northern	900	12	103	1015	-18.01%
Riverside	4832	17	461	5310	-22.52%
San Fernando Valley	1426	51	185	1662	-11.21%
Santa Ana	2179	44	208	2431	-15.02%
Total	16206	262	1769	18237	-17.34%

Business Filings	Ch 7	Ch 11	Ch 13	Total
2021 YTD	689	202	23	914
2020 YTD	764	216	48	1028

Central District of CA - Filings YTD



The interactive Statistics Dashboard is a feature on the Court's website that provides up-to-date filing and closing data for chapter 7, 11, and 13 cases, as well as adversary proceedings. Users can view data sorted by division or from the entire Central District, or they can choose to view only pro se (SRL) or business cases. The Statistics Dashboard also displays year-by-year and month-by-month comparisons; another option compares each month of the current year to the corresponding month of the prior year. Access the "Interactive Statistics" through the link: <https://ecf.cacb.uscourts.gov/ecfstatsdash/ecfstatsdash-new.html>

TOP 10 CASES OF INTEREST*

Debtor	Case Number	Chapter	Filed	Assets	Liabilities
Airport Van Rental, Inc.	LA-20-20876-BB	11	12/11/20	\$10 - \$50 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Thomas Vincent Girardi	LA 20-21020-BR	7	12/18/20	\$50 - \$100 million	\$50 - \$100 million
Glenroy Coachella, LLC	LA-21-11188-BB	11	02/15/21	\$50 - \$100 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Glostation USA, Inc.	SV-20-11435-MB	11	08/13/20	\$1 - \$10 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Harbour Community, LP	SV-21-11313-MT	11	08/03/21	\$10 - \$50 million	\$1 - \$10 million
Yueting Jia	LA-19-24804-VZ	11	10/14/19	\$500m - \$1billion	\$1 - \$10 billion
Plamex Investment, LLC	SA-21-10958-ES	11	04/14/21	\$100 - \$500 million	\$100 - \$500 million
PS On Tap, LLC	SV-21-10757-MB	11	04/28/21	\$1 - \$10 million	\$10 - \$50 million
The Source Hotel, LLC	SA-21-10525-ES	11	02/26/21	\$50 - \$100 million	\$50 - \$100 million
Western Community Energy	RS-21-12821-SY	9	05/24/21	\$50 - \$100 million	\$50 - \$100 million

*Based on a combination of asset and liability levels, and/or name recognition.

BANKRUPTCY FRAUD PROSECUTIONS

The following information has been provided by the Office of the United States Trustee:

USA v. Jonathan Lee Smith

- On July 13, 2021, Jonathan Lee Smith plead guilty to wire fraud in the United States District Court for the Central District of California, Los Angeles Division. Smith is the President of two Chapter 11 debtors, Hoplite Entertainment and Hoplite, Inc. The two Chapter 11 entities are production companies that specialize in reality television programming. In September 2020, Hoplite Entertainment procured a \$2M loan, which loan was guaranteed by Smith. To obtain the loan Smith presented false documents to the lender. Debtors missed the first payment on that loan and instead created multiple phony electronic fund transfers notifications and presented those notifications in an effort to delay action by the lender. Within a few months, the lender filed a civil complaint against the corporate entities and against Smith. Shortly thereafter, the entities filed for bankruptcy protection. For more information see [USAO press release](#)

USA v. Richard Allen Mease

- On August 12, 2021 Richard Allen Mease was sentenced to 12 months and one day in federal prison for continuing to act as a bankruptcy petition preparer despite injunctions issued by the bankruptcy courts preventing him from performing petition preparer services. For more information see [USAO press release](#)