

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

GENERAL ORDER 20-5

EXTENSION OF ALTERATIONS TO COURT OPERATIONS
ARISING FROM COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This General Order extends the alteration of normal court operations in the Court's continuing effort to protect the health and safety of the public, including Court employees, litigants, attorneys, and other individuals from unnecessary risks arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. While efforts are being made throughout the country to balance economic and public health concerns, the Court views it advisable to continue its policy of reducing the necessity of physical appearances in the courtroom, advancing the Court's docket primarily through video conferencing and telephonic technologies while reserving the right to permit physical appearances in court under specified conditions when necessary. Accordingly,

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. **Hearings on Pending Contested Matters.** Subject to certain exceptions under ¶ 2 herein, hearings which have been subjected to the Delay Period under General Order 20-3 or which are to be scheduled on pending contested matters shall be conducted by video conferencing or by telephonic means at the discretion of the particular judge and shall be coordinated with the parties by the courtroom deputy. Procedures regarding the presentation of testimony and the submission of exhibits will be directed by the presiding judge.

2. **Adversary Trials and Extended Contested Matters.** The conduct of adversary trials, together with certain contested matters involving extended time estimates or a large number of participants, shall be handled on a case-

by-case basis. Courtroom participation may be authorized by the Court for a regulated number of persons under specified conditions. In the absence of an order providing direction in a particular case, parties should contact the applicable courtroom deputy.

3. **Declarations for Electronic Filing and Clerk Contacts.** The provisions addressing the submission of Declarations for Electronic Filing and the scope of clerk contacts, as specified in ¶¶ 5 and 6 of General Order 20-3, respectively, are extended.

4. This Order will remain in effect through July 3, 2020, and will then expire unless extended by separate order.

SIGNED this the 15th day of May, 2020.



BILL PARKER
CHIEF UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE