

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**

In re: Business of the Court

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General Order No. 24-1

**ORDER SUSPENDING REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN ORIGINAL
SIGNATURES BY DEBTORS FOR ELECTRONIC FILINGS**

In light of persistent public health concerns remaining since the President of the United States and the Governor of the State of Missouri declared the public health emergency in response to the COVID-19 virus over, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri will proceed with an abundance of caution and provide attorneys practicing in this district and their clients the flexibility to maintain distance and limit contact where appropriate. Therefore,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. For all documents that require original signatures by a debtor under Local Rule 9011 or otherwise, the Court hereby **SUSPENDS** the requirement that a CM/ECF filer secure the debtor's original signature prior to electronically filing such documents PROVIDED that the filer of the documents has:
 - a. Transmitted the entire document(s) to the debtor for review and signature;
 - b. Verified with the debtor that they have received and reviewed the entire document(s) to be signed;
 - c. Communicated with the debtor regarding the substance and purpose of the signed document(s) and received express authorization from the debtor to file the document(s); and
 - d. Either:
 - i. Obtained the debtor's digital signature via commercially available digital signature software that provides signature authentication and, after the filing, maintains a copy of the digitally signed document(s) in the case file in accord with Local Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 9011(C);
 - ii. Obtained the express written permission, including by electronic mail, from the debtor to affix their signature to the document(s) and, after the filing, maintains a hard copy of such written consent in the file in accord with Local Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 9011(C); or
 - iii. Obtained in their possession at the time of filing an image format or other facsimile of the entire signed document(s), including the signature page(s), received electronically (including by electronic mail or facsimile transmission) from the debtor, and after the filing,

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maintains a hard copy in accord with Local Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 9011(C).

2. The electronic filing of any document(s) with an electronic signature constitutes a certification by the CM/ECF filer under Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 9011, Local Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 9011, the applicable Missouri Rules of Professional Conduct and this Order that the filer has complied with paragraph 1 of this Order.
3. If a document is signed by a person other than the debtor, such as a guardian or an attorney in fact, the requirements of paragraph 1 apply to the person who signs that document. In addition, the electronic signature must identify the person who signs and the capacity in which that person acts. If limitations of software or space do not permit this information to be included in the signature block, the information must be clearly and conspicuously disclosed in an attachment to the document.
4. On written request (including by electronic transmission) from the Court or any party in interest, the CM/ECF filer shall promptly provide evidence to the requesting party of compliance with the terms of this Order.

This Order takes the place of General Order No. 20-4 entered on March 24, 2020, and will remain in effect until further order of this Court.

SO ORDERED



Bonnie L. Clair
Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge



Kathy A. Surratt-States
United States Bankruptcy Judge



Brian C. Walsh
United States Bankruptcy Judge

Dated: January 2, 2024