

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR FILING, SIGNING AND
VERIFYING PLEADINGS AND PAPERS BY ELECTRONIC MEANS**

I. REGISTRATION FOR THE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM

A. DESIGNATION OF CASES

The court shall designate which cases shall be assigned to the Electronic Filing System (“System”). The current implementation/activation date can be viewed at the court’s Web site www.txwb.uscourts.gov.

B. PASSWORDS

Each attorney is required to use a password to participate in the electronic retrieval and filing of pleadings and other papers in accordance with the System. Registration for a password is governed by Paragraph I.C.

C. REGISTRATION

1. Each attorney desiring to file pleadings or other papers electronically must complete and sign an Attorney Registration Form and a Credit Card Blanket Authorization Form.
2. All signed original Registration Forms and Credit Card Forms shall be mailed to the ECF Help Desk, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, P.O. Box 1439, San Antonio, TX 78295-1439 or delivered to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, 615 E. Houston St., San Antonio, TX, Attn.: ECF Help Desk.
3. Upon approval of the Credit Card Blanket Authorization Form, each attorney will receive telephonic notice from the Office of the Clerk indicating that an envelope containing the attorney’s assigned System password is available for pick-up at the Office of the Clerk. Only the attorney or an authorized representative may pick up the envelope. Out of district attorneys applying for registration may communicate with the Office of the Clerk to arrange for delivery of the system password.

4. Once registered, an attorney may withdraw from participation in the System by providing the ECF Help Desk with notice of such withdrawal. Such notice must be in writing. Upon receipt, the ECF Help Desk will immediately cancel the attorney's password and will delete the attorney's name from any applicable electronic service list.
5. If any of the information on the Registration changes, e.g., mailing address, e-mail address, etc., the attorney must submit an Amended Registration form to the attention of the ECF Help Desk.

II. FILING AND SERVICE OF DOCUMENTS

A. FILING

1. All petitions, motions, pleadings, memoranda of law, or other documents required to be filed with the court in connection with a case assigned to the System may be electronically filed on the System.
2. When filing new cases electronically, the filing attorney shall provide the full nine digit social security number in the case opening screen, or if using case upload software, the "debtor.txt" file should continue to contain the full social security number.
3. When filing petitions, the filing attorney shall ensure that only the last four digits of the debtor's social security number is displayed on the image of the petition.
4. The Statement of Social Security Number, Official Form 21 shall not be filed electronically. This document shall be "submitted" in paper format to the clerk within five (5) business days after the filing of the petition. Failure to submit the Statement of Social Security Number within the time prescribed may result in the case being dismissed or other appropriate sanction.
5. When filing expedited matters, the filing attorney shall immediately advise the judge's courtroom deputy clerk of the filing by phone or fax. The telephone and fax numbers for the courtroom deputies are available on the court's Web site at www.txwb.uscourts.gov.

B. SERVICE

1. Whenever a pleading or other paper is filed electronically in accordance with these *Procedures*, the System will automatically generate a “Notice of Electronic Filing” by electronic means at the time of docketing.
2. The filing attorney shall serve the pleading or other paper upon all persons entitled to notice or service in accordance with the applicable rules, or, if service by first class mail is permitted under the rules, the filing attorney may make service in accordance with Paragraph II.B.3 below.
3. An attorney filing a pleading or other paper electronically may serve the Notice of Electronic Filing by electronic means and such service will be considered the equivalent of service of the pleading or other paper by first class mail, postage prepaid, *if and only if* the recipient of notice or service is a registered participant in the System and agrees in writing with the filer to accept such service in lieu of service by first class mail.

C. SIGNATURES

1. All pleadings and other papers and documents electronically filed shall either contain a scanned image of any signature(s) therein or indicate the signature by putting “/s/ Jane Doe” where the original signature occurs.
2. Filing of Pleadings, Documents and Other Papers Requiring Original or Verified Signatures.
 - a. Electronic Filings by Registered Attorneys and Parties with Legal Representation.

Petitions, lists, schedules, statements, amendments, pleadings, affidavits and other documents that must contain original signatures or that requires verification under FRBP 1008 or an unsworn declaration as provided in 28 U.S.C. § 1746 may be filed electronically by attorneys registered in the System. A copy containing an original signature must be retained by the attorney who files such a pleading, document or other paper for four (4) years after the closing of the case.

b. Other Filings

After docketing, the Clerk shall transmit to the trustee appointed in the case or to the United States Trustee, if the case is a Chapter 9 or 11 case without a case trustee, the originals of all petitions, lists, schedules, statements, amendments, pleadings, affidavits and other documents that must contain original signatures, or which require verification under FRBP 1008 or an unsworn declaration as provided in 28 U.S.C. § 1746.

D. FEES PAYABLE TO THE CLERK

Prior to the electronic filing of any pleading or paper requiring a filing fee, a Credit Card Blanket Authorization Form, which is available on the Court's web site, must have been received and approved by the Financial Administrator of the Office of the Clerk.

E. ORDERS

1. All orders submitted electronically must conform to the following specifications:
 - a. The top margin on the first page must be four (4) inches.
 - b. The last line in the proposed order must be three (3) pound symbols (# # #), centered in the middle of the line to indicate the end of the order.
 - c. The signature line for the judge is no longer necessary. The judge will electronically sign the document in the blank space provided by the top margin on the first page.
 - d. The fonts used with Adobe Acrobat Writer version 3 or 4 must be Courier, Helvetica, or Times New Roman (Regular, bold, italic, and bold italic). The fonts used with Adobe Acrobat Writer version 5 must be Arial, Courier, or Times New Roman (Regular, bold, italic, and bold italic). Other fonts will not process correctly through the court's noticing center.
2. For all motions, applications, objections to claim, and other requests for relief, including those with "negative notice language" (bankruptcy case or adversary proceeding), the moving party at the time of filing must separately submit an order by electronic means using the Order Upload feature in the System.

3. The foregoing paragraph does not apply to requests for entry of order to pay wages and applications to pay filing fee in installments. These are considered administrative orders and the current procedure for attaching these documents to the docket entry remains in effect. Do **not** use the Order Upload feature to submit pay orders and installment fee orders.
4. Parties submitting agreed orders or judgments prior to or subsequent to the scheduled hearing by electronic means shall use the Order Upload feature in the System.
5. A cover sheet is not required for any electronically submitted orders.

A sample, signed order is attached to this document as an exhibit.

F. ATTACHMENTS TO PLEADINGS AND PROOF(S) OF CLAIM

If a filed document includes exhibits or attachments, then such exhibits or attachments must be summarized, and only the summary is to be attached to the document that is submitted for filing. However, for purposes of service on parties in interest pursuant to L. Rule 9013(g), the entire pleading, including its exhibits and attachments, must be served. If the filed document is set for hearing, the exhibits or attachments shall be introduced at the hearing for possible admission to the official record.

The foregoing paragraph does **not** apply to the following pleadings:

1. Plan of Reorganization;
2. Disclosure Statement;
3. Motions filed pursuant to Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure 7012, 7056, 7065, 9023, and 9024;
4. Application for Compensation and/or Reimbursement;
5. Trustee's Final Report and Account; and
6. Any filed document which requires an affidavit to be attached (*e.g.*, Application for Temporary Restraining Order).

With respect to the foregoing listed items, all required exhibits and attachments must be included with the document that is filed with the court.

Similarly, all exhibits or attachments to Proof of Claims must be summarized and only the summary is to be attached to the Proof of Claim that is filed with the court. Pursuant to L. Rule 3002(a), the complete Proof of Claim, including original exhibits, attachments or supporting documentation must be served on the Debtor's attorney (or on the Debtor, if the Debtor is *pro se*) and upon any trustee

appointed in the case. The creditor must provide a copy of the original documentation to any party objecting to its claim. In the event of a hearing on an objection to the claim, the Proof of Claim and all original exhibits, attachments and supporting documentation shall be introduced at the hearing for possible admission to the official record.

G. DOCUMENTS TO BE FILED UNDER SEAL

A motion to file document(s) under seal may be filed electronically; however, the actual document(s) to be filed under seal shall be filed conventionally and only after the motion is granted. The order of the court authorizing the filing of such document(s) under seal will be entered electronically by the Clerk and a paper copy of the order shall be attached to the document(s) under seal and delivered to the Clerk at the time of the filing of the document(s).

H. TITLE OF DOCKET ENTRIES

An attorney who electronically files a pleading or other document shall be responsible for designating a docket entry title for the document by using one of the docket event categories prescribed by the court.

I. CORRECTING DOCKET ENTRIES

Once a document is submitted and becomes part of the case docket, corrections to the docket are made only by the Clerk.

III. PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE SYSTEM DOCKET

A. PUBLIC ACCESS AT THE COURT

Electronic access to the electronic docket and documents filed in the System is available to the public at no charge at each Divisional Office of the Clerk during regular business hours.

B. INTERNET ACCESS

Although any person can retrieve and view documents in the System and access information from it without charge at the Clerk's Offices, electronic access to the System for viewing purposes is otherwise limited to subscribers to the Public Access to Court Electronic Records ("PACER") System and, in accordance with the ruling of the Judicial Conference of the United States, a user fee will be charged for accessing certain detailed case information, such as reviewing filed

documents and docket sheets, but excluding review of calendars and similar general information. Information regarding subscribing to PACER is available at the court's Web site at www.txwb.uscourts.gov and at each Divisional Office of the Clerk.

C. CONVENTIONAL COPIES AND CERTIFIED COPIES

Conventional copies and certified copies of electronically filed documents may be purchased at the Office of the Clerk. The fee for copying and certification will be in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1930.