



JUDGE PETER D. RUSSIN

By: Dawn Leonard

Although some of you may have already appeared before him at a telephone or zoom hearing, a formal introduction is long overdue. It is my honor to introduce to you the latest addition to The Bench in the Southern District, Ft. Lauderdale division, The Honorable Peter Dumas Russin.



Peter D. Russin, Esq was sworn in, via zoom, on August 14, 2020, by The Honorable A. Jay Cristol. An “official” investiture ceremony will be scheduled at a later date. Judge Cristol has been an inspiration for Judge Russin over his 30 plus years practicing before the Court. The respect goes both ways, in fact, as Judge Cristol nicknamed Judge Russin “The Magician” for his ability to turn what he said seemed to be “hopeless cases” into “successful ones”.

Judge Russin comes to our court from the firm formerly known as Meland Russin & Budwick (now named Meland and Budwick), where he was a co-founder and a shareholder. Judge Russin expresses great pride in the firm’s work over its 27 years of commercial and bankruptcy litigation. Over the years they successfully reorganized, settled, closed major deals and avoided foreclosures for hundreds of clients. The newly named Meland and Budwick will continue the tradition of excellence, with perhaps a little bit of the Russin magic left behind?

Before becoming a lawyer, Judge Russin studied law and fell in love at George Washington University Law School. There he met his wife Andi, to whom he was introduced by his best friend from college and her best friend from high school, who he says “is going to heaven” for her introduction. Together, they have three sons, Jake, Noah, and Asher. All three are accomplished young men. Jake is working on his Ph.D. in computational neuroscience at UC Davis, Noah is pursuing an architectural master’s degree from Michigan, and Asher is a talented musician and artist. Judge Russin could not be prouder of his family, who have supported him in his career in law and on to his judgeship. They have agreed, however, to keep him grounded. Judge Russin still must take out the trash in the Russin family household.

Although he received a great sense of satisfaction as a lawyer and thoroughly enjoyed his years fighting for his clients, Judge Russin began to think about the possibility of becoming a judge. The idea of becoming a public servant was in line with his natural inclination to help. Over his lifetime, Judge Russin has been

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Bankruptcy Cases Filed From 01/01/20 to 11/30/20

TOTAL FILED:	13,189
• Chapter 7	8,366
• Chapter 9	0
• Chapter 11	213
• Chapter 12	1
• Chapter 13	4,601
• Chapter 15	8

Additional filing statistics are available on the court website www.flsb.uscourts.gov under the “Court Information” tab at the top of page.

Select: [“Case Filing Statistics”](#)



JUDGE PETER D. RUSSIN (continued from page 1)

committed to community service and was involved in multiple charitable institutions. So, when the opportunity to apply for the judgeship arose, he decided to “go for it.” Judge Russin says that becoming a public servant has given his life great meaning.

In that Judge Russin had quite a reputation for his ability to negotiate difficult settlements, it is clear that this skill will help him in what he calls “The Art of Judging.” He believes that there are both technical and artistic aspects of being a successful judge, and he is working his way through them. He has received a warm reception (unsurprisingly) from his fellow judges. Each has offered advice, encouragement, and guidance in both things big and small in this new endeavor.

Unfortunately, due to the current COVID crisis, Judge Russin has not been able to conduct court in his robe, from his bench in front of a room full of lawyers, but via telephone or zoom. He says that despite the unconventionality of the hearings, they have been seamless. In fact, when we are back to having in-person hearings, he said he might feel a little “weird” when it comes time to officially wear the robe.

Judge Russin is smart, funny, humble, and self-deprecating. It has been an honor to get to know him through this interview, and all of us in the Court Family look forward to working with him. I’m sure those of you who are appearing before him on a small screen also look forward to seeing him in person in his actual courtroom. Welcome to the bench, Judge Russin.

“The Unemployment Rate Depends on Who You Are”

**By: William T. Rule II, Ph.D.
Senior Economist
Administrative Office of the United States**

During every recession since 1980 the peak unemployment rate for women was lower than that for men, sometimes by quite a lot. In fact, during the Great Recession the unemployment rate for men peaked 2.6 percentage points higher than the peak for women. Not so this time around. So far, at least, the peak unemployment rate for women was 15.7%, 2.4 percentage points higher than the peak for men of 13.3%. The most popular theory as to why this is so focuses on the fact that this recession has disproportionately affected the leisure and hospitality industry and the retail industry, and to a lesser extent education and health services and miscellaneous services. These industries tend to employ a higher proportion of women than most other industries.

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FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS



**CHIEF JUDGE'S CORNER —
OUR NEW "NORMAL"
By: Hon. Laurel M. Isicoff**

As we enter the holiday season, we are starting month nine of this strange new world in which we find ourselves. Our worlds, for the most part, have been reduced to what we can see on a computer screen – whether we are attending court, meeting with a client, or celebrating holidays and milestones with out-of-town family. And while there are hopeful developments on the horizon, it appears we will have to continue with this state of affairs for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, it is interesting to see what mask designs folks are wearing – masks are the new bumper stickers, or maybe the new t-shirts. And, of course, we all have become accustomed to our quarantine names . . . (what you had for breakfast the day you “chose your name” and your high school mascot.)

However, the Court continues to carry on its work – developing new ways to address this “new normal” and also to continue with projects irrespective of the pandemic and the challenges of “in-person” contact. First, as you know, our new local rules have gone into effect. By now you will have, of course, memorized them all, and most important, purged all of your old forms and replaced them with the new forms. Second, plans are underway to completely redo the front of the Atkins Courthouse. We are hoping that construction will begin in the not-too-distant future on a much larger and safer entryway (those big support columns in the front are destined to become part of the new outer wall). Third, the site of the new Fort Lauderdale courthouse has finally been chosen. I cannot tell you where that is yet, but watch for press releases some-time in the next few months. Now that the site has been chosen, architectural plans can go forward. Judge Grossman and Judge Russin can look forward to moving into new digs sometime before Judge Grossman’s beautiful little girls go to college (well, hopefully sooner than that . . .). Finally, although our courtrooms already had state-of-the-art technology (not that all of you used it as you should . . .) our fantastic IT team has set up each courtroom so that, when we DO come back, we will be able to safely conduct court and those who are unable to travel or come to court will be able to attend our court hearings via video conferencing.

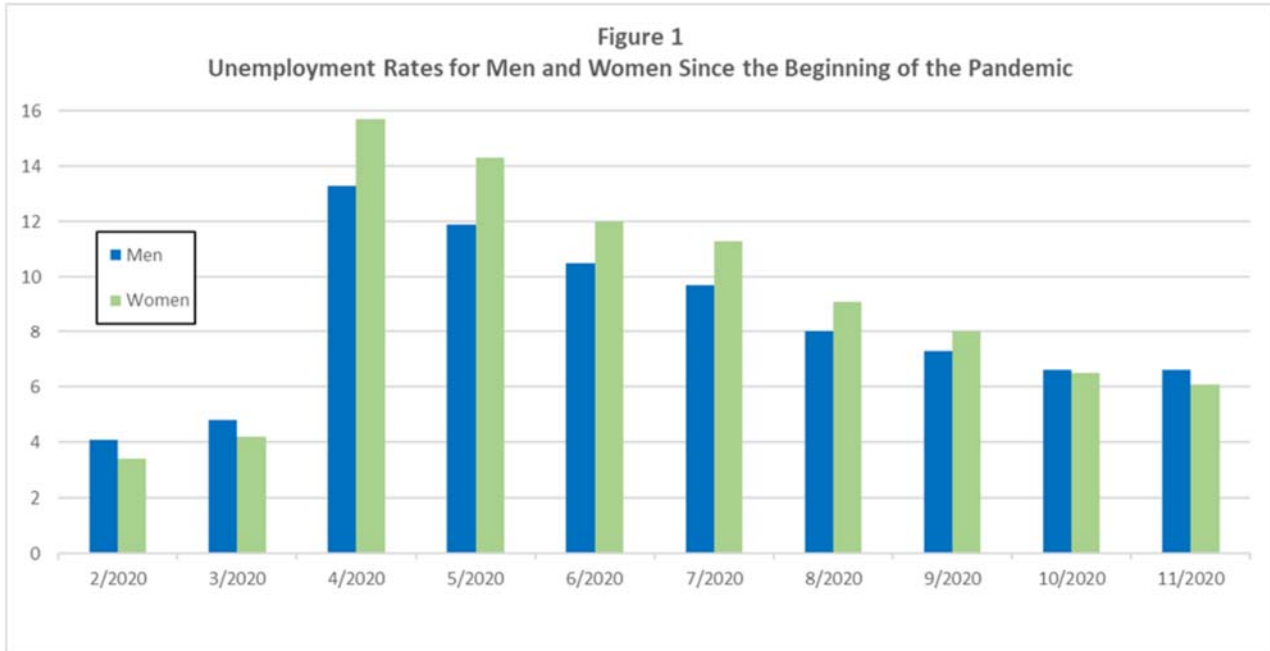
I am also happy to report that Judge Hyman, who both as a sitting judge and on recall has been an incredible asset to us all, has agreed to continue to serve on recall for at least another three years. In addition to stepping in to cover calendars upon Judge Ray’s retirement (briefly) and Judge Olson’s retirement (for six months . . .), Judge Hyman has done hundreds of judicial settlement conferences – most of them successful. So, as I have stated in the last several Chief Judge’s Corners I have written, THANK YOU, JUDGE HYMAN!

The pandemic has forced many of us to rethink the way that we do things, in some ways that I hope will make it easier for all of you to take cases pro bono. Not only are all of us getting better at technology – the public is as well. Most people own cell phones or know someone who owns a cell phone, which may facilitate client meetings when face-to-face meetings are not possible. This is the case for so many debtors who live in the outer reaches of the Southern District (remember, we stretch from Key West all the way to Indian River County, far from most attorneys and certainly far from our three divisional courthouses). Moreover, while telephonic 341

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“The Unemployment Rate Depends on Who You Are” (continued from page 2)



While the peak unemployment rate for women exceeded that for men early on in the pandemic, in the last two months the relationship has reversed. This does not represent much of an improvement, however, since a significant number of women have left the labor force, and hence are no longer counted as unemployed.

What remains to be seen is if, when, and the speed with which the employment situation for women returns to pre-pandemic levels. This will be influenced by a host of factors, including the speed with which children return to school on a full-time basis and the speed with which the general public becomes comfortable shopping in stores, eating in restaurants, taking cruises, etc.

Other demographic groups have been differentially impacted by the pandemic. Figure 2 shows the monthly unemployment rates for white, Black or African-American, and Hispanic or Latino workers. Clearly, both of the latter two groups were more heavily impacted by the pandemic with unemployment exceeding 18% for the Hispanic or Latino group and more than 16% for the Black or African-American group. Moreover, while the unemployment rate for whites has fallen to within 2.6 percentage points of its pre-pandemic level, the rate for both the Black or African-American group and the Hispanic or Latino group remain 3.5 percentage points above their pre-pandemic levels. This is in addition to the fact that the pre-pandemic unemployment rate for whites was only 3.4% while for the Black or African-American group it was 6.3% and for the Hispanic or Latino group it was 4.8%.

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**FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS****CHIEF JUDGE'S CORNER** (continued from page 3)

meetings are not ideal, I am hopeful that the Office of the US Trustee will be a little more flexible about allowing remote 341 meetings once in-person meetings resume, so that remote clients or remote volunteer lawyers can attend without the need to travel such distances. And, of course, while we are still waiting for that “tsunami” of consumer and small business filings, the judiciary’s forecasters still predict major filings unless there is a significant turn around in the next few months. Tsunami or not, the need for pro bono and low bono services has always been present. Please make sure to sign up for a pro bono case today. For those of you who have already taken a case – or ten – thank you. Please check out our Pro Bono Honor Roll for a list of volunteers from the past year.

So, until we meet again in person – wear your masks, do not sign your pleadings with your quarantine names, sign up for at least one pro bono case, and remember to thank Judge Hyman when you “see” him.

All the best. – Chief Judge Cashew Chargers.

“The Unemployment Rate Depends on Who You Are” (continued from page 4)

An open question facing the labor market in general is the extent to which things never return to “normal.” There is a growing consensus that the proportion of people teleworking will increase significantly. If so, there will be far-ranging consequences from a contraction of office footprints resulting in an oversupply of office space in many urban areas, to less traffic, less dry cleaning and fewer lunches eaten away from home. All of this suggests the likelihood of widespread reorganizations across many sectors with the potential for a significant number of bankruptcies.

On the consumer side, one major question is whether additional relief to consumers will be enacted and whether the eviction and mortgage moratoria are extended. There is clearly a potentially huge wave of bankruptcies on the horizon as relief and the moratoria expire, and one of the biggest questions is whether we have reached the point that arrearages are no longer curable within a plan even with a two-year extension and loan mods. Given the differential impact of the pandemic on certain groups, there is likely to be a much greater need for assistance in some communities than in others. Now would be a good time to prepare.

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FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS



FORM ORDERS CONFIRMING SUBCHAPTER V PLANS OF REORGANIZATION AVAILABLE FOR REFERENCE AND USE ON MY WEBPAGE

By: Hon. Peter D. Russin

Chapter 11 cases can often be difficult, time-consuming, and “prohibitively expensive.”¹ Therefore, to allow qualifying small business debtors to “streamline the bankruptcy process by which small businesses debtors reorganize and rehabilitate their financial affairs,” Congress enacted the Small Business Reorganization Act, which created subchapter V of chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code². To ease the burden on small business debtors, subchapter V bankruptcies differ from standard chapter 11 bankruptcies in several ways, including that certain provisions of chapter 11 are inapplicable to subchapter V debtors³. Therefore, confirmation orders in subchapter V cases differ from those in standard chapter 11 cases.

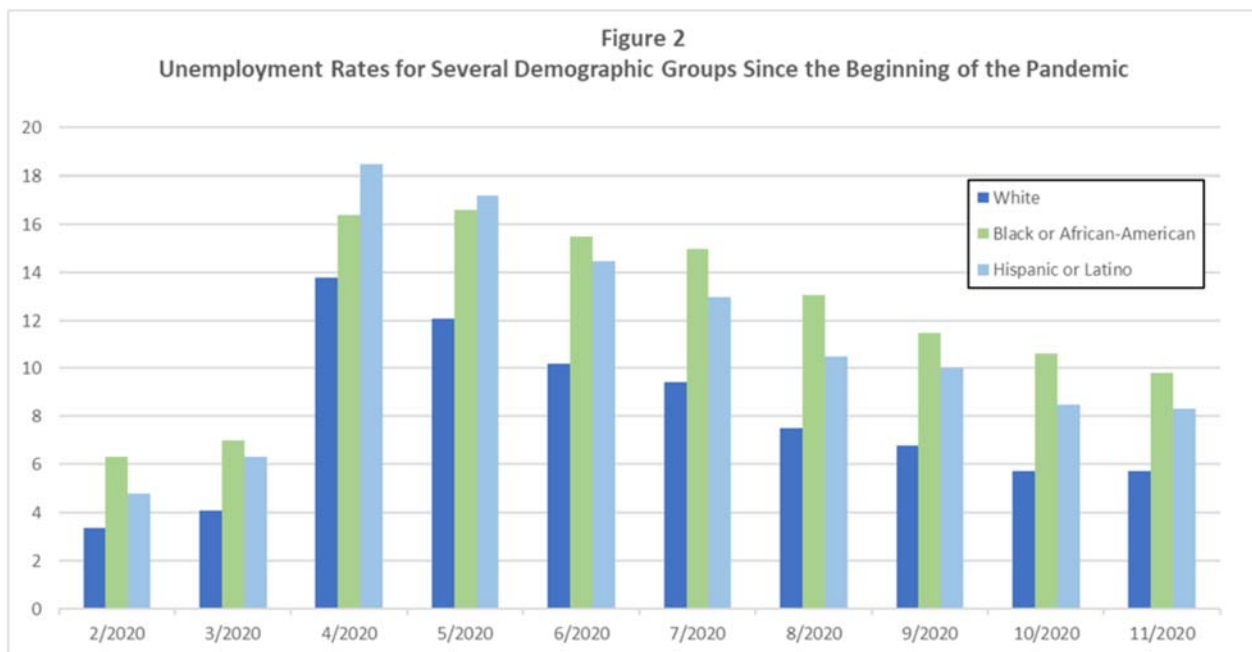
To aid practitioners in this new area of the law, my Chambers developed form orders confirming subchapter V plans of reorganization. The first version for consensual subchapter V confirmations is available for reference and use on my webpage, and a version for contested subchapter V confirmations will be available shortly. It is my hope that these forms can aid attorneys by promoting uniformity and providing a “road map” to confirmation, making the process more efficient and less expensive. Please keep in mind that these form orders should be revised as necessary to apply to the specific facts and circumstances of each case. I hope the forms are useful, and of course, would love to hear any thoughts on how they may be improved.

¹*In re Seven Stars on the Hudson Corp.*, 618 B.R. 333, 339 (Bankr. S.D. Fla. 2020) (Grossman, J.).

²*Id.* (quoting H.R. Rep. 116-171 at 1); see 11 U.S.C. §§ 1181-95.

³See, e.g., 11 U.S.C. §§ 1181, 1191(a)-(b).

“The Unemployment Rate Depends on Who You Are” (continued from page 5)



**FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS****EPK CORNER****By: Hon. Erik P. Kimball**

Rather than a formal article addressing a single topic, for this edition of Courthouse Beacon News I am experimenting with a new format. The idea is to present several items that I hope are useful to members of the bar, in a more relaxed way.

At the end of the recent View from the Bench seminar I recommended that lawyers not use private chat during Zoom hearings because it may not actually be private. I do not permit any chat during my video hearings as such communication would not be part of the court's official record. If your meeting host permits chat, the host may designate whether chats can be public (sent to every participant), private (directed only to specific participants), or both. At the seminar, I suggested that private chats may not be truly private because they could end up in a meeting transcript. My comment was not entirely accurate. According to Zoom, only private chats that include a person with recording privileges, meaning a host or co-host, may be included in a meeting transcript. Theoretically, private chats with someone other than the host or a co-host will not be included in a meeting transcript. But why take the risk that your supposedly private chat may go awry? If there is anyone reading this article who has not accidentally texted the wrong person, I would be surprised. In Zoom, it is too easy to mistakenly send a chat to every participant when you intend the message for just one. I have done it myself. I recommend that you avoid chat during Zoom hearings even if it is available.

When I first began practicing, the following complaint, written on a napkin, would have resulted in an answer and gone to trial: "Defendant asked me to invest \$100,000 in his company and told me it was a great investment because they had a huge contract with Massive Corp. and would go public within a year. He knew there was no such contract and the company was about to fail. I relied on his representations and invested \$100,000, which I never got back. I want a judgment." Yes, back then a "mobile" phone was a briefcase of its own used only by bigwigs, faxes were so new that receiving one meant the communication was really important, my assistant used an IBM Selectric every day, I read case law in books in a library, and we still sent runners to file things. We spent our free time fending off dinosaurs. But notice pleading was real. So long as a complaint could support some claim, it would not be dismissed.

My, how things have changed. Relatively recent Supreme Court rulings did away with notice pleading. A complaint now needs to allege sufficient facts to plausibly support the relief requested. If a complaint seeks damages of more than 25 cents, there is a motion to dismiss. Is this an exaggeration? Not really.

Is it a good idea to move to dismiss a complaint just because you can? No. In fact, the more a complaint invites a motion to dismiss, the more a defendant should think twice before seeking its dismissal.

I regularly see motions to dismiss pointing out that the complaint does not include allegations necessary to support a required element of a claim. For example, a complaint may seek relief in fraud based on a false representation, but fail to allege that the defendant knew the representation was false. If the matter came to trial, the defendant could properly object to any evidence intended to support the missing element, and those objections should be sustained. A motion for judgment for the defendant should follow, and be granted. Of course all of this could happen at summary judgment. A motion to dismiss such a complaint would only permit the plaintiff to improve the pleading by amendment.

When I see a motion to dismiss a complaint that, taken as a whole, seems to state a valid claim, I assume the defendant is acting strategically. Perhaps the goal is delay or causing the plaintiff to spend time and money in hopes of strong-arming a settlement. But neither of these is an appropriate motivation. Many times the defendant protests that it is unable to answer the complaint as originally presented, but this is rarely the case. The defendant typically knows all too well what the complaint is about, and even after amendment nearly every allegation is denied. When I see a questionable motion to dismiss, I direct briefing as usual, and rule on the motion according to the substance and the law. And then I put the case at the top of my list for diligence, making sure that it moves forward swiftly. In other words, a defendant's obvious attempt at delay typically results in the case moving more quickly to trial.

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FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS

**EPK Corner** (continued from page 7)

This brings me to the troubling state of complaints and motions. The majority of complaints and longer motions are poorly presented. Many law school writing instructors implore their students to “tell a compelling story” in their pleadings. I read lots of compelling stories, but very few complaints and longer motions that provide the information required by the relevant law, and nearly none that provide it in a logical way.

When ruling on any request for relief, I always start with the elements of the claim. Even when the requested relief requires me to apply an equitable standard, such as the totality of circumstances, case law often provides an advisory list of factors to consider. In ruling, I almost always prepare a list of those elements or factors, insert the evidence under the appropriate element or factor, and then determine whether the plaintiff or movant has met its burden. It would be extremely helpful if complaints and longer motions were organized in the same manner. Not only is this useful to me, but it is useful to the plaintiff or movant who prepares the document. If you organize your document according to the required elements of the claim, you will immediately know if you have a shortcoming in your presentation.

It is not appropriate to begin a complaint with pages of numbered allegations and then incorporate all of them into every count of the complaint, no matter the legal basis of the claim. It is obvious that not all of the allegations are relevant to every count. In my view, the most appropriate organization in most complaints is to start with truly background material that may be incorporated into every count, and then set out allegations in labelled sections aimed at incorporation into specific requests for relief. Those sections should be organized according to the elements of the claim.

I often get exactly the opposite of this. Many complaints start with that “compelling story”, not tailored to any specific kind of relief. Then allegations typically follow in a loosely chronological presentation, without regard to the claims they might support. The ensuing counts incorporate every factual allegation and include only summary allegations often mimicking statutory requirements. Such a presentation is not useful to me at any stage of the litigation. Indeed, when analyzing a motion to dismiss most of my time is spent in trying to figure out what allegations go with what claims so I can discern whether the complaint states a plausible claim. I am not exaggerating when I say that many motions to dismiss require 2-3 full days of my time, and often 5-6 days of total chambers time, not including any hearing. A properly organized complaint would likely reduce that by half.

At present, I am setting video hearings only for evidentiary matters. There are several reasons for this, including the fact that, at least currently, video hearings cannot be self-calendared. I would be interested if any of you feel strongly one way or the other whether I should increase my use of video hearings in non-evidentiary matters. Perhaps you feel that they are useful only in certain circumstances. Please feel free to send a brief email to the chambers mailbox, EPK_Chambers@flsb.uscourts.gov.

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. It is America’s only universal family holiday. Thanksgiving reminds me of my grandparents, who always had their farmhouse-style kitchen completely filled for dinner. The house smelled of turkey, and apple pie, and the unique scent of pressure-cooked squash from their own garden. My grandmother would break out her special chocolate fudge, stored on the attic stairs where it was perfectly cool. For decades, dinner was followed by Trivial Pursuit in one room and football in another. There was often more cheering from the Trivial Pursuit room. My grandparents are gone and so is their house. Mary and I continued with our own Thanksgiving traditions, often having as many as 5 families at our house. This year, of course, is different. Indeed, the entire holiday season will be different from what we have experienced all our lives. I expect to reach out to my family members, the ones I would usually see only during this season but otherwise not have much communication with. It will be a little harder this year to keep those contacts. I hope we will all make the time to do it.

Wishing Happy Holidays to you all!

**FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS****NEW ADVERSARY PROCEEDING PROCEDURES****By: Hon. Scott M. Grossman**

Among the December 1, 2020 revisions of our Local Rules are substantial changes to how we conduct adversary proceedings.

Challenges Presented by Prior Practice

Under our longstanding prior practice, immediately upon filing a complaint, adversary proceedings were scheduled for a pretrial conference about 60-90 days later – an impractical deadline for many, if not most, adversary proceedings. This short deadline often provided insufficient time for discovery (especially when courtesy extensions of time to answer were given) and frequently resulted in multiple continuances of the pretrial conference. Parties would regularly show up at the pretrial conference not having complied with deadlines and not ready for trial. Counsel being mindful of the deadlines would promptly request an agreed continuance of the pretrial conference. But when these agreed requests were granted without a hearing, the Court was deprived of an opportunity for early assessment of the adversary proceeding, including the potential for referral to mediation, or to establish briefing schedules on dispositive motions or other purely legal issues.

Our old procedures had also opted out of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(f), which requires parties to have a discovery planning conference. But with e-discovery considerations that are – and have been for years now – present in nearly every dispute, early communication of counsel is critical to efficiently manage the process. As such, opting out of Rule 26(f) resulted in a less efficient and more time-consuming process than requiring the parties to meet early to discuss a discovery plan.

New Procedures

Under the new adversary proceeding procedures, instead of setting a pretrial conference immediately upon filing a complaint, we will now be setting a Status Conference immediately upon filing a complaint. Depending on each Judge's preference, Status Conferences may be held approximately one to three months after a complaint is filed. And rather than issuing a pretrial order upon filing a complaint, we will instead issue an Order Setting Status Conference and Establishing Procedures and Deadlines (the "Status Conference Order"), which must be served with the summons and complaint. Some provisions of the old standard form pretrial order will now be contained in the new Status Conference Order, and other provisions of the old pretrial order will be in a new revised form of Order Setting Filing and Disclosure Requirements for Pretrial and Trial (the "Pretrial Scheduling Order")

Status Conference Order

The new Status Conference Order includes the following provisions:

- The Court will conduct a Status Conference at the date and time set forth in the Summons;
- The parties may not introduce testimony or documentary evidence at the Status Conference, but the Court may consider relevant undisputed facts, judicial notice items, and admissions made during the Status Conference by parties either directly or through counsel;
- Demands for jury trial and objections to entry of final orders and judgments must be filed not later than 14 days before the date first set for the Status Conference;
- Rule 26(f) will apply to the extent set forth in the Status Conference Order;

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FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS

**NEW ADVERSARY PROCEEDING PROCEDURES** (continued from page 9)

- At least 14 days before the Status Conference, the attorneys for the parties (or, if a party is not represented by an attorney, the party) must meet (in person, by video conference, or by telephone) to discuss:
 - the parties' claims and defenses;
 - the possibility of settlement;
 - Rule 26(a)(1) initial disclosures;
 - a Rule 26(f) discovery plan;
 - e-discovery issues; and
 - proposed dates and deadlines to be set forth in a pretrial scheduling order, including dates and deadlines for:
 - making Rule 26(a)(1) initial disclosures;
 - completion of discovery;
 - Rule 26(a)(2) expert disclosures, and completion of expert discovery (if applicable);
 - motions for judgment on the pleadings or summary judgment;
 - mediation;
 - Rule 26(a)(3)(A) pretrial disclosures; and
 - a final pretrial conference (the "Pretrial Conference").

Requirements for dispositive motions contained in the old pretrial order (e.g., page limits, etc.) will now be set forth in the Status Conference Order. And other standard provisions of the old pretrial order – on compliance with the Federal Judiciary Privacy Policy, mediation, settlement, default, and sanctions – will now be in the Status Conference Order.

Continuances of the Status Conference

Given the importance of the Status Conference to case management, except for brief continuances sought pursuant to Local Rule 7004-2(B) (for issuance of an alias summons) or to accommodate the schedules of counsel (or the parties, if unrepresented), the Court will continue the Status Conference only in extraordinary circumstances. The idea is to get the parties before the Court for a Status Conference early in the litigation, in order to efficiently manage the adversary proceeding. Any request to continue the Status Conference or any deadlines set forth in the Status Conference Order must be presented by written motion, and must set forth the status of service of process, the pleadings, and the pendency of any potentially dispositive motions, and must state the reasons why the party or parties seek a continuance.

In most cases, the Status Conference will be concluded at the initial Status Conference hearing. In some circumstances, however, the Status Conference may be continued further. For example, if there are still defendants to be served, if potentially dispositive motions have been filed and are under advisement, or if the Court sends the case to early mediation.

Pretrial Scheduling Order

At the Status Conference, the parties must be prepared to announce to the Court the proposed dates and deadlines as required above, to be set forth in a proposed form of pretrial scheduling order. A pretrial scheduling order will then be entered after the conclusion of the Status Conference. If the parties fail to agree on a pretrial scheduling order by the time of the Status Conference, the Court will select a date for the Pretrial Conference on its own and enter the new form Pretrial Scheduling Order, with the default dates and deadlines set forth therein.

Unless otherwise permitted by the Court, the pretrial scheduling order must be in substantially the form of the new form Pretrial Scheduling Order, with the only material variations being the agreed-upon dates and deadlines discussed above. These new procedures, however, are intended to provide flexibility (with the Court's permission) for the parties to propose their own form of pretrial scheduling order, which may be particularly useful in complex adversary proceedings. For exam-

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**FROM THE JUDGES' CHAMBERS****NEW ADVERSARY PROCEEDING PROCEDURES** (continued from page 10)

ple, if the parties intend to first conduct fact discovery, then conduct expert discovery after the close of fact discovery, and then file motions for summary judgment well in advance of any contemplated Pretrial Conference, the parties should be able to propose such a schedule.

The new Pretrial Scheduling Order will set a date for the Pretrial Conference. At the Pretrial Conference, the parties should be ready for trial and should expect the Court to set a trial date.

The new Pretrial Scheduling Order includes several “default” deadlines that would apply absent agreement of the parties to other deadlines. Note that many of these new default dates and deadlines are different from those under the old standard form pretrial order. These new default deadlines include:

- Initial disclosures must be made not later than 14 days after entry of the Pretrial Scheduling Order;
- Disclosures of expert testimony under Rule 26(a)(2) must be made (i) at least 60 days before the Pretrial Conference, or (ii) within 14 days after an opposing party’s disclosure of evidence that gives rise to the need for the expert, whichever is later;
- The party disclosing an expert witness must, within 14 days of the disclosure, provide to each opposing party a written report prepared and signed by the witness as required by Rule 26(a)(2)(B);
- Discovery must be completed not later than 14 days before the Pretrial Conference (but any previously scheduled depositions may be completed up to one business day before the pretrial conference);
- Dispositive motions must be filed 10 days before the Pretrial Conference; and
- Pretrial disclosures under Rule 26(a)(3)(A) must be made no later than one business day before the Pretrial Conference.

Provisions of the new Pretrial Scheduling Order that remain similar to provisions of the old form order include the requirement of a joint pretrial stipulation, and the provisions on continuances, final arguments, required attendance, sanctions, and service of the order. But, based on developments in practice over the years, certain other provisions of the old form have been eliminated from the new Pretrial Scheduling Order. It has for a long time been the norm to specially set all trials (as opposed to being placed on a rolling trial calendar, a practice that has not been regularly employed for years). Thus, a separate provision for specially setting trials has been eliminated as unnecessary. Likewise, sworn declarations in lieu of direct testimony has been less commonly used (some judges do not use them at all), and so they have been eliminated from the Pretrial Scheduling Order. Of course, each judge retains the ability to use that procedure if he or she wishes.

Finally, the provisions on electronic submission and exchange of exhibits set forth in new Local Rule [9070-1](#) are incorporated into the new Pretrial Scheduling Order.



PRO BONO CORNER



BY:
STEVEN S. NEWBURGH, ESQ.
(GUEST CONTRIBUTOR)
LAY CHAIR,
PRO BONO STANDING COMMITTEE

Headlines from this morning's Washington Post highlighted what's in store for us. The headline read, "Millions of Americans are heading into the holidays unemployed and over \$5,000 behind on rent." The article cited Moody's Analytics, whose disturbing predictions included an estimated nine million renters who are behind on their rent payments. Approximately \$5,850 in back rent and utilities are estimated to accrue, per household by the time we enter January, 2021 for twelve million Americans. Quoting from the article: "The tidal wave is coming. It's going to be really horrible for people", said Charlie Harak, a senior attorney at the National Consumer Law Center.

The pandemic, no doubt, has caused terrible suffering. Many have been laid-off because of this virus and the dollars made available through PPP and other programs don't appear to have much of an impact on those who are, arguably, the most in need of this assistance.

As attorneys trained in bankruptcy law and practice, we occupy the unique position of being able to help the disadvantaged and the neediest, directly. Providing a qualified pro bono debtor with a fresh start is likely going to have a significant effect on the debtor's ability to now feed his or her family. Rather than making interest payments on credit cards, the debtor can now, in theory, direct his or her income to the necessities of life; rent payments, the electric bill, groceries, school supplies and so on. It is our ability to provide this direct assistance that drives our pro bono programs and initiatives. Our programs in the Southern District of Florida have thrived due to the time, expertise and energy of our Bankruptcy Bar Association's members and our Judges and Court Clerk staff. As part of the process of keeping up with trends in pro bono services and initiatives, pro bono programs in many other jurisdictions have been tapped for information. The irony of our inquiries is that it is our local Bankruptcy Bar Association and its programs that appear to attract the most attention from outside of our jurisdiction. This is partly due to the great job our Chief Judge, Laurel M. Isicoff has done in "going on the road" and broadcasting our pro bono mission and partly due to the truly engaging programs and initiatives that our Bankruptcy Bar Association has championed for many years now. Invitations to bankruptcy judges from all over the United States to attend and participate in the BBA's Annual Retreat have led to a fairly large fan club from almost every Circuit in the United States. The CLE's and regular social events have filled the lives of our bankruptcy bar with real friendships and a sense of community within our ranks. However, we are now in a place where we need to provide a great deal of help and comfort to others. This month's message from this Pro Bono Corner is to "sign-up to take a case" and to do so, now. We can handle a large volume of pro bono and low bono applicants between our three Divisions and can do so, smoothly, provided we don't suffer lag-time between a pro bono applicant's being "qualified" by our program and the assignment of a volunteer attorney. By agreeing to sign-up now, you will be on a rotating waiting list for an assignment. It is our goal to have twenty (20) attorneys sign-up, in each of our three Divisions before January 1, 2021. Maintaining a "waiting list" of sorts will allow us to redirect resources from one Division to another should the need arise. There will be a special Honor Roll posted online for this January 1 volunteer drive. Please consider signing up for at least one case, especially if you have never taken a case before. If you are a creditor-only attorney, please sign-up so that we can be prepared for an expected increase in unrepresented creditors. These creditors may not be able to afford traditional legal representation but they may qualify for low bono representation. Small business owners, for example, might need such assistance from the creditor side. This is the time for us to all work together to get this done. To volunteer, please email the Pro Bono Chair for your Division: **Miami-Dade: Kristina Gonzalez** – KPG@miamibankruptcy.com or **Peter Kelly** – pkelly@pwkpa.com; **Broward County: Grace Robson** – grobson@mythlaw.com; **Palm Beach County: Steven Newburgh** snewburgh@mclaughlinstern.com.

Thanking you all, in advance, for the success of this volunteer drive. Have a wonderful holiday season, everyone! Stay busy, but safe!



CORONAVIRUS RELATED INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Our court continues to take whatever steps are necessary to assist in ensuring reduced risk of any potential spread of this virus. In addition to the items posted below, please visit the court website: www.flsb.uscourts.gov for all public notices and administrative orders posted by the court in order to keep current with future updates and new notifications. For U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida information on this topic, please visit that court's website at www.flsd.uscourts.gov.

The Bankruptcy Court remains closed to in-person visits from the public. Additionally, until further notice or unless directed otherwise, the court is continuing to ONLY hold telephonic (or, when applicable, video) hearings in all pending cases. See [Administrative Order 2020-07 Re: I\) Temporarily Closing Clerk's Office Intake to the Public; and II\) Expanding Filing Options for Self- Represented Parties During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) and subsequent Administrative Orders and notices.

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR HEARINGS BY VIDEO CONFERENCE :

https://www.flsb.uscourts.gov/sites/flsb/files/documents/judges/General_Procedures_for_Hearings_by_Video_Conference.pdf

Individuals not represented by counsel will be permitted to use court telephonic services FREE of charge. Amended pricing is now available for other users. All attorneys shall advise their clients NOT to appear at the courthouse. Information regarding names of telephonic service providers and contact information for each judge and information regarding pricing in this court is posted in notices on the court website.

The U.S. Trustee Program has extended telephonic or video section 341 meetings to cases filed through October 10, 2020.

<https://www.flsb.uscourts.gov/news/us-trustee-program-extends-telephonic-or-video-section-341-meetings-cases-filed-through-october>

Please visit the following U.S. Federal and Florida state websites for updated information about Coronavirus:

Center for Disease Control: www.coronavirus.gov

Florida Department of Health websites for Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties:

<http://miamidade.floridahealth.gov>

<http://broward.floridahealth.gov>

<http://palmbeach.floridahealth.gov>

INFORMATION ABOUT FACE MASKS: The CDC has advised that facemasks/coverings made at home from common materials available, or at low cost, can be used as a public health measure providing the mouth and nose are fully covered. The covering should fit snugly against the sides of the face so there are no gaps and should be washed after each use. Remember to handle your facemask/covering by the ear loops or ties only and wash your hands often. For more information, visit

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

**PRO HAC VICE FEE****By: Jose Rodriguez**

Local Rule [2091-I](#) sets forth the requirements for attorneys appearing in this court. Attorneys who are not members of the bar of the Southern District of Florida may seek to appear pro hac vice in any case or proceeding before this court under Local Rule 2091-I(C)(2).

The Local Rule provides that “Any applicable fee authorized under the Local Rules or General Orders of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida for pro hac vice appearances in the bankruptcy court must be paid at the filing of a motion to appear pro hac vice.”

The U.S. District Court, SDFL Administrative Order 2015-43 established a \$75.00 fee for Attorneys petitioning to appear pro hac vice in the Bankruptcy Court, and Administrative Order 2020-9 increased this fee to \$200.00 effective February 21, 2020. These two administrative orders can be viewed on the website of the U.S. District Court, SDFL at the following links:

<https://web.flsd.uscourts.gov/uploads/adminOrders/2020/2020-9.pdf> <https://web.flsd.uscourts.gov/uploads/adminOrders/2015/2015-43.pdf>

Fees are generally paid online, and all funds collected by the Bankruptcy Court are remitted to the District Court on a monthly basis. The District Court is the official custodian of these funds. Funds collected by the Bankruptcy Court are used by the Court to further enhance bankruptcy education and community outreach. In the past, we have implemented pro-bono programs and used these funds to provide for materials to advertise the program, educate the public and to recognize the work of pro bono attorneys. Some of the programs we have funded include pro bono week activities and the Demystifying Bankruptcy seminar.

Since the fee was instituted in the bankruptcy court, 742 Motions to Appear Pro Hac Vice have been filed.

COURT ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL ORDERS CURRENTLY IN EFFECT

The list of administrative orders and general orders currently in effect has been updated in conjunction with amendments to the local rules which were effective December 1, 2020. These documents can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.flsb.uscourts.gov/general-orders>

[Clerk's Notice of 1\) Administrative Order 2020-12](#) Adoption of Amended Local Rules and Clarification of Status of Local Forms, Court Guidelines, Clerk's Instructions, and Administrative Orders; 2) Amendments to Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure; and 3) Increases in The Bankruptcy Court Miscellaneous Fee Schedule Effective December 1, 2020

[AO 2020-13](#) 1) Clarifying Status of Administrative Order 2020-06; 2) Setting Forth Requirements for Use of Digital Signature Software and 3) Readopting Provisions Establishing Procedures for Admission of Direct Evidence Through Declarations or Affidavits

[AO 2020-12](#) Adoption of Amended Local Rules and Clarification of Status of Local Forms, Court Guidelines, Clerk's Instructions, and Administrative Orders

[AO 2020-11](#) (I) Modification of the Automatic Stay to Facilitate Forbearance Agreements During COVID-19 and (II) Amendments to and Modifications of Chapter 13 Plans to Accommodate Forbearance Agreements



WORD SEARCH

By: Lucie Fleurimond

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines COVID-19 as a respiratory condition caused by a coronavirus. As a result of this deadly disease impacting many aspects of our financial, emotional and physical lives, most of us have had to adapt to many changes.

Congress has created and funded programs to address the financial effects of Covid-19. New procedures have been adopted in this Court to accommodate remote filings and remote appearances.

As a result, clerk's office staff are finding they are hearing the following terms more frequently. Can you find them in the puzzle below? The Answer key is on page 16.

Mortgage Forbearance

Emergency Filing

Loan Modification

Eviction Moratorium

Paycheck Protection Program

CARES Act

Electronic Exchange

Essential Services

Wet Signature

Online Payment

W I D V B O G K W B P C X Q E M R R P X Z V O K O F T P N V
 Z I P K U N N U H L Y J F O J Z M G L Z T C C E U G K H O Q Q
 T S A A F A O L E L D F F W F X G B O D E F T B T E U F L K
 A I O V Y G V J I F O K I F I Q Y B S S N B K M I S H F K W
 H J E Y O C L R B N X X F D M U F T J G U A S V V I J P I J
 T F X M J I H W K X E I W Y C L R O Y Z Z T C W L I Y U X A
 C G L K E I E E Y E N P C A H T I Q D N K L D F X Y Z G Z D
 Y T S P M R F Z C E V K A T R V S Y R S D T N N P R V P Z N
 G L P H X Y G L F K L I G Y X H M Q A B O L N D M O T H F A
 S L T W M C P E Y K P U C K M S D K Y V Q X N W M V K K E F
 D F Y L C G O G N A M R F T K E B L R Y M K W C R X Q E P K
 M X X A O C A K Y C V O O E I D N Q U J Z F V B S F V S K O
 E R X W Z A J C R M Y Q R T B O T T C O B J X N G N L S Q C
 G S M E I B N X R A L F A T E B N Z L A R T T T Z L T G E X F
 E X W T D B S M Q B J O I B G C A M C Q R P I F V P C N T X
 Y O M S Y J I X O F N X F L K A T B O Q Q D E Q S X S X T B T
 U J N I Y H S F K D I N Y M I X G I P R O A S Q N A Y I A K
 S E K G G S X K B N I U S X E N F E O I A N I A N R Q A F I
 V I G N Q D U E C J P F L G W K G M F N K T R C C Y W L P D
 A I V A Q K D T K V O C I M X A J I M O P K O A M T V S K X
 M Z I T N C X O S J U S S C V Z U A W N R R G R E J Y E T U
 H B A U Z J R P C N T U G B A N L G L N W B O T I I V R D N
 D I P R O V B G O V N S R C T T K E W E A A E G V U F V R Z
 A W U E H I Q C W H V N C D H G I R X S F K H A R O M I F W
 O L S C K Y E B I X W N X P M V H O V O A D G K R A V C U E
 Q B V K Y D K R H N P E Y Y J E M N N B O F V U U A M E S V W
 E F N I L S W E L E C T R O N I C E X C H A N G E V N S P V
 I I X F D G R S B T V P G G H X R N J D E E C A X H B C E L
 W C O X K M D U N P L O H Y J K Q A H A G Z K F A J B B E E
 K V P C E V B S W Y K N R V G E J G N S I O T H V V N B L Q



DO YOU BECOME AN ANGRY BIRD OVER WHICH CM/ECF MOTION EVENT TO SELECT? By: Lorraine Adam

Trying to select the correct CM/ECF motion event may leave you feeling up in the air, since some of the events appear to be interchangeable. Below are scenarios to test your CM/ECF motion events knowledge.

Answers are on page 17.

Scenario One: You represent a debtor whose case was dismissed. As their attorney, you need to get their case back on track. Which CM/ECF motion event should be selected when e-filing your motion?

- 1. Reinstate Case
- 2. Vacate
- 3. Reconsider
- 4. Miscellaneous Motion

Scenario Two: You represent a chapter 7 debtor who failed to file their Certificate of Financial Management and their case was closed without a discharge. Which event must you use to have the case reopened for the sole purpose of issuing the discharge?

- 1. Reopen Case to Administer Additional Assets
- 2. Reopen Ch 7 Case
- 3. Reopen Case for Issuance of Discharge

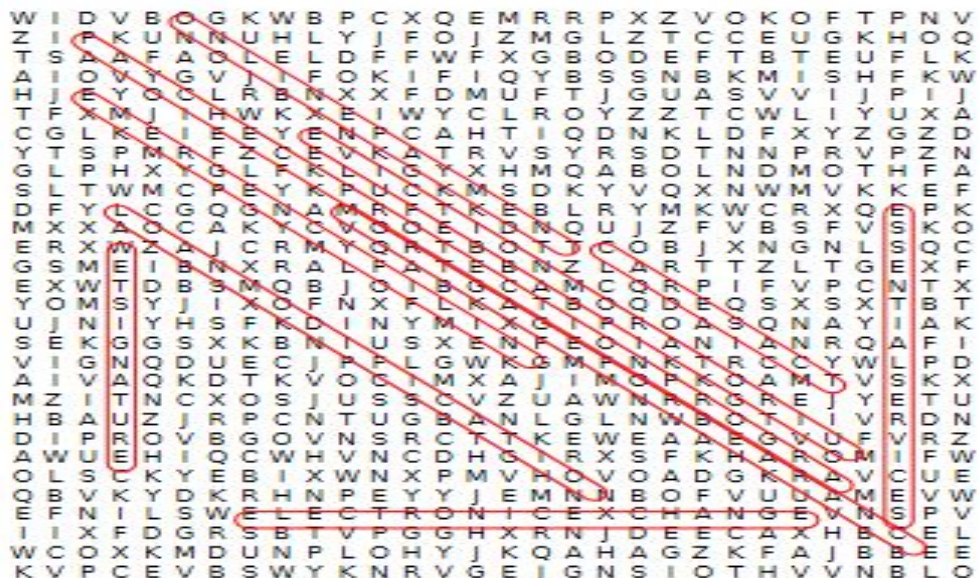
Scenario Three: You represent a chapter 13 debtor who lost their job during COVID-19 and can no longer make plan payments. They would like to convert their case to chapter 7. Would you use a motion event?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Extra Credit: You represent an *in forma pauperis* debtor who needs their chapter 7 case reopened (for reasons other than issuing a discharge). How will you let the system know that the reopening fee is not due for this debtor?

Answer Key to Word Search on Page 15

- Mortgage Forbearance
- Emergency Filing
- Loan Modification
- Eviction Moratorium
- Paycheck Protection Program
- CARES Act
- Electronic Exchange
- Essential Services
- Wet Signature
- Online Payment



**ANSWERS TO ANGRY BIRD CM/ECF MOTION EVENT QUIZ**

Scenario One: Reinstate Case is the appropriate event. This event will change the case status from dismissed to reinstated. Case status information is found at the top of every docket sheet (ex: chapter, asset/no asset, date filed, date dismissed, date discharged, etc.).

~~Vacate.~~ This event is used to vacate an order (except for discharge or dismissal).

~~Reconsider.~~ This event is used to request reconsideration of an order (except for discharge or dismissal). (See Courthouse Beacon News, April 2020 issue, *Suggestions for Practice*).

~~Miscellaneous Motion.~~ This event is used when no other CM/ECF event fits the description of the relief being requested.

Scenario Two: Reopen Case for Issuance of Discharge is the appropriate event. This event will place the case in proper case status for the system to release the discharge.

~~Reopen Case to Administer Additional Assets.~~ This event is used by the case trustee to administer additional assets. Local Form *Order Reopening Case to Administer Additional Assets* [LF-38] shall be prepared and uploaded.

~~Reopen Ch 7 Case.~~ This event is used for all other requests to reopen a chapter 7 case.

Scenario Three: No. 11 USC §1307(a) allows a chapter 13 debtor to convert to chapter 7 at any time. The event [Notice of Voluntary Conversion] is used for this purpose since the date the notice is filed will be the date of conversion, even if the order is entered on a later date.

Extra Credit: Correctly answering the following prompt provided during the docketing of the [Reopen Ch 7 Case] event will allow CM/ECF to bypass the fee module:

A Filing Fee is Due at the Time a Motion to Reopen Case is Filed, EXCEPT when the:

filing party is the United States or a child support creditor;

reopening is based upon an alleged violation of the terms of the discharge under 11 U.S.C. 524;

request is to shorten the *with prejudice* period provision of a prior order of dismissal;

reopening is to correct an administrative error by the court;

filing party is requesting to redact a record already filed in a case, pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9037, if redaction is the only reason for reopening;

debtor is proceeding *in forma pauperis*

when a party files a motion to reopen a case to request to withdraw unclaimed funds, unless the court orders otherwise

Is a Filing Fee Required with the filing of this Motion?

Yes

No



POWER IN OUR WORDS

By: Jacqueline Antillon, Courtroom Deputy



Our words are a way to motivate us; they can bring joy, kindness, mindfulness, opportunities and renew passions. When we use inspirational and motivating words, we allow ourselves to focus, concentrate on what's important. What's important is different to each of us; that's what makes each one of us special. The words we choose are so vital, they can help us cope with life, reach certain decisions about our future and our state of mind. During these past few months, some of us have felt isolation, yearning for our everyday routine, as mundane as it may sound. I personally long for our talks in chambers (yes, we Zoom and chat, but it's not the same), deciding where we are going for lunch, discussing our weekend plans, visiting the girls on the 1st floor, and human interaction.

These days most of us have become creative in ways of entertaining our family and reaching out to family members and friends. I looked forward to saying TGIF, except these days, TGIF doesn't mean much. I've run out of things to clean, organize, and I'm left with perhaps painting my walls. I decided I'm going to live a little dangerous and not wear a mask when I paint my walls. Judge Mark, in our last newsletter best said, keep on sailing, we're all in the same storm. We're in uncharted waters. As individuals we face different fears, hurdling dissimilar obstacles, but together, we can and shall overcome. Life isn't that bad if we look at it through the right lens. Things may seem a bit bitter, but we have so much to appreciate.

We have an incredible, nurturing court family. Through the years, we've been able to sail through many challenges. I leave you with a few words of inspiration from our court family. Words that are allowing many of us to accomplish, overcome, believe, take on new challenges, words to give us confidence, courage, drive, to hope, to be grateful, words that make us laugh, to dare, and to find determination thru adversity. "It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up." – Vince Lombardi. You got this, we got this! Please enjoy some of the amazing, uplifting quotes from our court family.

When you are down and out lift up your head and shout, "I'm Outta Here!" – Lynette Harris

One love. One heart. Let's get together and feel alright. – Bob Marley

Life is full of give and take. Give thanks and take nothing for granted. – Author Unknown

Make you the world a bit better or more beautiful because you have lived in it. – Edward W. Bok

"Hardships often prepare Ordinary People for an Extraordinary Destiny." – Lynn Dailey

Two looked out prison bard. One saw mud. One saw stars. – Dale Carnegie

If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred. – Mahatma Gandhi

The world is changed by your example not your opinion. – Paolo Coelho

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." – Winston Churchill

"Whatever happened, happened for the good. Whatever is happening, is happening for the good. Whatever will happen, will also happen for the good." – Bhagavad Gita

"Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise." – Victor Hugo

When everything seems to be against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it. – Henry Ford

In the great words of Dr. Seuss – "When you think things are bad, when you feel sour and blue, when you start to get mad you should do what I do- Just tell yourself, Duckie, you're really quite lucky! Some people are much more-oh, ever so much more- oh, muchly much-much more unlucky than you!"

It's a beautiful day, don't let it get away! There's so much beauty in the world, just breathe! We have an indomitable will.

(A big thanks to those that contributed with such wonderful and uplifting quotes – Chief Judge Isicoff, Lorraine Adams, Corinne Aftimos, Tonya Armstrong, Nora Blanco, Cameron Cradic, Lucie Fleurimond, Hebe Montygierd, Lorraine Lebron, Jennifer Rolph.)



FLORIDA SOUTHERN BANKRUPTCY MORTGAGE MODIFICATION MEDIATION STATISTICS

(From April 1, 2013 through November 30, 2020)

	MIA	FTL	WPB	TOTAL
MMM Motion (Attorney Rep.)	7709	5175	2950	15834
MMM Motion (Pro Se)	96	43	26	165
Total Motions Filed	7805	5218	2976	15999
Order Granting MMM Motion	6841	4502	2509	13852
Final Report of Mediator	5843	3609	1954	11406
Mediation Agreement Reached	2551	1727	922	5200

MMM MOTIONS FILED BY MONTH (Attorney Rep. & Pro Se)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
MIAMI													
2013				18	82	106	137	130	173	181	169	141	1137
2014	171	157	184	179	170	164	156	126	198	146	123	137	1911
2015	161	168	189	183	142	165	127	122	127	108	93	93	1678
2016	111	124	79	102	119	110	60	92	99	84	78	74	1132
2017	59	49	59	52	59	56	54	44	48	57	63	39	639
2018	40	48	54	64	57	44	59	65	44	52	39	39	605
2019	57	39	48	41	48	35	31	42	45	45	35	23	489
2020	35	38	24	20	31	19	8	14	5	15	9		218
	TOTAL =												7809
FT. LAUDERDALE													
2013				49	92	98	116	144	189	118	97	77	980
2014	91	82	69	108	89	89	106	103	99	100	121	95	1152
2015	96	100	109	89	94	96	82	74	93	89	91	79	1092
2016	86	81	58	61	68	63	46	75	59	43	54	50	744
2017	38	25	38	26	47	42	40	34	33	39	29	26	417
2018	20	21	36	24	33	43	47	61	28	33	26	21	393
2019	34	20	31	24	28	20	20	18	25	19	26	19	284
2020	26	13	25	19	22	17	8	12	5	5	6		158
	TOTAL =												5220
WEST PALM BEACH													
2013				9	35	56	91	83	147	63	68	67	619
2014	47	43	64	54	66	74	54	43	83	52	49	44	673
2015	51	57	52	41	47	56	48	39	35	35	33	36	530
2016	46	33	33	32	36	29	29	32	18	13	16	25	342
2017	22	18	21	22	20	10	23	27	18	24	17	13	235
2018	19	8	10	15	21	20	26	25	24	25	13	12	218
2019	22	20	13	28	14	20	27	19	10	31	18	10	232
2020	16	14	18	13	10	10	15	5	11	11	7		130

UPCOMING COURT HOLIDAY CLOSINGS *

- Thursday, December 24 - Day Before Christmas**
- Monday, December 25 - Christmas (Federal Holiday)
- Thursday, December 31 **Court will close at 2 pm** - New Year's Eve**
- Friday, January 1, 2021 - New Year's Day (Federal Holiday)
- Monday, January 18, 2021 - Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Federal Holiday)
- Monday, February 15, 2021 - Washington's Birthday (Federal Holiday)

*Any additions to the court closing schedule are announced by General Order and posted on the court website

<http://www.flsb.uscourts.gov/general-orders>

** See General Order 20-04

COURT MISSION STATEMENT

To promote public trust and confidence in the administration of bankruptcy cases:

- through easy access to comprehensible, accurate information about the court, its procedures, and records;
- by the efficient, respectful, and dignified conduct of business at all levels of the court—clerk's office, chambers and courtroom;
- through adjudication of bankruptcy cases by a fair and impartial tribunal that is designed to provide relief to the honest debtor, equitable distribution of available assets to creditors, and preservation of jobs and value through successful business reorganizations.

CONTACT "COURTHOUSE BEACON NEWS" PUBLICATION STAFF

If you have any comments regarding this issue or want to suggest ideas for future articles, please contact "Courthouse Beacon News" staff at the following email address:

Debbie_Lewis@flsb.uscourts.gov

Please do not use the above email address to file or send papers to the court or to ask questions about court procedure or status of a particular case. Contact the clerk's office at any of the following numbers for assistance in these matters.

Visit the court website www.flsb.uscourts.gov

for local filing information.

Thank you.

Miami: (305) 714-1800

Ft. Lauderdale: (954) 769-5700

West Palm Beach: (561) 514-4100

Please Note:

Clerk's office staff is not permitted to give legal advice.