

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA**

IN RE: )  
)  
ORIGINAL SIGNATURES ON BANKRUPTCY )  
PETITIONS AND SCHEDULES )  
)

**GENERAL ORDER 20-7**

Considering the national pandemic caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus, and to facilitate social distancing, the Court is hereby temporarily modifying the requirement that counsel obtain a debtor's original, physical signature on any document before the document is filed with the Court.

The debtor's original, physical signature requirement may be satisfied in any of the following ways:

- a. Counsel secures and maintains the debtor's original, physical signature before filing the document, as presently required, or
- b. Counsel secures the debtor's digital signature via any commercially available digital signature software and maintains a copy of the digitally signed document in the case file, or
- c. Counsel obtains express written permission (including via text message or electronic mail) from the debtor to affix the debtor's /s/ signature to the document and maintains a copy thereof in the case file, or
- d. Counsel obtains an image of the specified signature page showing debtor's original signature thereon via email, text message or facsimile transmission and maintains a copy of the image and its transmission media in the case file.

Filing under any of the above methods constitutes counsel's certification to the Court that the debtor was given an opportunity to review the entire document before signing it, counsel has received the express authorization from the debtor to file the complete document with the Court, and counsel believes in good faith that the signature method adopted establishes the identity of the debtor. The requirements of N.D.W.Va. 5005-6 (Electronic Signatures) to maintain the supporting documentation for permitting the use of the debtor's electronic signature for 7 years remains in place.

This General Order remains in effect until terminated by a future General.

**SO ORDERED** this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2020



Hon. David L. Bissett  
United States Bankruptcy Court,  
Northern District of West Virginia