

**JUDGE GREGORY L. TADDONIO'S
MODIFIED PROCEDURES FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION
(Effective March 13, 2020; Revised October 1, 2020)**

Effective October 1, 2020, and in accordance with the Standing Order 20-204, participation in all non-evidentiary hearings before Judge Gregory L. Taddonio shall be through video conference pending further Court Order. Unless otherwise ordered, these procedures shall be utilized to participate remotely in all hearings before Judge Taddonio. Any questions regarding these procedures may be directed to Judge Taddonio's chambers.

A. **General Remote Participation Procedures.** The following procedures apply to all remote hearings, regardless of whether they are conducted by video or telephone:

1. **Punctuality:** As with in-person hearings, participants in a remote hearing must be present in the "virtual courtroom" at the time their case is called. Parties must account for the time needed to connect to the hearing and be cleared through any applicable waiting room. If a party fails to timely appear for the hearing, they will be deemed to have waived their appearance and the Court may proceed without them. The Court will not call a case a second time. To avoid this result, all parties must join the conference not less than ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the hearing. Parties should be aware that, based on the number of items on the Court's docket, a hearing may not begin at its scheduled time. Accordingly, parties may track the Court's progression through its daily calendar by utilizing the "Now Hearing" functionality located at http://www.pawb.uscourts.gov/mobile_cal/hearingCalA.htm?judgeId=14082. In the event a participant is scheduled to appear in front of another bankruptcy judge at the same time, it is highly recommended that they contact Judge Taddonio's chambers in advance to apprise the Court of the potential conflict.

2. Evidentiary Hearings: To the extent an evidentiary hearing is required, the Court will specify the form and manner of the hearing in a scheduling order.

3. Hand-Delivery of Documents: While these modified procedures remain in place, any requirement (whether under the Local Rules, Court Order, or Judge Taddonio's procedures) directing a party to hand-deliver a copy of documents, exhibits, or filings to Judge Taddonio's chambers is hereby suspended, **except that** in the case of first-day filings for a complex chapter 11 case, debtor's counsel shall contact the assigned courtroom deputy to receive direction as to whether binders will be required.

4. Notice of Emergency Filings: Parties are reminded that chambers staff do not receive immediate electronic notices of filings under the current environment. It is therefore of critical importance that parties notify court staff of any emergency filings or other matters that require immediate attention.

B. **Video Conference Hearing Procedures**. Unless otherwise ordered, all hearings conducted by video conference ("Video Conference Hearings") shall utilize the Zoom Video Communications ("Zoom") application and adhere to the following procedures:

1. Video Conference Hearing Dates: All hearings scheduled after October 1, 2020, shall be conducted as a Video Conference Hearing. To the extent a party seeks to self-schedule a matter for a hearing date after October 1, 2020, they must use Judge Taddonio's Form 301-V (*Notice of Video Conference Hearing*), effective October 1, 2020, which is appended to these procedures and can also be found at <http://www.pawb.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Form-GLT-301-v.pdf>.

2. Video Conference Transition Period: Participants in any hearing scheduled to occur telephonically between October 1, 2020 and November 1, 2020 (the "Transition Period"),

may participate either by video conference or by telephone. The Court will issue notices in these cases as necessary, informing parties of the available options. Thereafter, Judge Taddonio will conduct non evidentiary hearings exclusively by video conference until circumstances justify a change in procedure.

3. Court Approval of Video Conference Participation: As video participation is now mandatory until further notice, **parties are not required to seek leave to participate remotely, provided they adhere to these procedures.**

4. Registering for Video Conference Hearings: All parties wishing to appear at a Video Conference Hearing must pre-register by submitting a registration form via the link published on Judge Taddonio's website (located at <http://www.pawb.uscourts.gov/judge-taddonios-video-conference-hearing-information>) by no later than **4 p.m. on the business day** prior to the scheduled hearing. Because the registration form is **unique to each hearing date**, participants must register using the link that corresponds to the correct hearing date and include the following information:

- Case name and number;
- The hearing date and time(s);
- The participant's name, address, and telephone number;
- The name of the party or parties whom the participant represents;
- Any other required information.

Parties who fail to pre-register may not be admitted into the courtroom by the video conference host.

5. Joining Video Conference Hearings: After registering for the Video Conference Hearing, participants will receive a confirmation email containing meeting

information and the requisite links to join the video conference. To join by computer, click on the meeting link in the confirmation email or, alternatively, enter the Meeting ID provided in the confirmation email into the Zoom mobile or desktop application. Participants will be placed into a waiting room and admitted into the main conference by the video conference host.

6. Entering a Video Conference Hearing Appearance: Once parties are connected to the Video Conference Hearing, they **must** provide their full names as their “screen names” when entering the Meeting ID to join the hearing. In hearings with a large number of participants, the Court may use the screen names to take the entry of appearances for the record.

7. Rules for Video Conference Participation: All parties appearing by video conference must abide by the following directives at all times. Failure to comply with the Court’s video conferencing procedures may result in the Court imposing sanctions, including but not limited to, revoking the party’s privilege to participate in Video Conference Hearings.

- Basic Prohibitions: The following actions are prohibited while connected to a Video Conference Hearing: (a) use of a device while in a vehicle or a public place; (b) conversing with anyone outside of the hearing; (c) failing to keep an audio microphone on “mute” when the participant is not speaking; and (d) allowing any background noise to interfere or disturb the proceedings. Once the participant’s hearing is called, they must remain seated and stationary at all times.
- Hearing Attire and Surroundings: Appropriate business professional courtroom attire is required. Participants should also be mindful of their background so as to not distract or detract from the court proceedings. Virtual backgrounds are permitted solely to the extent that it involves a

solid, neutral background. To prevent image distortion, participants should refrain from having a large light source (i.e. windows) directly behind them.

- Minimization of Noise Interference: Participants must make a concerted effort to minimize all background noise and shall silence any devices that may make noise (e.g., telephones, cell phones, messaging and email alerts). All parties are responsible for the quality of their audio connection, and to that end, the Court strongly recommends that participants wear a corded headset with a microphone during hearings. Should participants choose to use a wireless device, such as AirPods or Bluetooth-enabled devices, they must remain in close proximity to the connection source and avoid movement that would interfere with the signal. The Court cannot rely on a legal argument it cannot hear.
- Recording: Other than the Court, no participant may record any part of the hearing, whether by use of the video conferencing recording capabilities, third-party applications, photographs, screenshots, or by any other means.

8. Zoom Operating Instructions: For the purpose of ensuring a smooth and efficient hearing, all participants shall review the following information prior to the scheduled hearing to familiarize themselves with the Zoom application and its features:

- Hardware: Zoom is compatible for use on mobile devices (such as a smartphone or tablet) as well as personal computer (laptop or desktop) which have camera and microphone functions.
- Installation/Update of Zoom: To participate, parties will need to install the Zoom application on a smartphone/tablet or install the Zoom software on a

Windows, Linux, or macOS laptop/desktop. If parties already have Zoom installed on the device being used for the Video Conference Hearing, parties must ensure the application is updated to the most recent version.

- Testing Your Device: All participants are required to test their device compatibility with Zoom requirements and their internet connection speed to ensure that it is at least 3 Mbps prior to the hearing date. Participants can conduct such tests at <https://www.zoom.us/test>. Tests must be performed on the same device that will be used to participate in the hearing.
- Screen Mode: Parties are expected to view the Video Conference Hearing using the “Speaker View” mode.
- Additional Assistance: For additional assistance using Zoom, please consult the Zoom “Help Center” at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us> which offers “quick start guides” and video tutorials.

9. Off-Record Discussions Between Parties: Should participants wish to speak with each other or with clients off the record, participants should disconnect from the Video Conference Hearing, speak off the record, and then log back in. The video conference host will then admit returning participants into the main conference.

10. Video Conference Hearing Exemptions: A party seeking an exemption from the video conferencing procedures must file a short, written motion at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

C. **Telephonic Hearing Procedures.** Because the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet abated, the Court is now transitioning away from telephonic hearings. Nevertheless, to the extent the Court issues an Order (after October 1, 2020) authorizing a party to participate in a hearing telephonically or a party is participating telephonically during the Transition Period, the following procedures shall apply:

1. **Court Approval of Telephonic Participation:** As the Court now requires participants to attend hearings by video conference, telephonic participation will only be authorized by leave of the Court. To obtain leave, a party must file a short, written motion at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

2. **Entering a Telephonic Appearance:** Parties authorized to appear telephonically must register with CourtCall at www.CourtCall.com or at (866) 582-6878 no later than **twenty-four (24) hours** prior to a scheduled hearing. Parties shall pay the current fee charged by CourtCall upon registration. Registrants must provide CourtCall with the following information:

- Case name and number;
- Name of the judge conducting the hearing;
- The hearing date and time(s);
- The participant's name, address, and telephone number;
- The name of the party or parties whom the participant represents;
- The matter(s) on which the participant wishes to be heard or whether the participant intends to monitor the proceedings in "listen-only" mode; and
- Any other information required by CourtCall.

4. Rules for Telephonic Participation: All parties appearing by telephone must abide by the following directives at all times. Failure to comply with the Court's telephonic procedures may result in the Court imposing sanctions, including but not limited to, revoking the party's telephonic privileges.

- Basic Prohibitions: The following actions are prohibited while connected to a telephonic hearing: (a) use of a telephonic device while in a vehicle or a public place; (b) using the "speaker phone" function of a telephonic device; (c) placing the Court on "hold" during a hearing; (d) conversing with anyone outside of the hearing; (e) failing to keep an audio microphone on "mute" when the participant is not speaking; and (f) allowing any background noise to interfere or disturb the proceedings.
- Use of Landlines and Cellular Phones: Under the current state of emergency, use of a cellular phone will be authorized only if the participant does not have access to a landline but can otherwise clearly communicate with the Court without signal interruption or excessive background noise.

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

<i>In re:</i>	:	Case No. XX-XXXXX-GLT
	:	
DEBTOR(S) NAME(S),	:	Chapter XX
	:	
<i>Debtor.</i>	:	
	:	
	:	
MOVANT(S) NAME(S),	:	
	:	
<i>Movant(s),</i>	:	
	:	
v.	:	Related to Dkt. No.
	:	
RESPONDENT(S) NAME(S),	:	
	:	
<i>Respondent(s).</i>	:	
	:	
	:	
	:	

**NOTICE OF VIDEO CONFERENCE HEARING AND RESPONSE DEADLINE
REGARDING MOTION OF [NAME OF MOVANT] FOR [RELIEF REQUESTED]
(MODIFIED PROCEDURES FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION)
EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2020**

TO THE RESPONDENT(S):

You are hereby notified that the Movant seeks an order affecting your rights or property.

You are further instructed to file with the Clerk and serve upon the undersigned attorney for Movant a response to the Motion by no later than _____, 20__ (i.e., seventeen (17) days after the date of service below), in accordance with the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, the Local Rules of this Court, and the general procedures of the presiding judge as found on the Court’s webpage at www.pawb.uscourts.gov. If you fail to timely file and serve a written response, an order granting the relief requested in the Motion may be entered and the hearing may not be held. Please refer to the calendar posted on the Court’s webpage to verify if a default order was signed or if the hearing will go forward as scheduled.

You should take this Notice and the Motion to a lawyer at once.

A **video conference** hearing will be held on _____, 20__, at _____:_____ .m. before Judge Gregory L. Taddonio. All parties wishing to appear by video conference must register by submitting a video conference registration form via the link

published on Judge Taddonio’s website (which can be found at <http://www.pawb.uscourts.gov/judge-taddonios-video-conference-hearing-information>) no later than **4 p.m. on the business day** prior to a scheduled hearing. All counsel and parties participating by video conference shall comply with Judge Taddonio’s *Modified Procedures for Remote Participation* (effective October 1, 2020), (which can be found at <http://www.pawb.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/pdfs/glt-proc-appearances.pdf>).

Only a limited time of ten (10) minutes is being provided on the calendar. No witnesses will be heard. If there is an issue of fact, an evidentiary hearing will be scheduled by the Court for a later date.

Date of Service: _____, 20____

Attorney for Movant/Applicant

Signature

Address

Telephone Number

Attorney I.D. No.