

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT**

IN RE:
RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO THE
CLERK'S OFFICES

GENERAL ORDER 2021-2

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has declared a national emergency, and the Governor of the State of Connecticut has declared a public health emergency throughout the State;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised people to take precautions in light of the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak, and has noted that the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus, through, among other means, social distancing;

WHEREAS, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Connecticut (the "Court") continues to review its operations to identify measures that will help slow the spread of the virus by minimizing contact between persons, while at the same time preserving its core mission of serving the public through the fair and impartial administration of justice;

AND

WHEREAS, on March 29, 2021, the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut (the "District Court") entered a General Order Regarding In-Court Appearances which provides that certain persons shall not enter any courthouse in the District of Connecticut until further Order of the District Court, the provisions of which are incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit A**;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, **effective June 1, 2021, and until further order of the Court**, that except for federal holidays, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Connecticut Clerk's Offices (the "Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office") will be open to the public **Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. through 4:00 p.m.**, with the following restrictions:

1. **Prior General Orders superseded.** This Order supersedes the March 12, 2020 General Order Regarding Restrictions on Visitors to Courthouses and the March 26, 2020 General Order Restricting Access to Clerk's Offices.

2. **Entry to Clerk's Office.** Only one member of the public may be present at the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office intake counter at a time. All others will need to wait outside the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office in a line, maintaining six feet of distance from the other.

3. **Public computer terminal.** The public computer terminal in the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Offices will not be accessible. The public, filers, and litigants may telephone the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office to obtain information regarding a case. The public, filers, and litigants may also continue to access information on the Court's website at the following link: www.ctb.uscourts.gov. Electronic dockets may continue to be accessed through PACER.

4. **Filing Fees and all other required fees/payments.** Cash will not be accepted for filing fees and all other required fees/payments. Along with the filing of a petition commencing a case under any chapter of the Bankruptcy Code, a debtor must pay the required filing fee, or file an application to pay the filing fee in installments or an application to waive the filing fee. The failure to pay the required filing fee with any petition, or to file an application to pay the filing fee in installments or an application to waive the filing fee with the petition, shall result in dismissal of the debtor's case.

Filing fees and all other required fees/payments shall be made by certified check, money order, or check drawn on an attorney's account. Such payments shall be: (i) made in person; (ii) mailed (or sent by FedEx or UPS) to the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office in the relevant seat of court (the addresses and phone numbers of which are provided below); or (iii) placed in the lock box located in the United States Courthouses identified below. Each certified check, money order, or check drawn on an attorney's account shall indicate the docket number of the case and the purpose of the payment (e.g., "filing fee"). Should any person subject to a payment order be unable to obtain a certified check, money order, or check drawn on an attorney's account, that person may file a motion to request temporary relief from the payment obligation. Individual judges may decide, in their discretion, to require some showing that the person has made reasonable efforts to obtain a certified check, money order, or check drawn on an attorney's account. Except for the required filing fee that must be paid with the petition commencing a case

under any chapter of the Bankruptcy Code, filing fees and all other required fees/payments may also be made online using Pay.gov <https://pay.gov/public/form/start/73185821>.

5. **Manual Filings when the United States Courthouses are open.** *Pro Se* Filer/Litigants may file petitions, complaints, motions, and other documents in-person at the intake counter of the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office or deposit a manual filing into the filings drop box when the Courthouses or buildings are open to the public.

Effective June 1, 2021, the filings drop boxes will be located outside of the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office as follows:

- **New Haven:** CFC Building, 157 Church Street, 18th floor
- **Hartford:** Ribicoff Federal Building, 450 Main Street - 7th floor
- **Bridgeport:** McMahon Federal Building, 915 Lafayette Boulevard - 1st floor lobby

A time-stamp machine will be located next to each filings drop box. The *Pro Se* Filer/Litigant making the manual filing shall: (i) time-stamp the filing, which will indicate the city, date, and time of filing; and (ii) place the time-stamped filing in the filings drop box.

This Order does not affect filings made through the Court's case management/electronic case filing system ("CM/ECF"), which should be continued to be used by all CM/ECF filers and users.

SO ORDERED.

Dated at Bridgeport, Connecticut this 29th day of April, 2021.

Julie A. Manning
Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge
District of Connecticut

Mailing addresses and Telephone Numbers of the Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Offices are:

Hartford

United States Bankruptcy Court
Abraham Ribicoff Federal Building
450 Main Street, 7th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

Telephone number (860) 240-3675

New Haven

United States Bankruptcy Court
Connecticut Financial Center
157 Church Street, 18th Floor
New Haven, CT 06510

Telephone number (203) 773-2009

Bridgeport

United States Bankruptcy Court
Brien McMahon Federal Building
915 Lafayette Boulevard, 1st Floor
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Telephone number (203) 579-5808

EXHIBIT A

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT**

IN RE:
COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY COVID-19

GENERAL ORDER

MAR 29 2021 PM3:02
FILED - USDC - BPT - CT

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has declared a national emergency, and the Governor of the State of Connecticut has declared a public health emergency throughout the State,

WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has advised people to take precautions in light of the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak, and has noted that the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus, through, among other means, social distancing,

WHEREAS, the CDC and the State of Connecticut have recently updated their guidance concerning quarantine periods,

WHEREAS, the Court continues to review its operations to identify measures that will help slow the spread of the virus by minimizing contact between persons, while at the same time preserving its core mission of serving the public through the fair and impartial administration of justice,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, **effective immediately and until further order of the Court**, that:

- 1) This order supersedes the General Order entered on December 14, 2020.
- 2) The following persons shall not enter any courthouse in the District of Connecticut:
 - Persons who have, within the past 14 days, experienced fever or flu-like symptoms or the loss of the sense of taste or smell;
 - Persons who have tested positive for COVID-19, unless at least 14 days have passed from the positive test or the experience of fever, flu-like symptoms, or the loss of the sense of taste or smell, whichever is later;
 - Persons who have had close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19, unless (i) at least 14 days have passed from either the close contact

with that other person or that other person's experience of fever, flu-like symptoms, or the loss of the sense of taste or smell, whichever is later; or (ii) the person seeking to enter the courthouse has been fully vaccinated, i.e., at least 14 days have passed since the administration of a one-shot vaccine or the second shot of a two-shot vaccine. For purposes of this order, "close contact" means closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes cumulative over a 24-hour period or any in-person interaction where a person is unmasked regardless of duration.

- Persons who have traveled outside the United States at any time within the past 14 days. Such persons may, however, enter a courthouse in this District if they meet all of the following three requirements: (i) they have had a COVID-19 test following arrival in CT, (ii) the result of the test was negative, and (iii) they show proof of the negative test at the courthouse entrance.

SO ORDERED:

Dated: March 29, 2021
Bridgeport, CT

/s/ Stefan R. Underhill

Stefan R. Underhill
Chief United State District Judge