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Revised:

Tuesday, September 2, 2014

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR
THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION**

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR APPEARANCES BY TELEPHONE

**Judge Hannah Blumenstiel
Judge Dennis Montali**

The following procedures apply in the San Francisco Division for telephone appearances by counsel or parties appearing in propria persona:

1. Permitted Appearances.

In general, telephonic appearances are permitted except in situations where the party or counsel: will be examining witnesses;

is the proponent of a [chapter 11 disclosure statement](#) or [plan](#);

is counsel for a client who is present in court; or

is directed by the court to appear personally.

There are no restrictions on eligibility to appear by telephone based upon the geographic location of the counsel or the party. **The Court does not require advance permission for telephonic appearances.**

2. Procedure for Arranging for Telephonic Appearances.

Telephonic appearances are arranged through CourtCall. All parties/counsel using this service **must have an account or make arrangements to set one up well in advance of the hearing.**

Appearances are arranged by reservation. To make a reservation, a participant should call **1-86-582-6878** no later than **4:00 p.m. PT the day before the appearance.** (Failure to make a reservation no later than 4:00 PM the day before the hearing may result in the inability of CourtCall to arrange for the appearance.) Note however, CourtCall will not process telephonic appearances unless an account has been set up. The coordinator will need:

court date and time;

name of judge;

case name and number;

name and phone number of the attorney appearing;

verification that a CourtCall account has been set up.

After scheduling a reservation, attorneys will receive a [confirmation](#), either by fax or e-mail, providing the party with dial-in information and telephonic instructions. Attorneys are required to notify CourtCall of any appearance substitutions.

Telephonic appearances are connected directly with the courtroom's public address system and electronic recording equipment so that a normal record is produced. To ensure a quality record, the court prohibits the use of car phones, cellular phones, public telephone booths, or phones in other public places except in emergencies or unless the presiding judge has consented.

Participants should be able to hear all parties without difficulty or echo.

At the time of the hearing, a participant may initially be able to hear the matter(s) preceding his or her case. After a call is connected to the courtroom, the courtroom deputy will call the case. The presiding judge will ask for appearances and direct the manner in which the hearing proceeds.

Each time a participant speaks, he or she should identify himself or herself for the record. The court's teleconferencing system allows more than one speaker to be heard so that the judge can interrupt a speaker to ask a question or redirect the discussion. When the judge informs the participants that the hearing is completed, the participants may disconnect and the next case will be called.

Failure to comply with these procedures may result in the imposition of sanctions. Sanctions may include dropping the matter from the calendar, continuing the hearing, proceeding in the absence of an unavailable participant, a monetary sanction, or a temporary or permanent prohibition against a person/firm appearing telephonically.

When the court conducts a telephone conference on short notice and uses CourtCall, it may designate one party to bear the entire cost of the conference call. The court may on occasion initiate calls to one or two persons directly without use of a conference operator. In those instances, the courtroom deputy will contact parties to inform them of the arrangements.

Because the courtroom deputy is usually in court prior to the initiation of any particular call, last minute changes are generally impossible to handle and are discouraged.

Judge Montali's Courtroom Deputy is Ms. Lorena Parada (415-268-2323 or

Lorena.Parada@canb.uscourts.gov). Judge Blumenstiel's Courtroom Deputy is Mr. Benjamin Gapuz (415-268-2362 or Benjamin_Gapuz@canb.uscourts.gov).

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