

United States Bankruptcy Court – Eastern District of Texas

NOTICE OF

MANDATORY Social Security Number Redaction

The Judicial Conference of the United States Courts has adopted new amendments to the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure (FRBP), specifically rules 1005 and 1007, to require that the social security number for all individuals on all pleadings must be redacted to the last four digits only, effective

December 1, 2003.

The requirement to include the FULL social security number of a debtor at the time of filing still exists. As a result, the declarations required when filing a petition electronically have been modified as needed to include the disclosure of the debtor's full social security number on the form. In addition, attorneys using case upload software must include the full security number where required when completing the electronic forms presented by the Court.

All petitions filed on behalf of or by individual debtors filed on paper on or after this effective date MUST include the new Official Bankruptcy Form 21, Statement of Social Security Number.

Failure to provide the full Social Security Number on the new Form 21 for paper filings or on the appropriate declaration for electronic filings may result in dismissal of the petition or other action as the bankruptcy judges may decide. Either form as appropriate must be filed on paper within five business days. These documents are NOT public documents and are not available for review by the public.

Copies of the new Official Bankruptcy Form 21 and the new Exhibits B-1 and B-2 to LBR Appendix 5005 (the declarations) are available on the Court's website at www.txeb.uscourts.gov.

The first meeting of creditors notice generated by the Court through the Bankruptcy Noticing Center (BNC) will still contain the full nine digit Social Security Number; however, this will be only method by which a debtor's full Social Security Number can be obtained from the Court.

Sensitive information in any document filed with the Court should not be included unless otherwise required by the FRBP, Official Bankruptcy Forms, or otherwise necessary and relevant to the case. Unless otherwise required, generally speaking, the following items must be partially redacted: Social Security numbers, financial account numbers, dates of birth, and the names of minor children. The Clerk's Office will NOT redact any document received by the Court.

In addition, caution should be exercised when filing documents that contain the following: any personal identifying number (such as driver's license number), medical records, treatment and diagnosis, employment history, individual financial information, and proprietary or trade secret information.

The full nine-digit Social Security number is required on all petitions filed on behalf of or by individual debtors through November 30, 2003.