



**LOCAL BANKRUPTCY RULES**  
**FOR THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT**  
**FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA**

Honorable Benjamin P. Hursh  
Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge

Effective December 31, 2022

**LOCAL BANKRUPTCY RULES  
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FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA**

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**LOCAL BANKRUPTCY RULES  
FOR THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA**

**PART I**

RULE 1001-1. Scope, Applicability, and Promulgation of Local Rules; Short Title.

(a) **Scope.** The Local Bankruptcy Rules govern practice and procedure in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Montana. The Local Rules shall be cited as “Mont. LBR \_\_\_\_.” The term “Judge” as used in these Local Rules includes a United States Bankruptcy Judge, a United States District Judge, or any other judicial officer to whom a bankruptcy case or proceeding has been referred. The term “Clerk” as used in these Local Rules refers to the Clerk of Court for the United States Courts for the District of Montana. Local Bankruptcy Forms as contained in the Appendix to these Local Rules shall be cited as “Mont. LBF \_\_\_\_.”

(b) **Applicability.** Unless otherwise indicated, each of these Local Rules applies to cases commenced under Chapters 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 15 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and to all Adversary Proceedings.

(c) **Promulgation.** Promulgation of these Local Rules are made by the Bankruptcy Judge in accord with Rule 9029 of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure (Fed. R. Bankr. P.), and Rule 83 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (Fed. R. Civ. P.).

(d) **Numbering.** Each Local Rule is numbered by reference to the corresponding Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure. Except as otherwise provided, the authority for each Local Rule is the corresponding Fed. R. Bankr. P.

(e) **Electronic Filing and Address Changes.** The Court implemented the Case Management/Electronic Case Filing System (CM/ECF) in August of 2002. FILING THROUGH CM/ECF IS MANDATORY FOR ALL USERS IN ALL BANKRUPTCY CASES AND IN ALL ADVERSARY PROCEEDINGS, EXCEPT *PRO PER* ENTITIES (INCLUDING *PRO PER* CREDITORS WITHOUT COUNSEL). In order to receive electronic service through CM/ECF, a party must be a registered user and have an email address that is maintained. Any entity seeking to receive training and a password to access CM/ECF, may contact the Clerk of Court.

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Related Authority:  
28 U.S.C. §§ 151, 2071, 2072 and 2075  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1001, 5005, 9009 and 9029  
Fed. R. Civ. P. 83

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RULE 1002-1. Petition - General.

(a) **Petitions.** All petitions shall conform to Official Form 101.

(b) **Filing.** A petition commencing a case under the U. S. Bankruptcy Code shall be filed by

electronic means through CM/ECF, unless the filer is *in propria persona* (*pro per*), and then by filing with the Clerk's Office.

(c) **No Blank Items.** Each item in the petition not otherwise filled out shall be completed by the entry of "none" or "not applicable," as appropriate.

(d) **Documents Signed by Someone Other Than Debtor.** If a voluntary petition for an individual debtor or other document is signed on behalf of the debtor by someone other than the debtor, the name and capacity of the person signing on behalf of the debtor must be clearly stated under the signature line. In addition, a copy of documentation evidencing authority of the signer to act on behalf of the debtor must be filed at the same time as the petition. If there is no such documentation, then a statement explaining how the petition complies with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1004.1 must be filed with the petition. A certificate of service showing copies of the following were mailed to the non-signing debtor at the debtor's last known address with the Court shall be filed no later than 14 days after the case has commenced: (i) filed petition and (ii) notice of the bankruptcy case meeting of creditors and deadlines.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1002 and 5005  
Bankruptcy Official Form 101

Comment:

The rule in (d) does not confer authority on others to file petitions or other documents, such as schedules, reaffirmation agreements, etc., on behalf of a debtor. It is designed to make it clear when documents are signed by a representative such as a general guardian, committee, conservator, or similar fiduciary on behalf of a debtor so that parties in interest may determine whether it was appropriate. This rule is also designed to protect debtors. Attorneys filing such petition should review applicable law and rules of professional conduct

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RULE 1005-1. Petition - Caption.

(a) **Debtor's Current Name.** The title of the case shall include the debtor's full and correct name.

(1) **Corporations, Limited Liability Companies, and Partnerships.** If the debtor is a corporation, a limited liability company, or a partnership, the title of the case shall so specify as follows:

ABC, Inc., a Corporation; or XYZ, a General (or Limited) Partnership; or Blackacre, LLC.

(2) **Joint Petitions.** Pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 302, only a married couple are permitted to file a joint petition. The title of the case shall identify them as follows:

John Robert Doe, Jr., and Jane Roberta Doe.

(b) **Other Names Used by the Debtor.** Any other names used by the debtor in the eight (8) years preceding the commencement of the case shall be included in the petition, including assumed business names or dba's and the last four digits of the social security or individual debtor's

taxpayer identification number, and any other federal taxpayer identification number.

(c) **Debtor's Current Address.** Debtor shall include a physical street address, if available, on the petition, in addition to any mailing address (if the latter is different than the debtor's street address).

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1005 and 9004

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RULE 1006-1. Fees; Installment Payments.

(a) **General Requirement.** Every petition shall be accompanied by the filing fee required by statute or by the Judicial Conference of the United States, or Official Form 103A or 103B, requesting either waiver of the filing fee or payment in installments.

(b) **Failure to Pay Installment.**

(1) **Notice of Nonpayment.** If an individual debtor fails to pay an installment as required by this Rule and as approved in the application, the Clerk shall provide written notice to the debtor, debtor's attorney, if any, and the trustee that such installment must be paid within fourteen (14) days of the notice.

(2) **Dismissal of Case.** If an individual debtor fails to pay an installment after notice and within the required time period, the Clerk shall enter a Notice of Pending Dismissal that explains the case will be dismissed without further notice or hearing if the payment is not received within fourteen (14) days of the date of the Notice of Pending Dismissal.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1006  
Bankruptcy Official Form 103A

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RULE 1007-1. Schedules, Statement of Financial Affairs, Statement of Social Security Number, and Other Official Forms.

(a) **No Blank Items.** Every blank in every form must be completed, and all of the information required by the Official Forms must be provided.

(b) **Summary of Assets and Liabilities.** In all Chapter 7, 11, 12 and 13 cases, the debtor shall file a document listing a summary of all assets and liabilities, itemizing all priority, secured, and unsecured claims, and itemizing all real and personal property, and any exemptions claimed; together with total amounts for all assets, all liabilities, and all exemptions claimed. Such summary must be amended in the event of any amendments to the debtor's schedules or statements.

(c) **Corporate or Limited Liability Company Petition Accompanied by Resolution.** A petition filed by a corporation or a limited liability company under Chapters 7, 11 or 12 shall include a resolution adopted by the directors or members or managers and, if required by the corporate by-

laws or the laws of the state of incorporation, a resolution adopted by shareholders authorizing the relief sought (or a certification by the person signing the petition or the debtor's attorney that a shareholders' resolution is not required).

(d) **Incomplete Filings and Dismissal.** If the schedules, statement of financial affairs and other required forms are not filed with the petition, the Clerk will enter a Deficiency Notice that identifies each omitted item. If the omitted items are not received by the Clerk prior to the deadline stated in the Deficiency Notice, the Clerk will enter a Notice of Pending Dismissal that explains the case will be dismissed without further notice or hearing if the deficiency is not cured within fourteen (14) days of the date of the Notice of Pending Dismissal.

(e) **Extension of Time.** Except as provided in 11 U.S.C. § 1116(3), an extension of time under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007(c) for filing schedules, statement of affairs, or other required documents will not be granted beyond the date that is 3 days prior to the date set for the first meeting of creditors under § 341(a), unless a judge orders otherwise for cause shown. Any motion for extension of time filed under this rule shall:

(1) state the date of extension requested; and,

(2) identify the date currently set for the § 341(a) meeting or, alternatively, affirmatively allege that no such date has yet been set.

An extension beyond the date set for the § 341(a) meeting will not be granted unless the debtor has also been granted a continuance of the § 341(a) meeting, pursuant to LBR 2003-4, and the confirmation hearing if applicable, and provided appropriate notice thereof.

A motion for extension of time filed after the Notice of Pending Dismissal is entered but before it expires will be denied absent a showing of extraordinary circumstances beyond the Debtor's control.

(f) **Retention of Signed Copies.** Signatures on documents that are electronically filed and that require original signatures other than from the authorized CM/ECF user, must be maintained in one of the two following manners:

(1) **Original Signatures.** The originally signed paper copies of a bankruptcy petition and accompanying papers required to be verified under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1008 and any declaration made by any party under penalty of perjury in accordance with 28U.S.C. § 1746 must be retained by the CM/ECF User until five years after the date that the case or proceeding is closed. The Court, on its own motion or on the request of a party in interest, may require the production of any originally signed document; or

(2) **Scanned Signatures.** The pages of the document bearing the signatures must be scanned into CM/ECF after the electronic version of the document bearing the parties' electronic signatures.

**(g) Tax Returns and Refunds.**

(1) **Restrictions Regarding Debtor's Tax Information.** Tax information filed with the Court, and which is provided to creditors and trustees is subject to the Administrative Office's guidance regarding tax information as from time to time promulgated. Any person receiving copies of the debtor's tax information shall treat the information as confidential and shall not disseminate it except as appropriate under the circumstances of the case.

(2) **Tax Refunds.** Immediately upon receipt, all applicable income tax refunds shall be turned over to the trustee, in accordance with the Court's tax turnover order contained in Mont. LBF 35.

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Related Authority:

U.S. Bankruptcy Code §§ 102, 109(g), 521, 1116, 1308, 1325  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007, 1017, 4002 and 4004

Comments:

The Official Bankruptcy Forms for Schedules D and F require the creditor's name, address, and account number, and require the date the claim was incurred and the consideration for the claim, as well as the amount of the claim and other information. Be sure to provide an approximate date (or a range of dates) for when each debt was incurred and indicate the underlying basis for the claim (e.g., medical bills incurred from 5/99 through 6/03). The filing of incomplete schedules or statements of financial affairs may result in denial of discharge or the disgorgement of fees.

As the Administrative Office's Guidance may change, please refer to the Court's website at [www.mtb.uscourts.gov](http://www.mtb.uscourts.gov) for the most recent version. (Director's Interim Guidance Regarding Tax Information under 11 U.S.C. § 521)

The five-year retention requirement is intended to coincide with the statute of limitations for the bankruptcy fraud provisions of 18 U.S.C. 151, et. seq.

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RULE 1007-2. Master Mailing List.

**(a) Filing Requirements.**

(1) **Voluntary Case.** A "master mailing list" shall be filed with the petition in the form required by the Clerk at that time. The master mailing list shall include the name and mailing address of every creditor, each general and limited partner for a partnership debtor, the most recent officers and directors for a corporate debtor, all equity security holders, and the members or managers of a limited liability company. If the debtor does not file a master mailing list with the petition, then the debtor shall file a Notice of Filing of Creditor Mailing Matrix that attaches the master mailing list as an exhibit with the Clerk.

(2) **Involuntary Case.** With every involuntary petition there shall be filed a master mailing list including the name and address of each petitioner, the petitioner's attorney, the debtor, any debtor's attorney, all last known general partners if the debtor is a partnership, all last known officers if the debtor is a corporation, and the last known members and managers if the debtor is a limited liability company.

(3) **Duty to Supplement.** A supplemental mailing list setting forth newly added creditors

or additional parties in interest and all previously listed creditors or parties in interest shall be filed with any schedules or amended schedules, which will replace any previously filed mailing list. Debtor's failure to file a replacement mailing list with all creditors and parties in interest including any added persons, and to certify that a Notice of Commencement of Case, if previously entered by the Clerk, has been mailed to all added parties, after notice from the Court, shall be grounds for the Court to dismiss debtor's petition without further notice or hearing.

(b) **Accuracy and Completeness.** The debtor is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the master mailing list. When serving notices, the Clerk and any party in interest may rely exclusively on the master mailing list. It shall be the debtor's responsibility to amend the matrix whenever it appears that a creditor or other party in interest was omitted.

(c) **Dismissal.** If the master mailing list containing the names and addresses of each entity included or to be included on Schedules D, E/F, G and H, as required by Mont. LBR 1007-2(a) and 11 U.S.C. § 521(a)(1)(A), and the List of the Twenty (20) Largest Unsecured Creditors, if required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007(d), are not filed with the petition, the Clerk will enter a Notice of Pending Dismissal for Notice of Failure to file Master Mailing List or List of the Twenty (20) Largest Unsecured Creditors explaining if the missing list is not received prior to the expiration of the 7th day following the date of the petition, the case will be dismissed without further notice or hearing.

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Related Authority:  
U. S. Bankruptcy Code § 102  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007, 1017 and 9004

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RULE 1009-1. Amendments to Petition, Schedules, Master Mailing List and Statement.

(a) **Amendments Generally.** Under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1009, debtors may amend the petition, list, schedule, or statement at any time before the case is closed. Debtors shall:

- (1) file a notice of amendment together with the amended petition, list, schedule, or statement (*see* Mont. LBF 4); and,
- (2) contemporaneously serve the amendment on all entities affected by the amendment;
- (3) if the notice of amendment either adds creditors or parties in interest not previously included in the schedules, or on the mailing list or if the amendment corrects an address or listed debt, the notice shall explain and identify which creditors shall be added to or removed from the mailing matrix so that the Clerk can update the master mailing list.

If a party in interest moves to amend a petition, list, schedule, or statement, then a motion is required, filed in compliance with Mont. LBR 9013-1.

(b) **Interlineation.** No amendment by interlineation shall be permitted. The entire page or pages that the amendment affects shall be redrafted and filed and the amendments shall be clearly

identified with the word “Amended” and the date of the amendment.

(c) **Denomination of Amendment.** Any amended document shall clearly state that it is an amendment to the original.

(d) **Notification.** If the debtor files a notice of amendment the debtor shall serve on any affected creditor or party in interest a copy of the following, as applicable, and file a certificate of service verifying such service:

- (1) the amended list or schedule;
- (2) the “Notice of Chapter [7, 11, 12 or 13] Bankruptcy Case, Meeting of Creditors, and Deadlines;” and
- (3) the order granting discharge, if any.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1009

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#### RULE 1015-1. Joint Administration and Consolidation.

(a) **Joint Administration.** A motion seeking the joint administration of the cases of two or more related debtors shall be made pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1015(b).

(b) **Consolidation.** A motion seeking to consolidate two or more cases shall, if granted, result in the substantive consolidation of such cases for all purposes unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The debtors’ estates shall be consolidated in a case jointly filed by a married couple unless the Court orders otherwise.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. § 302  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1015 and 2009

#### Comment:

While joint administration is contemplated and provided for in the Fed. R. Bankr. P., the substantive consolidation of the estates of separate debtors is not. Consolidation of non-related parties is not mentioned in the Bankruptcy Code or Rules. As noted in the Advisory Committee Notes under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1015, consolidation, as distinguished from joint administration, “is neither authorized nor prohibited by this rule since the propriety of consolidation depends on substantive considerations and affects the substantive rights of the creditors of separate estates.” Consolidation is a judicially created doctrine, which must be expressly sought, and the grounds therefore proven. A trustee or debtor in possession must keep separate accounts of the property and distribution of each estate being jointly administered, as required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2009(e).

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#### RULE 1017-1. Dismissal or Conversion.



**(a) Motions and Notices to Dismiss or Convert Filed by Debtor.**

**(1) Motion by Debtor for Conversion from Chapter 7 or 11.** A debtor seeking conversion under 11 U.S.C. § 706(a), if the case has not been previously converted from another chapter, shall file a motion for conversion to the desired chapter, with the notice required under Mont. LBR 9013-1.

A debtor seeking conversion under 11 U.S.C. § 1112(a) or (d) shall file a motion for conversion to the desired chapter, without the notice required under Mont. LBR 9013-1. Such motion will be granted without hearing.

**(2) Motion by Debtor for Dismissal from Chapter 7, With Notice.** A debtor seeking dismissal under 11 U.S.C. § 707(a) shall file a motion for dismissal setting forth alleged facts showing no plain legal prejudice to creditors, with the notice required under Mont. LBR 9013-1.

**(3) Motion by Debtor for Dismissal from Chapter 12 or 13, With Notice.** A debtor seeking dismissal under 11 U.S.C. §§ 1208(b) or 1307(b) shall file a motion for dismissal, with the notice required under Mont. LBR 9013-1.

**(4) Notice of Conversion from Chapter 12 or 13 to Chapter 7.** A debtor seeking a conversion under 11 U.S.C. §§ 1208(a) or 1307(a) to a case under Chapter 7 shall file a notice of conversion, in compliance with Mont. LBF 10. No motion and court order are required. The filing date of the notice becomes the date of conversion.

**(b) Motion to Dismiss or Convert Filed by Trustee or Other Party in Interest.** Except as provided in Mont. LBR 1017-1(c), a trustee or other party in interest may file a motion to dismiss or to convert a case to a case under another chapter in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1017, by using Mont. LBF 27, with service of the motion on the debtor, debtor's attorney, and the trustee. The motion shall include a legal and factual basis for the motion, and the notice required under Mont. LBR 9013-1.

**(c) Dismissal or Conversion upon Debtor Defaulting under Terms of Confirmed Plan.** When the debtor defaults under the terms of a confirmed plan and the order confirming the plan contains the following provision: "In the event of any default under the plan, the Court may dismiss or convert this case to Chapter 7 without further notice or hearing," the Court may grant a motion for conversion or dismissal without the notice period required in Mont. LBR 1017-1(a) and without further hearing.

**(d) Dismissal of Related Title 11 Proceedings and Matters.** Whenever a case filed under Title 11 is dismissed, any related adversary proceeding, contested matter, or any other pending matter shall likewise be dismissed without prejudice and without further order of the Court, unless the Court orders otherwise. Cases with pending appeals may be dismissed, but the dismissal of the case shall not be deemed to deprive any appellate court of its jurisdiction. Dismissal shall not be deemed to deprive the Bankruptcy Court of the authority to rule on the reasonableness of the professional fees and costs charged by debtor's attorney, as provided for in Mont. LBR 2016-1(d).

(e) **Trustee's Professional's Fees.** When a Chapter 7 case is converted to another chapter, the Chapter 7 trustee shall file any application for professional fees or costs within thirty (30) days following the conversion. Failure to make such application within the time allowed may subject the fee application to denial.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 348, 349, 706, 707, 930, 1112, 1208, and 1307  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1017 and 1019

Comment:

A motion to dismiss or convert shall be served as required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002. Unless the moving party expressly consents to a continuance for a specific period of time or compelling circumstances prevent the Court from meeting the time limits established by § 1112(b)(3), the Court must commence the hearing on a motion to dismiss or convert under § 1112(b) not later than 30 days after the filing of the motion and must decide the motion not later than 15 days after the commencement of the hearing.

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RULE 1019-1. Conversion from One Chapter to Another.

(a) **Debtor's Schedules Following Conversion.** Within fourteen (14) days following conversion to another chapter the debtor shall file revised schedules of assets and liabilities, as well as revised statements of income and expenses, reflecting any changes in such items since the filing of the original petition.

(b) **Notification.** If the debtor files an amendment adding creditors or parties in interest not previously included in the schedules or included on the mailing list, or if the amendment corrects an address or listed debt, the person filing the amendment shall serve copies of the required documents in compliance with Mont. LBR 1009-1.

RULE 1020-1. Chapter 11 Reorganization Case for Small Business Debtors or Debtors Under Subchapter V.

(a) **Debtor Designation.** In a voluntary chapter 11 case, the debtor shall state in the petition whether the debtor is a small business debtor, or a debtor as defined in § 1182(1) of the Code and, if the latter, whether the debtor elects to have subchapter V of chapter 11 apply. In an involuntary chapter 11 case, the debtor shall file within 14 days after entry of the order for relief a statement as to whether the debtor is a small business debtor or a debtor as defined in § 1182(1) of the Code and, if the latter, whether the debtor elects to have subchapter V of chapter 11 apply. The status of the case as a small business case or a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 shall be in accordance with the debtor's statement under this subdivision, unless and until the Court enters an order finding that the debtor's statement is incorrect.

(b) **Objecting to Designation.** The United States trustee or a party in interest may file an objection to the debtor's statement under subdivision (a) no later than 30 days after the conclusion of the meeting of creditors held under § 341(a) of the Code, or within 30 days after any amendment to the statement, whichever is later.

**(c) Procedure for Objection or Determination.** Any objection or request for a determination under this rule shall be governed by Rule 9014 and served on: the debtor; the debtor’s attorney; the United States trustee; the trustee; the creditors included on the list filed under Rule 1007(d) or, if a committee has been appointed under § 1102(a)(3), the committee or its authorized agent; and any other entity as the Court directs.

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Comment:

The Interim Rule is amended in response to the enactment of the Bankruptcy Threshold Adjustment and Technical Correction Act (the “BTATC Act”), Pub. L. No. 117-151, \_\_\_ Stat. \_\_\_\_\_. The BTATC reinstates the definition of “debtor” for determining eligibility to proceed under subchapter V of chapter 11 that was in effect from March 27, 2020, through March 27, 2022, under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281, as amended. Subdivision (a) of the rule is amended to reflect that change. This Interim Rule will terminate two years after the date of enactment of the BTATC, unless the Act is extended.

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**RULE 1074-1. Representation of Corporations, Partnerships, Limited Liability Companies, Trusts, Associations, and Other Legal Entities.**

Other than at meetings of creditors held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), corporations, including corporate creditors, partnerships, limited liability companies, trusts, associations, and other legal entities shall be represented in Court proceedings by an attorney. Such entities are not required to retain attorneys to file proofs of claim, reaffirmation agreements or stipulations to modify stay.

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Related Authority:  
28 U.S.C. § 1654

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## **PART II**

**RULE 2002-1. Notice to Creditors and Other Parties in Interest.**

**(a) Duty to Provide Notice.** Unless otherwise directed in these rules, or by the Court, notices shall be provided as set forth in Mont. LBR 9013-1.

**(b) Chapter 12 and 13 Plans.** The debtor or debtor’s counsel shall be responsible to serve copies of Chapter 12 or 13 Plans or Amended Plans on all creditors and other parties in interest, and to file a certification of service listing the names and addresses of all parties who were served.

**(c) Method of Service.** Notices and documents required to be sent by a party, other than the Clerk, shall be served through CM/ECF to authorized users, and by mailing (as defined in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9001(8)) to any person not authorized to use CM/ECF, unless such person has consented by notification to the Clerk that such person requests notification by a specified type of electronic transmission pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9036.

**(d) Certification of Service.** Any certificate of service must fulfill the requirements set forth in Mont. LBR 9013-1(d)(2). The certificate of service does not need to include any person who is

notified through CM/ECF, as such person is identified on the notice of electronic filing generated through CM/ECF.

RULE 2002-2. Requests for Special Notice.

Any creditor or other party in interest may request special notice and the addition of its name to the master mailing list in a bankruptcy case by using Mont. LBF 23, or any similar request form.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(a) and (g), 3015(d), 9001(8) and 9010

Comment:

Persons to be served with a Request for Special Notice include the debtor, all creditors, the trustee, and the Office of the U.S. Trustee.

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RULE 2002-3. Notice to United States and Montana State Agencies.

Notices required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(j) and to agencies of the United States and the State of Montana listed in the schedules of creditors or mailing matrix shall be served at the addresses maintained on the Court's website. In addition to notices required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(j) and to agencies of the United States and the State of Montana listed in the schedules of creditors or mailing matrix, copies of notices shall be served, in all cases, to the Montana Department of Revenue and the Office of the United States Trustee at the address maintained on the Court's website.

RULE 2002-4. Notice of Application for Professional Fees and Costs.

If an application for professional fees or reimbursement of expenses exceeds \$1,000.00, except as otherwise provided in Mont. LBR 2016-1, the professional shall file a notice with the Court consistent with Mont. LBR 9013-1 and Mont. LBF 18, providing a notice period of twenty-one (21) days within which a party-in-interest may object. The professional shall serve the notice on the debtor(s) and case trustee, their respective attorneys, the U.S. Trustee, creditors having timely filed proofs of claim, any committee, and entities specifically requesting copies of all notices, and confirm such service has been accomplished by filing a certificate of service.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(a)(6)  
Mont. LBR 2016-1, 9013-1

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RULE 2003-1. Scheduling of Creditors' Meetings, Bankruptcy Information Sheet, and Debtor Declaration Sheet.

The U. S. Trustee shall schedule creditor meetings pursuant to Rule 2003, Fed. R. Bankr. P. Prior to each individual debtor's § 341 meeting, he or she will be provided and given the opportunity to read the "Bankruptcy Information Sheet" prepared by the Office of the United States Trustee,

which is set forth in LBF 32. Debtors will be asked by trustees at their § 341 meetings whether they have received and reviewed this information sheet. Debtors' counsel shall provide copies of the Bankruptcy Information Sheet (Mont. LBF 32) to their clients prior to their § 341 meetings in order to allow debtors sufficient time to read the same.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 341 and 343  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2003

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RULE 2003-2. Time Limitations of Creditors' Meetings.

The U.S. Trustee, or case trustee, at a meeting of creditors held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), shall have full authority to allocate available time to each meeting scheduled during each time period, place limitations on the time allowed creditors to examine a debtor in order to conclude or adjourn all meetings within the time period scheduled, and to call the docket in such order as appears necessary to facilitate the orderly conduct of meetings.

RULE 2003-3. Attendance and Cooperation at Creditors' Meetings.

(a) **Attendance by Debtor and Debtor's Counsel.** A debtor and debtor's attorneys shall attend the meeting of creditors held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), though a debtor's attorney may arrange for other counsel to attend in his or her absence, subject to proper disclosure being made pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016, and Mont. LBR 2090-4 (c), and subject to debtor's authorization. If debtor appears and debtor's attorney fails to appear, the trustee may, subject to directives from the U.S. Trustee, proceed with the scheduled meeting of creditors. In cases of joint petitions, both debtors must appear.

(b) **Video Conferencing.** A debtor may attend the meeting of creditors by means of video conferencing if they obtain the consent of the Trustee assigned to their case and provide notice to all creditors at least 14 days prior to the scheduled meeting. Proof of service of the mailing of such notice to all creditors shall be filed with the Clerk. Absent the Trustee's consent and notice to all creditors being provided at least 14 days in advance, the Debtor shall appear in person at the location stated on the Notice of 341 meeting.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 341 and 343  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 4002

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RULE 2003-4. Continuance of Creditors' Meetings.

An application seeking the continuance of a creditors' meeting set pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), accompanied by LBF 5-A, shall be made to the case trustee and not to the Court. The case trustee shall grant or deny such application as it deems appropriate. Written application for a continuance shall be in conformity with Mont. LBF 5 and shall be made at least fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled meeting. The case trustee shall file a Notice of Disposition granting or denying the application in conformity with Mont. LBF 5-A which, if the application is granted, shall include the date and time of

the continued meeting. The case trustee shall serve a copy of the disposition on the debtor's attorney or on the debtor if not represented by an attorney. If the application is granted, the debtor or debtor's attorney must notify all creditors and parties in interest of the continuance at least seven (7) days prior to the original date set for the meeting. Such notice shall be in conformity with Mont. LBF 6. Proof of service of the mailing of such notice of continuance shall be filed with the Clerk.

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Comment:

The U.S. Trustee's calendar of dates for creditor meetings held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a) is set generally three months in advance and can be reviewed at the U.S. Trustee's website located at [mtb.uscourts.gov/calendar-hearing-341-dates](http://mtb.uscourts.gov/calendar-hearing-341-dates). The application for continuance form (Mont. LBF 5) must be served upon the case trustee and U.S. Trustee and **should not be filed with the Court**. The notice of continuance form (Mont. LBF 6), if granted, must be served upon all creditors, the case trustee, and the U.S. Trustee.

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#### RULE 2003-5. Debtor Duties.

(a) **Identification.** All debtors are required to bring to § 341(a) meetings of creditors **ORIGINAL** forms of picture identification and proof of social security number. Acceptable forms of *proof of identification* include the following original or certified documents, provided they contain a photograph of the debtor: (1) driver's license; (2) government ID; (3) state picture ID; (4) student ID; (5) U.S. passport; (6) military ID; and (7) resident alien card. Acceptable forms of *proof of social security number* include the following original or certified documents: (1) social security card; (2) medical insurance card; (3) pay stub; (4) W-2 form; (5) IRS form 1099; and (6) Social Security Administration report.

(b) **Cooperation.** In every case, it is the duty of the debtor and debtor's attorney to provide the trustee assigned to such case (and/or the U.S. Trustee, if requested) with copies of those documents and materials specified in Mont. LBF 33, along with a fully completed Mont. LBF 33 (which documents and Form may be sent to trustees via e-mail in .pdf format), at least fourteen (14) days prior to the first date set for the debtor's creditors' meeting held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), unless otherwise agreed to by the trustee, along with such other books, records and documents which the trustee or U.S. Trustee may request. Failure to provide all of these documents or other materials requested by the trustee or the U.S. Trustee, or to cooperate with any inquiry or request made of the debtor, may be grounds for dismissal, conversion or denial of discharge by the Court, upon an appropriate pleading being filed with the Court.

#### RULE 2003-6. Oral Notice of Continuance of Creditors' Meetings.

At the sole discretion of the case trustee, oral notice of a continuance or adjournment may be given at the time of the creditors' meeting held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a). Written notice of the oral continuance of the creditors' meeting shall be filed with the Clerk by the trustee.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2003(e)

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RULE 2003-7. Failure to Appear at Creditors' Meetings.

If a debtor fails to appear at the meeting of creditors scheduled pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), the case may be dismissed or converted by the Court upon notification by the trustee or the U. S. Trustee of debtor's failure to appear (*see* Mont. LBF 7 and 7-A), unless the debtor or the debtor's attorney filed an application for continuance not later than fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled creditors' meeting, as required under Mont. LBR 2003-4 above, and such application was granted by the case Trustee. Failure to timely file an application for continuance may result in the case being dismissed or converted unless the trustee or other party in interest requests that the case remain open or in the present chapter. If one debtor in a joint case fails to appear, the Court may bifurcate the joint case and dismiss or convert the absent debtor's case.

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Comment:

The panel trustee may request that the case remain open or remain in its present chapter and is further allowed to oppose the entry of the debtor's discharge based on failure to appear. 11 U.S.C. §§ 704 and 727. Note also that dismissal on this ground falls within the scope of 11 U.S.C. § 109(g)(1) regarding filing of a subsequent petition.

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RULE 2004-1. Rule 2004 Examinations.

Any party in interest moving the Court for an order allowing the examination of an entity pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2004 shall make such motion in compliance with Mont. LBF 15 and shall provide a form of order in compliance with Mont. LBF 16.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2004 and 2005

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RULE 2014-1. Applications for Employment of Professionals.

All applications to approve the employment of professionals by the trustee, debtor in possession or committee, filed pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2014, in cases under Chapters 7, 11, 12, 13 or 15, shall be in conformity with Mont. LBF 1. Submission of a proposed form of order approving an employment application shall not be necessary.

(a) Absent compelling circumstances, no compensation may be earned by professionals retained by the trustee, debtor in possession or committee until after the filing of the application.

(b) If a Chapter 12 or 13 debtor seeks to employ a real estate agent, the debtor(s) shall either file a fully executed listing agreement with the employment application or file a fully executed listing agreement within seven (7) days after the Court approves the real estate agent's employment.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 326, 327, 329, 330 and 504  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2014, 2016 and 6003

Comments:

No requirement exists under the Fed. R. Bankr. P. or Code for a debtor's attorney to seek approval of employment in a Chapter 7 or 13 case. However, if such attorney seeks compensation as an administrative expense under § 330(a), Mont. LBR 2016-1 applies. *Lamie v. U.S. Trustee*, 540 U.S. 526 (2004) held § 330(a)(1) does not allow compensation to debtors' attorneys from the estate unless they are employed in a Chapter 7 case by the trustee under § 327 with Court approval. Section 329 of the Code applies to an attorney representing a debtor under any chapter of the Code, regardless of whether the attorney applies for compensation under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016.

It should be noted that Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003 now provides that within 21 days after the filing of a petition, the Court shall not grant relief regarding an application under Rule 2014, except to the extent that relief is necessary to avoid immediate and irreparable harm. The Court can make the order approving retroactive to the date of its filing.

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RULE 2014-2. Standard Forms of Attorney Retention Agreements.

(a) **Chapter 7.** All attorneys representing debtors in Chapter 7 are encouraged to use the standard form of Attorney Retention Agreement in conformity with Mont. LBF 3.

(b) **Chapter 13.** All attorneys representing debtors in Chapter 13 cases shall use the standard form of Attorney Retention Agreement in conformity with Mont. LBF 3-A, if they wish to have the presumption of reasonableness of their fees as described in Mont. LBR 2016-1(b).

RULE 2015-1. Trustee's Administrative Expenses.

A Chapter 7 trustee may expend up to \$1,500.00 for administrative expenses to preserve or protect estate assets, and may pay the fees and costs of professionals employed by the trustee or post-petition taxes owed by the estate, if they do not exceed \$1,500.00 in the aggregate per individual or entity, without prior order of the Court, provided preliminary notice is provided to the Office of the United States Trustee, and the trustee shall account for such fees and expenditures in the trustee's final motion for approval of compensation and expenses.

RULE 2015-2. Monthly Operating and Other Reports to the Court and United States Trustee.

All Chapter 11 debtors in possession (or trustees, if applicable) shall electronically file monthly operating reports with the Court, on such forms and in such manner as designated by the U.S. Trustee, on or before the 14<sup>th</sup> day of each month following the month for which such report pertains. Debtors in possession shall also timely file such other periodic reports and summaries of the operation of the debtor's business, including a statement of receipts and disbursements, and such other information as the Court or the U.S. Trustee requires. If the U.S. Trustee files a Notice of Delinquent Monthly Operating Report, in compliance with Mont. LBF 12-A, the Court shall immediately schedule a hearing and require the debtor in possession to show cause why the case should not be dismissed or converted due to the untimely filing of the monthly operating reports. Debtors in possession, or their representative if a corporation or other entity, must personally attend any hearing conducted pursuant to this Local Rule.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 704(a)(8), 1106 and 1107; and 28 U.S.C. § 1930(a)(6)  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2015(a)



Comment:

Additional reporting and informational requirements are imposed upon debtors in possession in small business cases pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1116.

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#### RULE 2016-1. Applications for Compensation of Professionals.

(a) **Applications.** Except for applications for post-petition attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 506(b), or reimbursement of a petitioning creditor's fees in an involuntary case, all applications for fees and costs of professionals filed pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016 in cases under Chapters 7, 11, 12, 13 or 15 shall be in conformity with Mont. LBF 17. No compensation or reimbursement of expenses shall be paid a professional, including from a retainer, until allowed by order of the Court under this Rule. In all Chapter 13 plans, amended plans or modified plans, Debtors' counsel shall estimate the total amount of their attorneys' fees and costs, reflect any retainer paid, and specify the total amount of attorneys' fees and costs to be paid through their clients' plans, in conformity with Mont. LBF 19.

The U.S. Trustee has established "Guidelines for Reviewing Applications for Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses Filed under 11 U.S.C. § 330" (Appendix A to 28 C.F.R. §58). Compliance with the project billing format will only be required upon request of a party-in-interest and will apply only to those fees and costs incurred after such request is made.

Professional fees shall be documented through contemporaneous billing records. Each task shall be itemized separately, identifying the task performed, the amount of time involved, and the fee for each time entry. The Court may deny compensation for tasks which are lumped together in one entry if the cumulative time for those tasks exceeds one hour. Lumping shall be permitted for cumulative tasks which do not exceed one hour. Professionals shall be allowed compensation at the professional's usual hourly rate for reasonable and necessary travel time.

(b) **Presumed Reasonable Fees in Chapter 13.** Absent an objection by a party in interest, fees incurred in a Chapter 13 case in which a plan has been confirmed will be presumed reasonable if the debtor's attorney:

- (1) uses the standard form of Attorney Retention Agreement set forth in Mont. LBF 3-A;
- (2) discloses the terms of compensation pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016(b); and
- (3) seeks compensation for professional services that does not exceed \$6,000.00, and costs that do not exceed \$750.00. An attorney receiving presumptive compensation under this rule may seek additional fees through an application for allowance of additional compensation and, if necessary, a motion to modify a confirmed plan.

(c) **Special Rules for Chapter 11, 12 and 13 Cases.** Unless otherwise approved by the Court, authorization for any professional to receive post-petition payments from the debtor, or from any other sources for the benefit of the debtor, must be sought by written application on proper notice and shall be granted only upon a demonstration of reasonableness and necessity. Unless the Court

orders otherwise, any approved post-petition retainer or payments to professionals must be deposited into a trust account and remain in such account until the Court enters an order allowing removal. Fees in excess of the retainer held by an attorney for a Chapter 12 or 13 debtor must be paid through the Chapter 12 or 13 plan as an administrative expense pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 503(b)(2).

**(d) Fees in Dismissed Cases.** Within 30 days of dismissal of a case, all professionals shall file with the Court a final Rule 2016(b) Disclosure of Compensation, reflecting the total amount of all fees and costs that have been or will be charged to their debtor clients for all services performed through the conclusion of the case. The Court shall retain jurisdiction to order the filing of a formal fee application and to hear and rule on the reasonableness and necessity of all professional fees in dismissed cases prior to the entry of a Final Decree.

**(e) Allowed Expenses.** In addition to a professional's fees and compensation, the following expenses shall be allowed at the actual cost to the professional: postage, long-distance telephone, facsimile charges, computerized legal research, travel-related expenses, and other expenses associated with the professional's representation of the party, provided they are shown to be reasonable and necessary. Photocopy costs shall be presumed reasonable and shall be allowed at the rate of \$.15 per page, unless the professional proves a greater actual cost; provided they are shown to be necessary. Mileage shall be presumed reasonable and shall be allowed at the federal rate provided by the regulations of the Internal Revenue Code for travel by private automobile, unless the professional proves a greater actual cost; provided such mileage is shown to be necessary.

**(f) Claims for Fees by Creditors.** If a creditor wishes to recover reasonable post-petition fees, post-petition costs, or post-petition charges provided for under the agreement upon which the claim arose as a portion of the creditor's allowed claim pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 506(b), the professionals retained by such creditor must file a fee application in accordance with the standards set forth in 11 U.S.C. § 330 and Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016(a). Each application shall also individually explain whether each of the following conditions are satisfied:

- (1) The claim is an allowed secured claim;
- (2) The creditor is over-secured;
- (3) The fees are reasonable considering the following factors: (a) the nature, extent, length, and value of the services rendered; (b) the bankruptcy and non-bankruptcy experience, reputation, and the ability of the lawyers; (c) awards in similar cases; (d) the novelty and difficulty (or lack thereof) of the questions presented; (e) the skill requisite to perform the legal services properly; (f) the customary fee; (g) professional time actually spent; (h) amount involved in potential risk; (i) results of the cases; (j) specialty in which the attorneys may be practicing; (k) fees sought to be applied; and (l) distinction between partner and associates time; (m) costs of comparable services; (n) use (or lack thereof) of paralegals; and (o) duplication of efforts; (p) fees sought in proportion to the claim; and
- (4) The fees are provided for under the agreement.

Reasonable fees and expenses of such professionals may be allowed by the Court as a portion of the creditor's allowed claim. Prepetition fees, prepetition costs, or prepetition charges incurred prior to the date of debtor filing the bankruptcy petition shall be itemized in the creditor's proof of claim. If professional fees and costs do not exceed \$750.00 for the filing of a motion for relief from the automatic stay pursuant to Mont. LBR 4001-1(a), such fees and costs are presumed to be reasonable, and no application will be required.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 330 and 506(b)  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016 and 2017  
Mont. LBR 2002-4

Comment:

In a Chapter 13 case, if the total amount of fees charged by a debtor's attorney exceeds the presumed reasonable fee described in subpart (b) of this rule, a formal fee application should be filed with the Court detailing the total amount of fees and costs charged to the debtor. If Debtors' counsel anticipates that their total attorneys' fees may exceed the presumed reasonable fee set forth in subpart (b) of this Local Rule, they should set forth their hourly rate for services rendered beyond the no-look fee in their Rule 2016 disclosures of compensation (which hourly rate should be the same as set forth in the Montana Chapter 13 Model Retention Agreement, if this is employed by counsel).

All creditors are entitled to request post-petition fees if provided for in the underlying contract. *See Centre Insurance Co. v. SNTL Corp. (In re SNTL Corp.)*, 2009 WL 1758759 (9th Cir. 2009). The Local Rule allowing fees and expenses to a creditor only applies if such creditor seeks reasonable fees and expenses as a portion of the creditor's allowed claim. The Court has no interest in reviewing the fee arrangement or the fees and expenses incurred between the creditor and the professional if the creditor is paying such fees and expenses and is not seeking such fees and expenses as a portion of the creditor's allowed claim. Pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(a)(6), and Mont. LBR 2002-4, if the amount of fees and costs exceed \$1,000, then the debtor, and all parties in interest requesting special notice must be served with the notice of application for professional fees and costs (by using Mont. LBF 18).

The factors identified above were derived from *In the Matter of Lehua Hoopai*, 581 F.3d 1090, 1098 (9th Cir. 2009) and *In re Olson*, 2020 Mont. B.R. 137, 147 (Bankr. D. Mont. 2020).

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RULE 2016-2. Attorney Fees Paid Through Chapter 13 Plans.

Except for prepetition retainers, all of debtor's attorney's fees and costs shall be paid through the Chapter 13 Plan unless otherwise ordered. Debtor's attorney may not receive the payment of fees or the reimbursement of expenses directly from the debtor, or from another party on behalf of the debtor, other than the prepetition retainer, without Court authorization. Court authorization shall also be required in all Chapter 13 cases that are dismissed or converted to another chapter, either before or after plan confirmation, when the total fees and costs exceed those presumed to be reasonable under Mont. LBR 2016-1(b). *See also* Mont. LBR 2016-1(d) with regard to dismissed Chapter 13 cases.

RULE 2090-1. Admission to Practice before the Bankruptcy Court.

(a) **Admission of Attorneys.** Admission to the Bar of this Court is limited to attorneys of good moral character who are members in good standing of the State Bar of Montana. Except as provided herein, the Local Rules of Procedure of the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana, as amended, shall govern the admission of attorneys to practice before the U. S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Montana.

(b) **Attorneys for the United States.** An attorney who is not eligible for admission under Mont. LBR 2090-1(a) but who is a member in good standing of and eligible to practice before the Bar of any United States Court or of the highest court of any state or of any territory or insular possession of the United States, who is of good moral character, may practice in this Court in any matter in which that attorney is employed or retained by the United States or its agencies and is representing the United States or any of its officers. Attorneys permitted to practice in this Court are subject to the jurisdiction of the Court with respect to their conduct to the same extent as members of the Bar of this Court.

(c) **Admission by pro hac vice.** An attorney not eligible for admission under Mont. LBR 2090-1(a) but who is a member in good standing of and eligible to practice before the Bar of any United States Court or of the highest court of any state or of any territory or insular possession of the United States, who is of good moral character, and who has been retained to appear in this Court, may, upon written application to and in the discretion of the Court, be permitted to appear and participate in a particular case or adversary proceeding. Application shall be in accordance with L.R. 83.1(d) of the Local Rules of Procedure for the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana.

(d) **Local Attorney.** The requirement to associate a local attorney admitted to practice before the U. S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Montana as set forth in L.R. 83.1(d)(2) may, on motion, be waived by the Court on a case-by-case basis. If such association is not waived, the local attorney shall be served with copies of all pleadings, shall attend all hearings or trials, shall be continually informed by the attorney admitted by *pro hac vice* of the current status of all negotiations and matters occurring in the case or proceeding, and shall have the local attorney's name, address, telephone and facsimile numbers, and e-mail address on all pleadings.

(e) **Fee.** The nonrefundable fee established for *pro hac vice* admission by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana shall be paid to the Bankruptcy Court at the time the application is

filed.

(f) **Revocation.** The Court may revoke *pro hac vice* admission for cause at any time without a hearing.

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Comment:

Admission *pro hac vice* is limited to the case or adversary proceeding in which the application is filed. If a *pro hac vice* applicant wishes to appear in both a bankruptcy case and any associated adversary proceeding, the applicant must file applications in the bankruptcy case and in any associated adversary proceeding(s) in which the applicant wishes to appear.

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#### Rule 2090-2. Self-Represented Litigants.

(a) **Individual Representation.** Any individual acting without an attorney must appear personally and may not delegate that duty to any other person who is not a member of the bar of this Court. A self-represented person is bound by the Federal Rules and all applicable local rules. Sanctions, including but not limited to entry of default judgment or dismissal with prejudice, may be imposed for failure to comply with Local Rules.

(b) **Representation of a Corporate Entity.** Any entity other than an individual, including but not limited to a corporation, an unincorporated association, a partnership, limited liability company, or a union, may only appear by an attorney.

#### (c) **Agreement with Clerk's Office.**

(1) A self-represented litigant and the Clerk's office may agree to serve each other and file documents via email. The agreement must be in writing, signed by the litigant and a deputy clerk, and filed in the record of the case. The Clerk may add terms and conditions other than those in this rule and may revoke the agreement at any time.

(2) The self-represented litigant shall request to receive and file documents via email by sending a request to the Clerk's office at [mtb\\_ca@mtb.uscourts.gov](mailto:mtb_ca@mtb.uscourts.gov).

(3) Under the agreement:

(A) the self-represented litigant must:

(i) sign all filings by hand;

(ii) attach a certificate of service to each document emailed to the Clerk for filing, listing email to the Clerk as the means of service and citing the agreement; and

(iii) all filings submitted by the self-represented litigant shall be emailed to the Clerk at [mtb\\_ca@mtb.uscourts.gov](mailto:mtb_ca@mtb.uscourts.gov), and shall reference the case name and number in the subject line.

(B) the self-represented litigant need not serve the case trustee or the United States Trustee with documents emailed to the Clerk for filing because the case trustee and the United States Trustee will receive service via ECF when the Clerk files the document. The self-represented litigant is required to serve all other parties-in-interest by first class mail, postage prepaid;

And

(C) the self-represented litigant will receive email service of all orders and documents other parties file in ECF.

(d) **Agreement with Parties.** Instead of or in addition to an agreement under subsection (c), a self-represented litigant and one or more other parties may agree to receive and/or effect service by means other than ECF, pursuant to Fed. R. of Bankr. P. 9036. Any such agreement must be in writing, signed by each party to it, and filed in the record of the case.

RULE 2090-3. Notice of Change of Status.

An attorney who is a member of the Bar of this Court or who has been permitted to practice in this Court under Mont. LBR 2090-1 shall promptly notify the Court of any change in the attorney's status in another jurisdiction, or any occurrence that would change any information provided by the attorney in an application to appear *pro hac vice*, which may make the attorney ineligible for membership in the Bar of this Court or ineligible to practice in this Court.

RULE 2090-4. Attorney Discipline, Suspension and Disbarment.

This Court shall enforce the disciplinary rules set forth in L.R. 83.2 of the Local Rules of Procedure of the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana, as amended, when circumstances warrant discipline in this Court. The reference to "Chief Judge" in the Local Rules of Procedure of the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana, as amended, and as incorporated herein shall mean the Chief Bankruptcy Judge or other bankruptcy judge designated by the Chief Bankruptcy Judge.

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Comment:

According to *Price v. Lehtinen (In re Lehtinen)*, 2009 WL 1119530 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2009), a bankruptcy court has the inherent power to disbar or suspend an attorney from practice, provided appropriate due process is afforded.

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RULE 2090-5. Temporary Co-Counsel and Attorney Withdrawal.

(a) **Withdrawal or Substitution of Attorney for a Debtor.** An attorney representing a debtor may withdraw from any case or proceeding, provided either:

(1) a motion filed in compliance with Mont. LBR 9013-1, with notice, is served on both the attorney's client(s) and on any opposing attorney, allowing the client(s) or opposing attorney to file a response and request a hearing; or

(2) a consent to withdrawal is signed by the attorney and the client(s) and filed with the Court, wherein the debtor, if an individual, specifies that the debtor at the specified address and phone number(s) will appear on the debtor's own behalf; or there is filed with the consent an appearance by a newly retained attorney; or the debtor, if a legal entity, specifies the name, address, phone and facsimile number, and e-mail address of the newly retained and substituting attorney.

If no response and request for hearing are filed within the fourteen (14) day period provided by Mont. LBR 9013-1 in subparagraph (1) above, then the Court may either routinely grant the motion without a hearing or may set the motion for hearing.

If, with the consent to withdrawal, the newly retained and substituting attorney files an appearance identifying the name, address, phone and facsimile number, and e-mail address of the substituting attorney, no hearing is necessary and approval by the Court will be routinely granted. Attorneys commencing employment in the case as newly retained and substituting attorneys for a debtor shall file a statement pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016(b) and otherwise fully comply with Mont. LBR 2016-1 and these rules.

**(b) Withdrawal or Substitution of Other Attorneys.** Notice of withdrawal or substitution of attorneys other than debtor's attorney shall be deemed effective upon filing with the Clerk and shall be served upon all parties to the proceeding, the case trustee, and the U.S. Trustee.

**(c) Temporary Co-Counsel at Creditors' Meetings or Court Hearings.** In the event it becomes necessary for temporary co-counsel to appear on behalf of debtors at a creditors' meeting held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), or in a hearing before the Court, such counsel shall file a statement as required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016(b), outlining such compensation as will be paid to such counsel by the debtors, if any, and the nature and limitations of any legal services to be provided by such temporary counsel. This statement shall be filed prior to the commencement of any legal services and shall be served on the debtor, the trustee, and the U.S. Trustee. At the conclusion of such temporary counsel's services on behalf of the debtors, counsel shall file a "Notice of Withdrawal as Temporary Counsel for Debtor(s); With No Change in Original Attorney for Debtor(s)," in conformity with Mont. LBF 2. Such withdrawal as temporary counsel shall be effective immediately upon filing, without further notice, hearing or order.

**(d) Notice for Removal from Service.** An attorney no longer wishing to receive notices in a case or proceeding may file a notice requesting that such attorney's name be removed from any service list utilized in CM/ECF or in any certificate of service.

**(e) Pro Per Litigants.** If a party without an attorney fails to appear and respond in the case or proceeding after an attorney has withdrawn, defaults and other prejudicial decisions may be entered against such party.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 329 and 504  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2014 and 2016  
Mont. LBR 2090-4

Comment:

Any attorney agreeing to act as temporary counsel for a debtor to attend a creditors' meeting or court hearing on behalf of such debtor must file a declaration of fees pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2016(b), notifying the Court and others that a fee has been paid to such counsel by the debtor (or that a fee will not be paid, if such is the case), and specifying the amount of such fee, if any, and the nature of and any limitations on the legal services to be provided by such temporary counsel. 11 U.S.C. § 504 prohibits any fee sharing between attorneys who are not members of the same firm, so any fee paid to a temporary co-counsel must be paid directly by the debtors. Co-counsel appearing under these circumstances should carefully consider the ethical issues that are attendant upon appearing as co-counsel, as well as the disclosures which should be made by debtor's regular counsel about the use of temporary co-counsel for purposes of appearing with the debtor at the § 341(a) creditors' meeting.

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#### RULE 2090-6. Communications with the Court and *Ex Parte* Motions and Applications.

The Court will not receive and review letters or other communications from attorneys or any parties that do not indicate on their face that copies have been sent to all opposing attorneys or *pro per* litigants. As appropriate, such communications may be transmitted to appropriate parties and attorneys in the case. *Ex Parte* motions or applications for orders will not be granted unless it is indicated in the motion or application that the adverse party or attorney has been advised of the request, unless an emergency exists as set forth in an affidavit submitted under penalty of perjury.

#### RULE 2091-1. Student Practice Rule.

(a) **Purpose.** This Court and the Bar are responsible for providing competent legal services. This rule is adopted to assist practicing attorneys in providing legal services and to encourage law schools to provide clinical instruction in diverse trial work.

#### (b) **Activities.**

(1) An eligible law student may appear in this Court on behalf of any person in any case or adversary proceeding if:

(A) the person on whose behalf the student is appearing has consented in writing to the appearance and the supervising attorney has approved the appearance in writing; and

(B) the supervising attorney is personally present throughout the case or proceeding and is fully responsible for the manner in which the case or proceeding is conducted.

(2) In each case the written consent and approval referred to above shall be filed in the record of the case or proceeding and shall be brought to the attention of the Court.

(c) **Requirements and Limitations.** To proceed under this Rule, the law student must:

(1) be duly enrolled in a law school approved by the American Bar Association;

(2) have completed legal studies amounting to at least two-thirds of the total credit hours



required for graduation;

(3) be certified by the Dean or designate of the student's law school as being of good moral character and competent legal ability and as being adequately trained to perform as a legal intern;

(4) be introduced to the Court by a member of the Bar of this Court;

(5) neither ask for nor receive any compensation or remuneration of any kind from the person on whose behalf the student renders services; but this shall not prevent an attorney employer, law school, or governmental agency from paying compensation to the eligible law student, nor shall it prevent any of the foregoing from making such charges for its services as it may otherwise properly require; and

(6) certify in writing that the student has read and is familiar with and will abide by the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct and the Montana Rules of Professional Conduct.

(d) **Certification.** The certification of a student by the Law School Dean or designate:

(1) shall be filed with the Clerk of Court, and, unless it is sooner withdrawn, shall remain in effect for twelve (12) months after it is filed, or until the student's admission to any bar, whichever occurs first. Under exceptional circumstances, the Dean or designate may renew the certification for one more twelve (12) month period. Law school graduates are eligible to practice under this Rule until the results of the first bar examination after their certification under this Rule are announced;

(2) may be withdrawn by the Dean or designate at any time by mailing a notice to that effect to the Clerk of Court, who shall forthwith mail copies thereof to the student and the supervising attorney; and

(3) may be terminated by this Court at any time without notice or hearing and without any showing of cause.

(e) **Supervision.** The attorney under whose supervision an eligible law student participates in any of the activities permitted by this Rule shall:

(1) be a member in good standing of the Bar of this Court;

(2) assume personal professional responsibility for the student's guidance in any work undertaken and for supervising the quality of the student's work; and

(3) assist and counsel the law student in the activities mentioned in these Rules and review such activities with such student to ensure the proper practical training of the student and the protection of the client.

(f) **Pro Per Representation.** Nothing contained in this rule shall affect the right of any person who is not admitted to practice law to do anything that person might lawfully have done prior to the adoption of this Rule.

### PART III

RULE 3001-1. Reserved.

RULE 3001-2. Attachments to Proof of Claim.

A proof of claim shall include those documents required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3001(c) and (d); and an itemized summary of the amount of the claim showing, as of the date of the commencement of the debtor's bankruptcy case, the unpaid principal balance, all accrued interest, late charges, and any other charges or amounts that are included in creditor's calculation of the amount of the claim; the rate of contract or other interest; and the per diem interest accrual as of the date of the commencement of the case.

RULE 3002-1. Late Filed Claims in Chapter 12 and 13 Cases.

Late filed proofs of claim in Chapter 12 or 13 cases shall be deemed disallowed, without need for formal objection by the trustee or a hearing, if the trustee sends a notice to the late filing creditor using Mont. LBF 21. If a creditor files a response and requests a hearing within thirty (30) days of the date of the notice, then the creditor shall notice the contested matter for hearing pursuant to Mont. LBR 9013-1, except that such notice shall provide that the hearing on the objection and response shall be scheduled at least twenty-one (21) days after the date of the creditor's response and request for hearing. If the creditor fails to file a written response to the objection to the late filed claim within thirty (30) days of the date of the notice provided by Mont. LBF 21, the failure to respond shall be deemed an admission that the objection should be sustained by the Court without further notice or hearing. The trustee shall not pay on a claim filed after the claims bar deadlines described in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3002 or 3004, without a Court order obtained by the claimant allowing such claim.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. § 502(b)(9)  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3002(c) and 3007

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RULE 3003-1. Proofs of Claim and Interest in Chapter 11 Cases.

(a) **Time to file.** Pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3003(c)(3) and except as provided in subdivision (b) of this rule, the last day to file proofs of claim in a Chapter 11 case shall be ninety (90) days from the first date set for a § 341(a) meeting of creditors. A claim of a governmental unit shall be filed before one hundred eighty (180) days after the date of the order for relief, except as otherwise provided in the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure. The Clerk shall notify all creditors and parties in interest of such bar date.

(b) **Extension.** The Court may, for cause shown, extend the deadline upon appropriate motion, notice, and hearing. If the § 341(a) meeting notice to creditors has already been sent by the Clerk's office, the notification to creditors of an extension of deadline to file claims will be the responsibility of the debtor in possession and its counsel.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002, 3002 and 3003

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#### RULE 3007-1. Objections to Proofs of Claim.

Except as provided in Mont. LBR 3002-1 for late filed claims in Chapter 12 or 13 cases, a trustee, debtor, or other party in interest may file an objection to a creditor's proof of claim in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3007, by using Mont. LBF 28. Objections to duplicate claims will be summarily granted by the Court without notice or hearing.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 102(1)(B)(i) and 9007  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3007

#### Comment:

Only the creditor at the address noted on the filed proof of claim and the case trustee must be served with the objection. If a federally insured depository institution is involved the service must be sent by certified mail to the officer of the institution unless the institution has appeared through an attorney, the Court orders otherwise after initial certified service, or the institution waives in writing the certified mail requirement by designating an officer to receive service.

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#### RULE 3011-1. Unclaimed Funds

A party seeking disbursement of unclaimed funds that have been deposited with the Clerk must file an application substantially conforming to the Official Form 1340. Upon entry of an Order granting an Application for Unclaimed Funds, the Clerk's office shall wait 14 days to make the associated disbursement.

#### RULE 3012-1. Valuation of Allowed Secured Claims in Chapter 11, 12 or 13.

A motion for valuation of security shall be filed in conformance with LBF 22.

#### RULE 3015-1. Objections to Confirmation or Modification of Chapter 12 or 13 Plans.

If the trustee has no objection to confirmation of a Chapter 12 or 13 plan, or modification of a confirmed plan the trustee shall file a report with the Court, serving a copy on the debtor, recommending plan confirmation or approval of any modification to a confirmed plan. The Court may, without further notice or hearing, grant plan confirmation or approval of any modification of a confirmed plan if no timely objections are filed. The Clerk shall include the date objections to plan confirmation are due in the Notice of Chapter 13 Bankruptcy Case and Meeting of Creditors, and debtor's attorney shall provide notice for objections to motions to modify confirmed plans as

specified in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3015(h) unless the trustee is proposing a modification and then the trustee will provide notice for objections.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 1223, 1224, 1225, 1229, 1323, 1324, 1325 and 1329  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3015(f) and (g)  
Mont. LBR 2002-1(b)

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RULE 3015-2. Amendment of Plans.

(a) **Notice of Intent to Amend Plan.** If timely objections have been made prior to the confirmation hearing in a chapter 12 or 13 case, the Debtor may file a Notice of Intent to Amend Plan (“Notice of Intent”) in conformity with Mont. LBF 41. Following the filing of a Notice of Intent, the hearing on confirmation shall be continued to afford debtor the opportunity to file an amended plan, unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The debtor shall file the Notice of Intent at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled hearing on confirmation. Prior to filing the Notice of Intent, the debtor shall contact the Trustee and advise them of their intent to file a further amended plan. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, all amended plans shall be filed no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the Court’s next regularly scheduled hearing date in the division in which the Debtor’s case is pending, which shall also be the date set for the hearing on confirmation of Debtor’s amended plan. Any objections to the Debtor’s amended plan shall be filed no later than seven (7) days prior to the hearing on confirmation of Debtor’s amended plan.

(b) **Plan Modification.** After confirmation of a plan, the proponent of a modified chapter 13 plan shall file a motion to modify plan using Mont. LBF 19-A and serve a copy of the motion and plan on the debtor(s) and case trustee, their respective attorneys, the U.S. Trustee, creditors having timely filed proofs of claim, and entities specifically requesting copies of all notices, and confirm such service has been accomplished by filing a certificate of service.

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Related Authority:  
Mont. LBR 9013-1(e)

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RULE 3015-3. Tax Returns in Chapter 12 or 13 Cases.

During each year of the plan after confirmation, the debtor shall provide: (1) a copy of the debtor’s federal income tax return; (2) any request for extension of the deadline for filing a return; and (3) Forms W-2 and 1099, to the Chapter 12 or 13 trustee within thirty (30) days after the return or document is filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

RULE 3017-1. Objections to Chapter 11 Disclosure Statements and Plans.

Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, objections to the disclosure statement or plan in a Chapter 11 case shall be filed and served not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing on such statement or plan. Service of the objection shall be made on any party in interest requesting notice.

The Clerk shall include the date objections are due in the notice of the hearing on the disclosure statement or plan.

**RULE 3017-2. Amendments to Subchapter V Plans Prior to Confirmation Hearing to Address Plan Objections.**

If timely objections have been made prior to the confirmation hearing in a Chapter 11, Subchapter V case, the Debtor may file a Notice of Intent to Amend Plan (“Notice of Intent”) in conformity with Mont. LBF 41. Following the filing of a Notice of Intent, the hearing on confirmation shall be continued to afford debtor the opportunity to file an amended plan, unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The debtor shall file the Notice of Intent at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled hearing on confirmation. Prior to filing the Notice of Intent, the debtor shall contact the Trustee and advise them of their intent to file a further amended plan. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, all amended plans shall be filed no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the Court’s next regularly scheduled hearing date in the division in which the Debtor’s case is pending, which shall also be the date set for the hearing on confirmation of Debtor’s amended plan. Any objections to the Debtor’s amended plan shall be filed no later than seven (7) days prior to the hearing on confirmation of Debtor’s amended plan.

**RULE 3017-3. Report of Administrative Expenses in Chapter 11 Cases.**

The proponent of a plan of reorganization in a Chapter 11 case shall file an estimate of administrative expenses not less than seven (7) days prior to the date fixed for the hearing on confirmation of the plan. Such administrative expenses shall include, but are not limited to, the debtor’s attorney’s fees, accountant’s fees, any other professional’s fees, and the fees owing to the Clerk of Court and the U. S. Trustee.

**RULE 3018-1. Chapter 11 Ballots-Voting on Plans.**

All ballots provided for voting on a proposed chapter 11 plan shall conform substantially to Official Form 314 and indicate the return address of the plan proponent. All ballots cast regarding a proposed chapter 11 plan shall be returned to the plan proponent. Not less than three (3) days prior to the hearing on confirmation, the plan proponent shall file the ballots and a written summary of the ballots cast and serve a copy of the summary on the debtor, the United States Trustee, any committee appointed pursuant to the Bankruptcy Code or their authorized agents, and any party that has filed an objection to confirmation or has requested notice. The summary shall contain a separate listing of acceptances and rejections and include the following information for each class of creditors:

- (a) The name of each creditor filing an acceptance or rejection, the dollar amount of each claim, and whether the debtor has objection to such claim;
- (b) The total dollar amount and number of all allowed claims voted;
- (c) The percentage of acceptances with respect to the total dollar amount of all claims; and

(d) The percentage of acceptances with respect to the total number of claims.

RULE 3020-1. Quarterly Fees in Chapter 11 Cases.

In accordance with 11 U.S.C. § 1129(a)(12), the Court shall not confirm a Chapter 11 plan unless the U. S. Trustee notifies the Court by filing Mont. LBF 12 that all fees required by 28 U.S.C. § 1930 have been paid or will be paid on or before the effective date of the plan. If the U.S. Trustee files a Notice of Delinquent Quarterly Fees, in compliance with Mont. LBF 12-B, the Court shall immediately schedule a hearing and require the debtor in possession to show cause why the case should not be dismissed or converted due to the nonpayment of quarterly fees. Debtors in possession, or their representative if a corporation or other entity, must personally attend any hearing conducted pursuant to this Local Rule.

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Related Authority:  
28 U.S.C. §§ 1112(b)(4)(K) 1930(a)(6)  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2015(a)

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RULE 3022-1. Chapter 11 Case Closings.

To facilitate the closing of Chapter 11 cases in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3022, the debtor in possession (or trustee) shall file a Motion for Final Decree within sixty (60) days of the Order of Confirmation of the plan in conformity with Mont. LBF 13. The motion shall be filed and served on all creditors. The motion may be immediately granted by the Court, as provided in Mont. LBR 9013-1(g)(2)(Y). Beginning sixty (60) days after confirmation of the plan and then every thirty (30) days thereafter, the debtor in possession shall file a Status Report with the Court explaining the failure to file a Motion for Final Decree in accordance with the terms of this rule. Failure to file such monthly reports shall subject the case to summary dismissal or conversion by the Court, without further notice or hearing. In the case of individual debtors, the case will remain open until completion of all payments provided for in the debtor's plan, unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 350(a); 1141(d)(5)

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Comment:

Section 28 U.S.C. § 1930(a)(6) was amended on January 27, 1996, to provide that quarterly fees due the U.S. Trustee in a Chapter 11 case are payable after confirmation of a plan until the case is closed by the Court, and interest accrues on delinquent quarterly fees until paid.

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## PART IV

RULE 4001-1. Motions to Modify Stay.

(a) **Motion.** A motion to modify stay under 11 U.S.C. § 362 shall be made in conformity with

Mont. LBF 8. Consents to the motion shall conform to Mont. LBF 9 and 9-A. Copies, or excerpts, of security documents and proof of perfection do not need be attached to a motion to modify stay if a proof of claim has been filed on or before the motion to modify. Instead, copies, or excerpts, of security documents and proof of perfection should be attached to the proof of claim filed on or before the motion to modify, and reference to such proof of claim shall be made in the motion to modify. Evidence of proof of the moving party's standing to file the motion shall be attached to the motion. To avoid the need for a preliminary telephonic hearing, a creditor may, in its motion to modify stay, consent to waiver of the 30-day rule set forth in 11 U.S.C. § 362(e).

**(b) Impact of Post-petition Invoicing on Content of Motion and Specificity Required in Both Motion and Response to Motion.**

(1) A secured creditor seeking relief from the automatic stay based upon allegations of a post-petition payment default by a debtor must specify that it seeks relief based on the debtor's payment default and articulate with specificity the amount and date of the payments the debtor allegedly failed to make, and attest that it responded promptly and thoroughly to the trustee or to the debtor's reasonable requests for account information. In the event the secured creditor has not provided the debtor with the account information required by this rule, the Court may deny the secured creditor's request for recovery of attorney's fees or costs in connection with the motion, regardless of the terms of its agreement with the debtor; and the Court may order the secured creditor to pay the debtor's reasonable attorney's fees, if any, for responding to the motion.

(2) A debtor opposing relief from stay in connection with a debt within the scope of this rule shall state with specificity which allegations of the creditor's motion the debtor disputes and must append to the response either an affidavit of the debtor or copies of records showing proof of payment on the account, and articulate the debtor's legal and factual basis for asserting that the creditor is not entitled to relief from stay. The debtor's failure to meet these requirements may constitute cause for the Court to deny the debtor's request for additional time and/or for the Court to consider the motion unopposed.

(3) When a Chapter 13 debtor's objection to a motion for relief from stay contests, with specificity, either the payment default or the creditor's application of payments, the creditor shall immediately transmit the debtor's payment history and a detailed accounting of how the debtor's payments were applied to the outstanding obligation to counsel for the debtor (or to the debtor directly, if not represented by counsel), by electronic or facsimile means, to ensure that the debtor has a reasonable opportunity to review this data prior to the hearing on the motion for relief from stay.

**(c) Response and Hearing.** If a debtor, trustee, or party in interest files a response, then a hearing shall be noticed pursuant to Mont. LBR 9013-1. In the event such scheduled hearing date is thirty (30) days beyond the date of the motion to modify, then a preliminary hearing within such thirty (30) day period will be scheduled by the responding party after such party contacts the Clerk of Court to confirm the preliminary telephone hearing date and time, which shall be set forth in the response. The response and request for hearing must include the legal and factual basis for the objection and as appropriate the following:

- (1) If valuation of property is an issue, the estimation of value asserted by the respondent.
- (2) If the existence, validity, or any other aspect of the notes or security documents is an issue, such objections must be stated with particularity.
- (3) If the debtor proposes to offer adequate protection, it must state with specificity the adequate protection offered to be provided (e.g., periodic payments, substitute liens, or other indubitable equivalents).
- (4) If the debtor asserts that the debtor has made or attempted to make all delinquent payments to the moving creditor, but the creditor has refused to accept such payments, the debtor shall state with specificity this fact, and state the dates of such payments, and shall provide a copy of the check or checks the debtor alleges were sent to but refused by the moving creditor.
- (5) If the moving creditor has requested that the fourteen (14) day stay provided for in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 4001(a)(3) be waived, the debtor shall state any objection the debtor may have to the Court's order becoming effective immediately.

**(d) Stipulation to Modify Stay.** A stipulation to modify stay, filed in compliance with Mont. LBF 8-B, joined by the creditor, debtor and trustee, if any, may be filed without fee, together with a proposed order, and an order shall be promptly issued without hearing. A creditor negotiating and filing such a stipulation is not required to retain an attorney. A form of proposed order in compliance with Mont. LBF 8-C shall accompany any Stipulation to Modify Stay.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. § 362, 1201 and 1301

Comment:

In a Chapter 7, 12 or 13 case, a motion to modify stay should be served upon the debtor, debtor's attorney, the trustee, if any, the U.S. Trustee, and any entity requesting special notice. In a Chapter 9 or 11 case, a motion to modify stay should be served upon all of the above entities and any committee appointed under the Code or its authorized agent, or if no committee has been appointed, the creditors listed under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007(d). A stipulation to modify stay only needs to be served upon the parties signing the stipulation. Debtor's and trustee's consents to modify only need to be filed and not be served upon any other entity. Note that pursuant to Rules 7004(b)(9), 7004(g) and 9014(b), Fed. R. Bankr. P., all motions directed to a debtor, in addition to being served upon counsel for the debtor, must be served upon the debtor by mailing a copy of the motion "to the debtor at the address shown in the petition or to such other address as the debtor may designate in a filed writing." Such service by mail can be accomplished pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9001(8), but the debtor must be served as well as his or her counsel. Proof of service upon the debtor is required. It will now be incumbent upon a creditor moving for stay relief to attach to its motion evidence of its standing to file the motion, such as an assignment from the original note holder. Too often the mortgage and note are in the name of one party while the moving party is a different party, and there is nothing appearing within the motion connecting the two together.

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RULE 4001-2. Orders Granting Modification of Stay.

If, at any time during the pendency of a Chapter 13 case, an order modifying the stay is entered, no distributions will be made under the Chapter 13 plan to the creditor obtaining modification of the stay until such time as the creditor files an amended proof of claim, or either the creditor or debtor move for or stipulate to specific modification from the Court.

RULE 4001-3. Scope and Content of Account Information and Statements Secured Creditors May Provide to Debtors Post-petition.

(a) **Scope and Purpose.** The purpose of this rule is to allow the routine flow of information from secured creditors to debtors to continue post-petition with respect to secured loans, in each bankruptcy case where the debtor retains possession of the collateral and continues to make regular installment payments directly to the secured creditor; and to direct that secured creditors provide debtors with a contact point so that debtors can obtain specific information on the status of their loans, as needed.

It is also the purpose of this rule to make clear that, as long as a creditor complies with this rule in furnishing account information to the debtor, such good faith attempts at compliance will not expose the secured creditor to claims of violating the automatic stay.

This rule applies in Chapters 7, 12 and 13; applies only to consumer loan relationships; and applies as long as the debtor is in bankruptcy and protected by the automatic stay. However, for cause shown and after proper notice and a hearing, the Court may direct parties to comply with this rule with regard to commercial loans, or in Chapter 11.

(b) **Debts Secured by a Mortgage on Real Property.**

(1) For purposes of this subpart, the term “Mortgage Creditor” may include any creditor that has a claim secured by a mortgage on real property.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3) below, the Mortgage Creditor may provide monthly statements to all Chapter 12 and Chapter 13 debtors who have indicated an intent to retain the Mortgage Creditor’s collateral in their plan, and to all Chapter 7 debtors who have indicated an intent to retain the Mortgage Creditor’s collateral in their statement of intention which has been served on the Mortgage Creditor. Monthly statements shall contain at least the following information concerning post-petition mortgage payments to be made directly to the mortgagee (“outside the plan”):

- (A) the date of the statement and the date the next payment is due;
- (B) the amount of the current monthly payment;
- (C) the portion of the payment attributable to escrow, if any;
- (D) the post-petition amount past due, if any, and from what date;
- (E) any outstanding post-petition late charges;
- (F) the amount and date of receipt of all payments received since the date of the last statement;

- (G) a telephone number and contact information that the debtor or the debtor's attorney may use to obtain reasonably prompt information regarding the loan and recent transactions; and
- (H) the proper payment address.

(3) No monthly statement shall be required in a Chapter 12 or Chapter 13 where post-petition mortgage payments are to be made to the trustee ("through the plan"). If a Mortgage Creditor sends a monthly statement to a debtor in such a case which complies with subsection (d)(2) below, the Mortgage Creditor is entitled to the protections of subsection (d)(2).

(4) The Mortgage Creditor shall provide any of the following information to the debtor upon the reasonable written request of the debtor:

- (A) the principal balance of the loan;
- (B) the original maturity date;
- (C) the current interest rate;
- (D) the current escrow balance, if any;
- (E) the interest paid year to date;
- (F) the property taxes paid year to date, if any; and/or
- (G) any other amounts due, including charges paid by lender for taxes, insurance, attorney's fees, or other expense, the nature of the expense, and the date of the payment.

**(c) Other Secured Debts.** For the purposes of this subpart, the term "creditor" shall include any creditor that holds a claim secured by personal property, and lessors for assumed leases for personal property, for which monthly statements are provided under non-bankruptcy law or practice. For all debts secured by property other than as provided by for subpart (b)(2) above, and for assumed leases for personal property, the creditor shall provide monthly statements to the debtors in the following manner:

(1) If the case was filed under Chapter 12 or 13 and the secured debt is paid entirely through the plan, the creditor is under no obligation to send a monthly statement to the debtor directly. However, if a creditor or lessor sends a monthly statement which complies with this rule to the debtor in such a case, then the creditor shall be entitled to the protection described in subsection (d)(2), below.

(2) If the case was filed under Chapter 7, or was filed under Chapter 12 or 13 and the secured debt is not paid entirely through the plan, and the creditor sent monthly statements to the debtor prior to the bankruptcy petition, the creditor shall send monthly statements which contain the same information as, and are similar to, the monthly statements that the creditor sent to the debtor before the bankruptcy was filed.

(3) If the case was filed under Chapter 7, or was filed under Chapter 12 or 13 and the secured debt is not paid entirely through the plan, and the creditor provided a coupon book or other similar set of invoices to the debtor, the creditor shall send to the debtor and the

debtor's attorney a default letter setting forth the post-petition arrearages, upon any perceived or actual default by the debtor, and before taking any steps to modify the automatic stay.

**(d) Forms of Communication; Issuance of Monthly Statements Do Not Violate the Automatic Stay.**

(1) For the purposes of this rule, creditors shall be considered to have sent the requisite documents or monthly statements to the debtor when the creditor has placed the required document in any form of communication which in the usual course would result in the debtor receiving said document, to the address that the debtor last provided to the creditor by agreement between the debtor and the creditor. Said communication may be transmitted via electronic mail, facsimile, United States Postal Service, commercial communications carrier, or such other mode as is mutually acceptable to the parties.

(2) Creditors who provide account information or monthly statements under subparts (b) or (c) above shall not be found to have violated the automatic stay by doing so. Secured creditors may contact the debtors about the status of insurance coverage on property that is collateral for the creditor's claim, may respond to inquiries and requests or information about the account from debtors, and may send the debtor statements, payment coupons, or other correspondence that the creditor sends to its non-debtor customers, without violating the automatic stay, provided none of these communications includes an attempt to collect the debt.

**(e) Motions to Compel a Creditor to Issue Monthly Statements that Comply with this Rule.**

(1) A debtor may file a Motion to Compel Creditor to Issue Monthly Statements in Compliance with Mont. LBR 4001-3 (a "Motion to Compel") if the debtor can offer evidence that the information in sections (b), (c), or (d) is necessary. Before filing such a Motion to Compel, the debtor must make good faith attempts to contact the creditor to determine whether the information is available. The Motion must include a description of the debtor's good faith attempts taken prior to filing the Motion, any response(s) from the creditor, and the harm the debtor has suffered, if any, as a result of the creditor's failure to provide appropriate monthly statements.

(2) If a creditor's regular billing system can provide a statement to a debtor that substantially complies with this rule but does not fully conform to all of its requirements, the creditor may request that the debtor accept such statements, and the debtor may do so. If the debtor declines to accept the non-conforming statements, a creditor may file a motion, on notice to the debtor and debtor's attorney, seeking a declaration of the Court that cause exists to allow such non-conforming statements to satisfy the creditor's obligations under this rule. For cause shown, the Court may grant a waiver for purposes of a single case or multiple cases, and for either a limited or unlimited period of time. No waiver will be granted, however, unless the proffered statement substantially complies with this rule and the creditor has demonstrated that it would be an undue hardship for it to strictly comply with this rule.

RULE 4002-1. Property in Need of Attention or Protection, Debtors with Special Needs, Privacy Ombudsmen, Domestic Support Obligations, and Other Documentation.

(a) **Inventory or Equipment.** When a stock of goods or inventory, or business equipment is scheduled, the debtor shall, immediately after the general description thereof, provide a detailed list of such inventory and business equipment and the respective value, append a brief explanation of its exact location, the name and address of the custodian thereof, the protection being given such property, and the amount of fire and theft insurance, if any, and state whether prompt additional attention or protection is necessary.

(b) **Need for Immediate Action.** If a stock of goods includes perishables, or if property or the business premises otherwise requires immediate attention or protection, the debtor or the debtor's attorney, when relief is ordered under Chapters 7, 12 or 13, or when a trustee is appointed under Chapter 11, shall notify the trustee of the need for immediate action. Notification shall be by personal communication or by telephone.

(c) **Debtors with Special Needs.** If a debtor has special needs, such as a hearing impairment which would require the services of a sign language interpreter, the debtor or debtor's counsel shall make the Court and the U.S. Trustee aware of such circumstances as soon as possible after the commencement of the case.

(d) **Consumer Privacy Ombudsman.** If it appears that a case may involve the sale or lease of personally identifiable information, as that term is defined in 11 U.S.C. § 101(41A), or if the appointment of a consumer privacy ombudsman under 11 U.S.C. § 332 may be required in a case, the debtor or its attorney shall immediately upon the filing of the case notify the Court and the U.S. Trustee.

(e) **Domestic Support Obligations.** Within fourteen (14) days of commencing a bankruptcy case, all individual debtors shall file a "Statement of Domestic Support Obligation(s)," in conformity with Mont. LBF 30.

(f) **Documentation Required by § 521.** In order to facilitate the filing of the documents required by 11 U.S.C. § 521, debtors shall file a form in substantial compliance with Mont. LBF 37.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 101(14A), 332 and 521  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 4002  
Mont. LBR 2003-3

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RULE 4002-2. Annual Financial Reports in Chapter 12 Cases.

Every debtor whose Chapter 12 case has not been closed by the Court prior to the end of each calendar year shall prepare and serve on the trustee annually the following materials: an annual summary of operations, using the report form prescribed by the trustee; an annual financial statement; and a balance sheet. The latter two documents may be copies of financial statements and balance sheets provided to lenders by the debtor.

RULE 4002-3. Plan Payments in Chapter 12 Cases.

All plan payments made by the debtor in possession to the Chapter 12 trustee shall be paid by cashier's check or certified check at least fourteen (14) days prior to the payment dates specified in the debtor's plan, or at least twenty-eight (28) days prior to such dates if paid by the debtor's personal check.

RULE 4002-4. Estimate of Administrative Expenses in Chapter 12 Cases.

The debtor shall file an estimate of administrative expenses, containing the detail required in Mont. LBR 3017-2, at least fourteen (14) days before the confirmation hearing.

RULE 4002-5. Monthly Financial Reports in Chapter 13 Cases.

A monthly financial report shall be filed by every debtor engaged in business within fourteen (14) days following the end of each calendar month reflecting the debtor's income and expenses, for purposes of establishing the debtor's projected disposable income.

RULE 4002-6. Filing of Income Documentation for Two Months Prior to Bankruptcy and Turnover of Income Documentation for Six Months to Chapter 13 Trustee.

At least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting of creditors held pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a), every individual debtor shall file with the Court copies of all payment advices and proof of income from all other sources received by the debtor for the two (2) month period ending on the last day of the calendar month immediately preceding the date of the commencement of the case. Individual debtors shall provide such additional proof of income and expenses to the U.S. Trustee as may be requested. In all Chapter 13 cases, individual debtors shall turn over to the standing trustee income documentation for the six (6) month period ending on the last day of the calendar month immediately preceding the date of the commencement of the case.

RULE 4002-7. Turnover of Income Tax Returns during Pendency of Case.

Every Chapter 11, 12 or 13 debtor shall turn over to the trustee assigned to its case (or to the U.S. Trustee in the case of a Chapter 11 debtor in possession), at the same time the same are filed with the appropriate taxing authorities, copies of all state and federal income tax returns, together with all schedules, for each year ending while the case is pending before the Bankruptcy Court.

RULE 4003-1. Claims of Exemptions.

A debtor shall claim exemptions, as required by 11 U.S.C. § 522, on Schedule C, pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007. The Montana Code Annotated section or other authority under which each exemption is claimed, and each item of property claimed as exempt, together with the value of each such item, shall be described with specificity, without reference to other schedules.

RULE 4003-2. Homestead Exemptions.

If a homestead exemption is claimed by the debtor, the date and place of recordation of the homestead declaration shall be included in either Schedule A or Schedule C.

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Related Authority:  
Montana Code Annotated §§ 70-32-105, 106 and 107  
Mont. LBR 2003-3, and Mont. LBF 33

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RULE 4003-3. Objections to Claims of Exemption.

A trustee or other party in interest may file an objection to a debtor's claim of exemption in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 4003(b), by using Mont. LBF 29. The objection shall include a legal and factual basis for the objection. The objection to a debtor's claim of exemption must be served upon the debtor, debtor's attorney, and the trustee, if any.

RULE 4003-4. Motions for Avoidance of Liens.

A debtor shall move to avoid liens pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 522(f)(1) by filing Mont. LBF 24, and by serving the creditor whose lien is subject to avoidance, or the creditor's attorney and the trustee, if any.

RULE 4004-1. Procedures for Entry of Discharge in Chapter 11 Subchapter V, 12 and 13 Cases.

In any case in which entry of a debtor's discharge is dependent on completion of plan payments, a discharge shall not be entered until the following requirements are met:

**(a) Chapter 11, Subchapter V.**

**(1) Confirmation pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1191(a).** In a Chapter 11, Subchapter V case with a plan confirmed pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1191(a), upon entry of the confirmation order, the Clerk shall enter Debtor's discharge on the official form.

**(2) Confirmation pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1191(b).** In a Chapter 11, Subchapter V case with a plan confirmed pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 1191(b), upon completion of payments required under the confirmed plan, the debtor shall file a Motion for Entry of Discharge; and Attorney Certification, in support thereof, in compliance with Mont. LBF 42.

**(b) Chapter 12.** Upon completion of a Chapter 12 plan, the debtor shall file a Motion for Entry of Discharge; and Attorney Certification, and an Affidavit in support thereof, in compliance with Mont. LBF 38 and 38-A.

**(c) Chapter 13.** Upon completion of a Chapter 13 plan, the debtor shall file a Motion for Entry of Discharge; and Attorney Certification, and an Affidavit in support thereof, in compliance with Mont. LBF 39 and 39-A.

(d) **Motion for Entry of Discharge.** In the Ch. 12 and 13 Motion for Entry of Discharge and Affidavit, the debtor shall certify that all payments under the plan have been completed and to the extent applicable:

(1) All domestic support obligations payable under any judicial or administrative order, or required by statute, have been paid, including but not limited to:

(A) child support and spousal maintenance and alimony that were due through the date of the motion, including all payments due under the confirmed plan for amounts due before the bankruptcy petition was filed; and

(B) any domestic support obligations that arose after the filing of the bankruptcy petition;

(2) The debtor has:

(A) not claimed a homestead exemption in excess of the cap described in 11 U.S.C. §522(q)(1); or

(B) claimed a homestead exemption in excess of the cap but there is no proceeding pending in which the debtor may be found guilty of a felony of the kind described in 11 U.S.C. § 522(q)(1)(A) or liable for a debt of the kind described in 11 U.S.C. § 522(q)(1)(B); and

(3) In a Chapter 13 case, the debtor has completed a financial management course required pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §§ 111, 1328(g)(1) and filed a certification of completion with the Court.

(e) **Attorney Certification - Chapter 11, Subchapter V.** If the debtor was represented by an attorney during the course of the Subchapter V case, the debtor's attorney shall certify that the attorney has explained the requirements for a discharge to the debtor and that to the best of the attorney's knowledge, the debtor qualifies for a discharge under 11 U.S.C. § 1192.

(f) **Attorney Certification - Chapter 12.** If the debtor was represented by an attorney during the course of the Chapter 12 case, the debtor's attorney shall certify that the attorney has explained the requirements for a discharge to the debtor and that to the best of the attorney's knowledge, the debtor qualifies for a discharge under 11 U.S.C. §§ 1228(a) and (f).

(g) **Attorney Certification - Chapter 13.** If the debtor was represented by an attorney during the course of the Chapter 13 case, the debtor's attorney shall certify that the attorney has explained the requirements for a discharge to the debtor and that to the best of the attorney's knowledge, the debtor qualifies for a discharge under 11 U.S.C. §§ 1328(a), (d) and (g)(1) and (h).

(h) **Service of Motion.** The debtor shall serve the Motion for Entry of Discharge upon the parties to whom the debtor is or was obligated to make the domestic support payments described in subpart

(c)(1) above, if any, as well as all of the debtor's creditors. In a Chapter 13 case, the Motion for Entry of Discharge shall neither be filed nor served until after the case Trustee files a Notice of Completion of Plan Payments. The Notice of Completion of Plan Payments shall be filed by the case Trustee after the time to comply with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 3002.1(g) has expired.

(i) **No Motion - No Discharge.** If no Motion for Entry of Discharge is filed, the Court will not issue a discharge in the debtor's case. If no Motion for Entry of Discharge is filed within a reasonable time after completion of the payments due under the debtor's confirmed plan, the case may be closed without the entry of a discharge order. If the debtor later files a Motion for Entry of Discharge, the debtor will be required to pay the reopening fee unless the debtor can demonstrate cause for the waiver of such fee.

## PART V

### RULE 5001-1. Clerk's Office Hours and Address.

The Office of the Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court is located in the Mike Mansfield Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, Room 273, 400 North Main, in Butte, Montana 59701 and shall be open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, for the filing of papers. *See* Mont. LBR 5005-1 for electronic filing. The mailing address is: Clerk of U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Mike Mansfield Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, Room 263, 400 North Main, Butte, Montana 59701.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. § 301  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 5001, 5003 and 5005

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### RULE 5001-2. Divisions of Court.

The Bankruptcy Court for the District of Montana is divided into the following Divisions, and Court trials or hearings are held in each Division depending upon the debtor's county of residence or principal place of business, to-wit:

(a) **Billings Division:** Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, Golden Valley, McCone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, and Yellowstone.

(b) **Butte Division:** Beaverhead, Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Jefferson, Gallatin, Granite, Lewis & Clark, Madison, Park, Powell, and Silver Bow.

(c) **Missoula Division:** Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders.

(d) **Great Falls Division:** Blaine, Cascade, Chouteau, Fergus, Glacier, Hill, Judith Basin, Liberty, Meagher, Phillips, Pondera, Teton, and Toole.



### RULE 5001-3. Court Hearings and Creditors' Meetings.

Bankruptcy Court trials and hearings are regularly scheduled in Butte, Missoula, Great Falls and Billings. Creditors' meetings conducted pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 341(a) are held in these four cities, and in Kalispell (Chapter 13 only) and are arranged and scheduled by the Office of the U.S. Trustee in its sole discretion.

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Related Authority:  
28 U.S.C. § 151  
11 U.S.C. §§ 341(a) and 343  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 5001(b)

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### RULE 5003-1. Withdrawal of Documents from Proofs of Claim.

After a proof of claim has been filed, the Clerk may, without an order of the Court, permit the substitution by the claimant of a photocopy for any original note or other instrument in writing filed in support of such claim. The original, upon return, may be endorsed reflecting its attachment to a claim in a bankruptcy proceeding.

### RULE 5003-2. Exhibits to Pleadings and Proofs of Claim.

All exhibits shall be filed with the pleading or proof of claim to which they belong. Each exhibit shall be filed as a separate .pdf document; or as a single .pdf document, with each exhibit bookmarked and identified therein. Entities filing exhibits not prepared in electronically produced text shall scan and electronically file only excerpts of the documents that are directly germane to the matter under consideration by the Court. Excerpted material must be clearly and prominently identified as such, and the complete exhibit must be made available forthwith to the attorneys and the Court on request. Entities filing excerpts do so without prejudice to their right to file by electronically scanning additional excerpts or the complete document with the Court. Responding entities may file by electronically scanning additional germane excerpts. Oversized and voluminous attachments will not be filed and will be returned by the Clerk. Filing attachments by other than electronic means is not encouraged but may be permitted at the discretion of the Court.

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#### Comment:

Each exhibit must be filed separately, or book marked separately, so that the Court and other parties may easily retrieve each individual exhibit from the electronic filing. Transcripts from Rule 2004 examinations or § 341 creditor meetings that are to be used for impeachment purposes do not need to be filed with the Court. Such transcripts only need to be filed with the Court if they will be used for evidentiary purposes.

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### RULE 5003-3. Judgments and Orders.

As the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts has not prescribed a form and manner for the U.S. Bankruptcy Clerk of Court to maintain judgments and orders, a prevailing party shall request that a copy of every final judgment or order affecting title to or lien on real property or for the recovery of money or property, and every other judgment or order as directed

by the Court, be kept and indexed with the civil judgments of the District Court in the judgment docket. To perfect a judicial lien, the prevailing party shall comply with applicable law.

**RULE 5005-1. Electronic Filing.**

Electronic filing through CM/ECF is mandatory for all users, except for *pro per* filers. Documents shall be filed, signed, or verified by electronic means through CM/ECF and according to rules and procedures adopted by the Court. A document filed by electronic means in compliance with this rule constitutes a written paper for the purposes of applying these rules, the Fed. R. Civ. P. made applicable by any rule and § 107 of the Bankruptcy Code. Instructions and procedures for electronic filing shall be distributed by the Clerk to members of the Bar and interested parties, will be posted on the Court's website at [www.mtb.uscourts.gov](http://www.mtb.uscourts.gov), and will be available from the Clerk's Office upon request. No papers or documents shall be filed with the U.S. District Court Clerk or at the Bankruptcy Judge's chambers. Documents electronically filed via CM/ECF shall be deemed timely filed on the date filed if they are received by the Clerk's Office on or before 11:59 p.m. on the date filed.

**RULE 5005-2. Requirements for Papers, Attorneys, Parties, and Bankruptcy Petition Preparers.**

**(a) Size and Format.** Filings and attachments must conform to these specifications:

- (1) be electronically filed in .pdf format, and *pro per* filers must use 8 ½ x 11-inch paper;
- (2) be plainly legible, whether typed or duplicated in at least 12-point font size, except the master mailing list shall be in 10-point font size;
- (3) have no less than one-inch (1") margins, exclusive of page numbers;
- (4) be consecutively paginated, with page numbers on the bottom of the page;
- (5) be double-spaced, except for quoted material and footnotes;
- (6) be one-sided, not 2-sided;
- (7) use a nationally recognized citation form, (i.e., The Harvard Citator or the Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD) Citation Manual);
- (8) NOT be stapled, but only be bound by paper or binder clip, if filed by *pro per* filers.

**(b) Identification of Attorney and Party.** The following information must appear in the upper left-hand corner of the first page of each document or pleading presented for electronic filing, in the order specified, except that in multiparty or multi-attorney actions or proceedings, reference may be made to the signature page for the complete list of attorneys and parties represented:

- (1) name of the attorney (or, if *pro per*, the name of the party);

- (2) office mailing address;
- (3) telephone number;
- (4) e-mail address;
- (5) state bar I.D. number;
- (6) specific identification of party represented by name and interest in litigation (i.e., Attorney for Debtor; Attorney for Plaintiff; etc.).

Should a party be without an address or telephone, the document shall set forth a work or third party's address or telephone number where the party may be contacted.

(c) **Signature Compliance.** The authorized CM/ECF user log-in and password required to submit documents to CM/ECF serve as the user's signature on all electronic documents filed with the Court. The log-in and password also serve as a signature for purposes of Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9011, and for any other purpose for which a signature is required in connection with proceedings before the Court. Filing by electronic means requires that the signature of any persons, individually or on behalf of an entity, shall conform to either a cursive signature on the signature line or a conformed signature using a /s/ and then the typewritten name. Examples follow of acceptable signatures:

“/s/ (name of person filing document)”  
(typed name of person); or

/s/ Joseph P. Smith  
\_\_\_\_\_

Joseph P. Smith

A signature, whether original, photocopied, scanned, or conformed, shall constitute the person's verification that such person has read the contents of the pleading and certification that Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9011(b) has been satisfied.

(d) **Bankruptcy Petition Preparers.** All bankruptcy petition preparers providing services to debtors filing documents before the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Montana shall provide the name and physical address of an authorized agent for service of process, and shall provide a physical street address for their business.

#### RULE 5005-3. Custody of Records and Release.

No record or paper belonging to the files of the Court shall be taken from the custody of the Clerk except with the permission of the Judge to whom the case is assigned, and a receipt given by the party obtaining it, specifying the record or paper, the date of its receipt, and the date it is to be returned. In the event the presiding Judge is not available or cannot be reached to give permission, then the Clerk or deputy in charge of the office is vested with the discretion to release any record or paper.

RULE 5005-4. Custody of Exhibits and Release.

Every exhibit placed in an electronic file shall be held in the custody of the Clerk. If, given the voluminous nature of an exhibit, a party submits an exhibit in paper form upon approval of the Court, such exhibit will be retained until the case is closed and then the Clerk shall notify the party that such exhibit may be obtained from the Clerk. If the party does not make arrangements within thirty (30) days to obtain such exhibit, the Clerk may dispose of the exhibit.

Any party may withdraw, after service to all parties, any exhibit the party has filed in paper copy or in original form, upon filing a waiver of the right to an appeal and to a new trial. If another party or witness files notice within seven (7) days thereafter requesting withdrawal of the same exhibit, the Clerk shall keep the exhibit in custody until the Court has determined who is entitled to it or until all interested persons consent to its release. If exhibits are not withdrawn within thirty (30) days after the judgment has become final, the Clerk may dispose of them within a reasonable time after notice to the party offering the exhibit.

RULE 5009-1. Trustee's Report and Accounting in Chapter 12 and 13 Cases.

Within thirty (30) days following the entry of an order of conversion or dismissal, the trustee in a Chapter 12 or 13 case shall file a report and accounting of all receipts and disbursements made pursuant to the plan, and shall serve a copy of such final report and accounting on the debtor or debtor's counsel, and all creditors who have filed a timely proof of claim and other parties in interest.

In a completed Chapter 12 or 13 case, the trustee shall report to the Court that the debtor has completed all payments within thirty (30) days of the final distribution of funds under the plan. The trustee shall file his final report and account with the Court as soon as practicable after the last disbursement check clears the trustee's bank and shall serve a copy of such final report and accounting on the debtor, all creditors who filed timely proofs of claim and other parties in interest.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 347, 1202(b)(1) and 1302(b)(1)

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RULE 5010-1. Reopening Closed Cases with Subsequent Income Tax Refunds.

Trustees shall not need to file motions or take any other affirmative actions to reserve their rights to later reopen closed cases in which the only asset such trustees may later seek to administer upon reopening is a tax refund received by the debtors based upon income earned prior to the commencement of their cases.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 521(1) and 554(c)

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RULE 5011-1. Withdrawal of Reference.

(a) **Motion to Withdraw Reference.** A motion to withdraw a case or proceeding under 28 U.S.C. § 157(d), and any response, shall be filed with the Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court. A motion to withdraw the reference shall be filed and served promptly after service of any pleading or document in which the basis for the motion first arises. Response documents shall be filed and served no later than 14 days after service of the motion for withdrawal. If a response is filed, a reply, if any, shall be filed no later than 7 days after service of the response to the motion.

(b) **Transmittal of Documents to District Court.** Except as otherwise ordered by the Bankruptcy Court, 28 days after the filing of the motion to withdraw the reference, or after a response, and reply have been filed, whichever is earlier, the Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court shall transmit to the District Court the motion, any response, reply, memoranda in support and associated exhibits that have been filed with the bankruptcy court. Following transmission to the District Court, any future filings associated with the motion to withdraw the reference shall be filed with the Clerk of the District Court. Documents relating to other matters in the bankruptcy case or adversary proceeding shall be filed with the Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court unless otherwise ordered by the bankruptcy or District Court.

(c) **Proceedings in District Court.** A motion to withdraw the reference shall be assigned to a District Court Judge. Unless otherwise ordered by the District Court, a motion to withdraw the reference will be decided by the Court without a hearing. A party desiring oral argument should so indicate in its motion or responsive pleading. The District Court may in its discretion grant or deny the motion in whole or in part and may make such orders as it deems appropriate for the orderly disposition of the case or proceeding. Upon entry of a dispositive order by the District Court, the Clerk of the District Court shall forward a copy of the order to the parties and transmit a copy to the Bankruptcy Court for filing in the bankruptcy case.

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Related Authority:  
28 U.S.C. § 157(d)

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RULE 5070-1. Calendars and Scheduling.

(a) **Consent Calendar.** A consent calendar shall precede each regularly scheduled hearing calendar, which will allow any matter scheduled for hearing to be placed on such consent calendar for purposes of resolution by stipulation or agreement. Parties or their counsel, without the submission of evidence, may appear at the time of the consent calendar and advise the Court of the case and the settlement terms. Upon concurrence by the Court, the hearing on the matter will be vacated, and the parties shall be granted up to fourteen (14) days (unless extended by the Court) to file a written stipulation and proposed order. The Court reserves the right to call the matter as originally scheduled.

(b) **Scheduling.** Attorneys shall schedule hearings for all matters to be heard in any division, except that only the Court shall set hearings for pretrial conferences in adversary proceedings, disclosure statement hearings, and confirmation hearings for Chapters 11, 12 and 13 cases. The

Court may at any time reschedule matters.

RULE 5071-1. Request for Continuance.

Any party requesting the continuance of a trial, hearing or conference shall:

- (a) file a motion seeking the continuance at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled trial, hearing or conference;
- (b) advise the Court of the affected party's response to such request or what attempts have been made to gain each party's consent; and
- (c) give telephone notice of the date, time, and location of, and reason for, the continued hearing to all affected parties and file written confirmation of such notice with the Clerk within two days of receiving such information from the Court, unless all affected parties receive electronic notice.

RULE 5072-1. Decorum in all proceedings.

The following procedures are to be followed in all proceedings:

- (a) there shall be no oral confrontation or colloquy directly between opposing attorneys or parties, and all persons within the courtroom shall be treated with dignity and respect;
- (b) all persons appearing in person and addressing the Court shall stand, unless otherwise directed by the Court, and address the Court from the podium or from a microphone location to improve the quality of the recording;
- (c) all objections shall be stated with specificity prior to any argument or explanation of the same (i.e., leading, hearsay, improper foundation, etc.);
- (d) during the testimony of a witness, attorneys shall not approach the witness box, bench, or Clerk's bench without the Court's prior approval;
- (e) counsel shall request assistance from the courtroom deputy if they wish to use blackboards, view boxes, or other audio-visual aids and shall make their request sufficiently in advance of the need to allow for set-up of this equipment when the Court is not in session;
- (f) counsel shall address each other and all witnesses by formal name (rather than by first name) during all court proceedings; and
- (g) whether appearing remotely or in person, all attorneys shall wear business, not business casual, attire while appearing before the Court.

The following procedures are to be followed in all proceedings where parties are appearing by video or other electronic means:

(a) **Prior Notice of Intent to Participate.** Anyone electing to appear remotely shall utilize the procedure identified by Mont. LBR 5074-1(c). “Video” for purposes of Mont. LBR 5074-1(c) shall refer to “Zoom” unless an alternative or subsequent videoconferencing application is designated by the Court. A party requesting to appear by video shall be responsible for ensuring a stable internet connection.

(b) **Remote Appearance Conduct.** Participants shall strive to conduct themselves in the same manner as they would in open court. To maintain the decorum of the proceedings any party, counsel or witness appearing via Zoom shall:

(A) Dress professionally;

(B) If a participant chooses to use a “background,” the background should reflect professionalism and not detract from the proceedings;

(C) Identify themselves for the record each time they speak;

(D) If a party is appearing from home, or other shared space, the other occupants of the space should be advised that Court is proceeding, and the party appearing remotely cannot be interrupted;

(E) Appear in a quiet location and mute their microphone until their case is called and their participation is necessary;

(F) Ensure the location has appropriate internet connectivity capabilities to support any necessary streaming, downloading of documents, among other things.

(G) If for some reason, a connection to a participant is lost, the Court will stop the proceedings and the Court’s IT staff will endeavor to fix the problem.

**RULE 5073-1. Photography, Recording Devices and Broadcasting.**

**(a) Cameras and Personal Electronic Devices.**

(1) **General Rule.** Personal electronic devices, including but not limited to tablets, cameras, phones, or laptop computers, whether capable of transmitting or recording or not, must not be used or possessed in any courthouse of this District. Upon entry to a courthouse and upon demand, all such devices are subject to security screening and screening for compliance with this Rule. Devices not subject to an exception must be left with Court security officers.

**(2) Exceptions.**

(A) District of Montana Judges may use personal electronic devices in any courthouse or courtroom and may set policy for chambers staff.

(B) Employees of the Clerk’s Office, the United States Probation Office, and the United States Marshals Service, contract Court security officers, and building managers and General Services Administration employees may use personal electronic devices in any courthouse.

(C) Attorneys appearing before the Court in a calendared matter, including scheduling conferences, may use personal electronic devices that are not disruptive or distracting. Use must be limited to purposes related to the appearance. Personal electronic devices may not be used to communicate publicly about the case. Photography, video-recording, and verbatim recording are prohibited. Audible rings or alarms are prohibited. In courtrooms, voice communication using personal electronic devices is prohibited. In sealed proceedings, personal electronic devices may not be used for communication. An attorney may authorize an employee to use a device in compliance with this paragraph, but the attorney is exclusively responsible for the employee’s conduct.

(D) Office of the United States Attorney.

(i) The United States Attorney may authorize use of cameras and personal electronic devices inside his or her office space but must prohibit any use of such devices in courthouse space and any photography or video recording showing courthouse space.

(ii) The following persons are authorized to bring personal electronic devices into a courthouse but may not use such devices, except as otherwise provided by this Rule:

(a) employees of the United States Attorney’s Office or the U.S. Department of Justice;

(b) provided they have business in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, federal agents or other law enforcement officers and federal employees holding a federal Personnel Identity Verification card; and

(c) any individual identified in a writing that is signed by an Assistant United States Attorney and presented to Court security officers prior to the individual’s entry.

(E) Court reporters employed by or acting pursuant to contract with the Court may use personal electronic devices. Photography and videorecording are prohibited. In courtrooms, personal electronic devices must not be used for voice communication and must not use audible rings or alarms.

(F) Persons who rely on personal electronic devices for medical reasons may use their devices. Photography and videorecording are prohibited.



(G) By written order, a Judge may authorize use of personal electronic devices in administrative proceedings and photography or videorecording on special occasions, such as naturalization or investiture proceedings.

**(b) Broadcasting Prohibited.**

Inside the courthouses of this District, broadcasting is prohibited, regardless of technology or medium except that:

- (1) The Court may permit electronic or photographic preservation of evidence and perpetuation of the record;
- (2) The Court may also permit broadcasting, televising, or photographing of ceremonial proceedings; and
- (3) The Court may conduct video conferences at the established Court locations in Butte, Billings, Great Falls and Missoula and at off-site locations.

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Comment:

Mont. LBR 5073-1 is intended to mirror D. Mont. L. R. 1.3(d) and should be revised or amended so as to conform with D. Mont. L. R. 1.3(d).

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**RULE 5074-1. Telephone, Video, or In-Person Conferences and Hearings.**

(a) **Conferences and Hearings.** The Court may schedule any matter in a bankruptcy case, contested matter or adversary proceeding to be heard by video or telephonic conference. Any party in interest affected by or involved in such case, matter or proceeding may request the Court to hear the matter by video conference, or in-person. The Court may, at its discretion, hold pretrial conferences in adversary proceedings, preliminary hearings on motions to modify, preliminary hearings, hearings on reaffirmation agreements, and any other matters requiring an emergency hearing by telephone. The Court, except within its discretion, will not conduct evidentiary hearings by telephone.

(b) **Expedited Hearings.** In accordance with Mont. LBR 9013-1(h)(2)(N), the Court will grant or deny requests to hear matters on an expedited basis at its discretion. If a request for an expedited hearing is granted, the moving party shall serve the Order granting such relief on all parties entitled to notice within two (2) business days unless directed otherwise by the Court.

(c) **Appearance by Video.** Any party or counsel wishing to appear at a court proceeding via video shall complete the “Notice of Remote Appearance” Form available on the Court’s website (<https://www.mtb.uscourts.gov/notice-remote-appearance>) and submit the completed form to the Clerk at least three (3) business days prior to the proceeding. Parties should submit one form per court date regardless of the number of matters they are appearing in on a given day.

- (1) Any party that intends to appear by video from a remote location shall file a notice at

least three (3) business days prior to the hearing and further certify that any witness will have access to all exhibits that may be the subject of direct or cross examination, or exhibits used for impeachment or rebuttal purposes.

(2) Parties shall confer prior to a hearing and ensure all witnesses will have access to a copy of any exhibit that is utilized at the hearing.

Requests to appear remotely in matters that are contested may not be permitted at the Court's discretion depending on the issues to be adjudicated.

**(d) Recording Virtual Proceedings Prohibited.** Other than official court reporters and official electronic recorders employed by the Court, Parties appearing remotely are not permitted to make audio or video recordings or take screenshots of the proceedings from any location by any means. Mont. LBR 5073-1 which relates to personal electronic devices and broadcasting, applies to parties appearing remotely or virtual hearings.

**(e) Additional Information to be Provided for Remote Witnesses.** In addition to the Notice of Remote Appearance form, any individual desiring to appear by video that may be called to testify ("Remote Witness") shall also provide the following information:

- (1) The name and title (if any) of the Remote Witness;
- (2) The location (city, state, country) of the Remote Witness;
- (3) The place from which the Remote Witness will testify (e.g., home, office – addresses are not required);
- (4) Whether anyone will be in the room with the Remote Witness during the testimony, and, if so, who and for what purpose;
- (5) Whether the Remote Witness will have access to any documents other than exhibits provided to the Court and the parties, and if so, what documents; and
- (6) The participants' intent, or lack thereof, to seek sequestration of witnesses under Federal Rule of Evidence 615.

**(f) Exchange of Exhibit and Witness Lists.** The parties involved in video and in-person conferences and hearings shall exchange proposed witness and exhibit lists and copies of all proposed exhibits, and file such lists and exhibits with the Court, at least three (3) business days prior to a hearing or trial.

- (1) Witness and exhibit lists may be combined into one document. Copies of all proposed exhibits shall be attached to such list, and each individual exhibit must be electronically filed as a separate .pdf document; or as a single .pdf document, with each exhibit book marked and identified therein. The location of any witness appearing remotely shall be disclosed in the witness list so counsel can coordinate exhibits necessary for that witness.
- (2) The moving party in a contested matter and the plaintiff in an adversary proceeding shall identify exhibits in numerical sequence commencing with the number 1. The

responding party in a contested matter and the defendant in an adversary proceeding shall identify exhibits in alphabetical sequence. If multiple parties are involved, the parties prior to hearing or trial shall determine an identification sequence that eliminates any duplicative sequence.

(3) Failure to timely exchange and file proposed witness and exhibit lists and copies of proposed exhibits in accordance with this rule may result in the Court barring any undisclosed witness testimony and denying the admission of any exhibit not disclosed or exchanged.

(4) Any impeachment exhibits shall be circulated to the Court and counsel least three days before the scheduled hearing or trial. Each impeachment exhibit shall be separately labeled, in a .pdf format, and password protected. Counsel shall not use the same password for each impeachment exhibit. Counsel shall insure that all impeachment exhibits are accessible to the witness. If an impeachment exhibit is utilized at the hearing or trial, counsel shall identify the impeachment exhibit by its title, request the witness to access it, and provide the Court and all parties with the unique password.

(5) Except as otherwise may be allowed by the Court, all exhibits shall be electronically filed.

(6) For purposes of any hearing or trial, counsel for the proponent of the exhibit shall be responsible for ensuring that sufficient copies of any exhibit that may be utilized are available for any witness in the courtroom.

**(g) Testimony by Remote Witnesses.** The Court will administer the oath to each remote witness during the video hearing and it shall have the same effect as if the witness was sworn in by the Court in person. The following shall apply as additional safeguards for testimony by Remote Witnesses:

(1) No person, including counsel, shall be permitted to be in the same room with any remote witness unless specifically and expressly authorized by the Court before the Remote Witness begins testifying.

(2) No person shall communicate in any manner with a Remote Witness during his or her testimony, except by direct examination and cross-examination on the record, unless specifically and expressly authorized by the Court before the communication takes place.

(3) Remote Witnesses shall have before them only the exhibits provided to the Court for consideration in connection with the matter(s) set for hearing and no other documents or data.

(4) The Court or any party may request that the Remote Witness display identification or request that one or more participants verify the identity of the Remote Witness if there is any question about the identity of the Remote Witness.

The Court may disqualify any Remote Witness from testifying, enter sanctions, or take other appropriate action if, during the course of testimony by a Remote Witness or otherwise, it is discovered that (a) the Remote Witness is being coached or otherwise communicated to; (b) there is an undisclosed person in the room with the Remote Witness; or (c) the Remote Witness has notes or other documents in their possession that have not been disclosed.

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Comment:

Each exhibit must be filed separately, or book marked separately, so that the Court and other parties may easily retrieve each individual exhibit from the electronic filing. Transcripts from Rule 2004 examinations or § 341 creditor meetings that are to be used for impeachment purposes do not need to be filed with the Court. Such transcripts only need to be filed with the Court if they will be used for evidentiary purposes.

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#### RULE 5077-1. Availability of Audio Files of Court Proceedings on the Public Docket

Digital recordings of court proceedings will be made available on the public docket as a convenience. These recordings will not be considered the official record for any purpose; provided, however, counsel may refer to the minute and seconds of an audio recording in their briefings before this Court but not for purposes of appeal or for purposes of impeachment at an evidentiary hearing. If an individual requires an official record of a hearing for any purpose, a transcript must be ordered using the appropriate procedure. It is the responsibility of each party and/or their counsel to notify the Court and courtroom deputy of their desire to restrict audio from the public docket during or prior to the court proceeding.

#### RULE 5078-1. Clerk's Fees in Chapter 13 Cases.

Unless otherwise ordered, the trustee in a Chapter 13 case shall pay any claim of the Clerk of Court for fees or costs incurred in a case at the time of the initial distribution under the plan. The Clerk shall provide a statement of such fees or costs to the trustee immediately following the confirmation of the plan.

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Related Authority:  
28 U.S.C. § 1930

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### **PART VI**

#### RULE 6004-1. Notice of a Proposed Sale by a Trustee or Debtor in Possession.

A notice of a proposed sale filed by a trustee or debtor in possession shall include the twenty-one (21) day notice provided in Mont. LBR 9013-1 and shall include the information required by Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(c)(1). In accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9006(c)(1), the 21-day notice period may be reduced for good cause shown. A party in interest may file a response and request a hearing pursuant to Mont. LBR 9013-1.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003 and 6004

Comment:

It should be noted that Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003 now provides that within 21 days after the filing of a petition, the Court shall not grant relief regarding a motion to use, sell, lease, or otherwise incur an obligation regarding property of the estate, except to the extent that relief is necessary to avoid immediate and irreparable harm. The Court can make the order approving the motion retroactive to the date of its filing.

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**RULE 6006-1. Motions for Assumption or Rejection of an Executory Contract or Unexpired Lease.**

(a) **Motion.** A motion for assumption or rejection of an executory contract or unexpired lease under 11 U.S.C. § 365 shall be made in compliance with Mont. LBR 9013-1 and in conformity with Mont. LBF 25, if appropriate, and promptly served in a Chapter 9 or 11 case upon any committee appointed under the Code or its authorized agent, or, if no committee has been appointed, the creditors listed under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007(d). Executory contract or lease documents shall be attached to the motion, unless such documents are attached to a timely filed proof of claim or otherwise located in the file; and reference to such proof of claim by number or file location by docket number shall be made in the motion.

(b) **Response to Motion.**

(1) A response must comply with Mont. LBR 9013-1. Any response must state with specificity the grounds for any and all objections, including citation to applicable statutes and case law, provisions of the executory contract or unexpired lease in question, and the facts regarding whether any default exists under the executory contract or unexpired lease.

(2) If the debtor or trustee proposes to offer a cure of default or adequate assurance, the response must state with specificity the terms of the cure or adequate assurance the debtor or trustee offers to provide (e.g., periodic payments, substitute liens, or other indubitable equivalents).

(c) **Stipulation for Assumption or Rejection of Executory Contract or Unexpired Lease.** A stipulation for assumption or rejection of an executory contract or unexpired lease, joined by the creditor, debtor and case trustee, if any, may be filed, together with a proposed order and an order shall be issued without hearing.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. § 365  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003, 6006, 9014

Comments:

Debtor, debtor's attorney, the trustee, if any, the U.S. Trustee, any affected creditor, and parties requesting special notice should be served with the motion. In a Chapter 11 case, in addition to the above entities, any appointed committees, or if no committees are appointed then to the creditors listed under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 1007(d) should be

served with the motion.

It should be noted that Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003 now provides that within 21 days after the filing of a petition, the Court shall not grant relief regarding a motion to assume or assign an executory contract or unexpired lease in accordance with § 365, except to the extent that relief is necessary to avoid immediate and irreparable harm. The Court can make the order approving the motion retroactive to the date of its filing.

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#### RULE 6007-1. Abandonment.

Abandonment or other disposition of property shall be accomplished pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6007 and in conformity with Mont. LBF 11. The trustee or debtor in possession shall give notice to all entities specified in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6007. Notices of proposed abandonment filed by a trustee shall include the fourteen (14) day notice provided in Mont. LBR 9013-1. A party in interest may file a response and request a hearing pursuant to Mont. LBR 9013-1. If no objections are filed, the trustee or debtor in possession may abandon or otherwise dispose of the property without an order from the Court.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. § 554  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6007

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## PART VII

#### RULE 7005-1. Service by Electronic Means.

Fed. R. Civ. P. 5, as amended, applies in adversary proceedings. In addition to other methods of service described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 5, service by electronic means is allowed provided the entity being served consents in writing to such electronic service. All authorized users of CM/ECF consent to electronic service. An entity or the Court may make service under this Local Rule through electronic means by using the Court's transmission facilities, wherein the notice of electronic filing generated by CM/ECF (which contains a hyperlink to the filed document) shall constitute service (and proof of service) of the document, pleading or other paper.

#### RULE 7016-1. Pretrial Procedures.

(a) **In Default Cases.** If the defendant has failed to appear or respond within the time permitted for an appearance or response, the procedure outlined herein shall not be applicable, but the Court may direct the party not in default to appear or to file a pleading for the purpose of noting a default, the entry of a default judgment, and for scheduling a date for trial on the issue of damages if required by law. If the party not in default fails to take action to prosecute its claim after reasonable notice to appear or take such action, the Court may dismiss the proceeding for failure to prosecute.

#### (b) **Case Scheduling Conference, Pretrial Conference, and Order.**

(1) Within twenty-one (21) days after the defendant files an answer, the Court will issue an order scheduling a telephone conference with all attorneys representing parties and with any *pro per* litigants to discuss time limits to be contained in a case scheduling order that limits the time: (1) to complete discovery; (2) to join parties and to amend pleadings; (3) to file pretrial motions; (4) to conduct and complete alternative dispute resolution procedures; (5) to file the pretrial order; (6) to exchange exhibits and identify witnesses; (7) to file pretrial memoranda; and (8) to set the trial date.

(2) An order containing the above time limits will be issued by the Court upon completion of the telephone conference. If multiple defendants exist in an adversary proceeding, the Court, in its discretion, may issue an order scheduling a telephone conference to establish appropriate dates for the appearing defendants and to determine the status of service of process on any unserved defendants.

(3) The Court, in its discretion, may set such additional pretrial conferences for the purposes of expediting the disposition of the case, establishing early and continuing control, discouraging wasteful pretrial activities, improving thorough preparation, and facilitating the settlement of the case. During the case scheduling conference, the parties shall discuss whether alternative dispute resolution may be beneficial in resolving any contested issues.

(4) Pursuant to the authorization of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(d), as incorporated in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7026, this Court through this rule and by other appropriate order directs that discovery may be commenced after the complaint is filed, without leave of Court. Furthermore, all parties are expected to informally satisfy the provisions of initial disclosure contained in Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a), without the need for any formal discovery requests.

**(c) Initial Conference and Discovery Plan.** During the case scheduling conference, the parties shall orally discuss the names and addresses of individuals likely to have discoverable information, discuss the need for and the names and addresses of possible expert witnesses, discuss the existence and availability of documents, and discuss a computation of damages, if applicable. Any information discussed shall be supplemented immediately upon discovering more complete or more accurate information. The parties shall further discuss a discovery plan that addresses the nature and complexity of the claims or defenses alleged in the litigation.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 16 and 26  
Mont. LBR 9014-1

Comment:

Mont. LBR 7016 and 7026 are based on Rules 16 and 26, Fed. R. Civ. P., as Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7016 and 7026 incorporate by reference the Fed. R. Civ. P. To promote thorough preparation for trial, to conserve scarce judicial resources and to expeditiously conclude litigation, the Court, pursuant to the Local Rules and the discretion and authority permitted by the rules to issue orders modifying strict compliance with the federal rules given the varying nature and complexity of the adversary proceedings filed before the Court, shall generally consolidate and coordinate the conferences and disclosures required under the federal rules.

RULE 7016-2. Continuances of Dates Set in Case Scheduling Order.

The parties and their attorneys are governed by the dates set forth in the Order entered immediately after the pretrial conference and no extensions or continuances shall be granted in the absence of a showing of good cause. Mere failure on the part of counsel to proceed promptly with the normal processes of discovery shall not constitute good cause for an extension or continuance.

RULE 7026-1. Discovery.

(a) **Initial Disclosure.** The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1), as incorporated into Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7026 shall not apply in adversary proceedings unless so ordered by the Court on a case-by-case basis, except as provided in Mont. LBR 7016-1(b)(4). Mont. LBR 7016-1(c) provides that the initial disclosures and the discovery plan shall be considered and discussed during the case scheduling conference. Prior to the completion of the case scheduling conference, parties may commence discovery, without leave of court. *See* Mont. LBR 7016-1(b).

(b) **Transcripts of Depositions.** No party shall take more than ten (10) depositions, whether upon oral examination under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7030 or upon written questions under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7031. Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Court only upon written motion showing good cause. Original transcripts of depositions need not be filed with the Clerk of Court.

(c) **Requirement of a Writing.** All objections to interrogatories, depositions, requests, applications under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7037, and all motions and replies concerning discovery matters shall be in writing and recite with specificity the offending interrogatory, deposition, request, or application. If time does not permit the filing of a written motion, the Court may, in its discretion, waive this requirement.

(d) **Objections to Discovery Process.** An objection to any interrogatory, deposition, request, or application under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7037 shall be filed within thirty (30) days after service of the offending interrogatory, deposition, request, or application unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The filing of an objection shall not extend the time within which the objecting party must otherwise answer or respond to any discovery matter not specifically included in the objection.

(e) **Mandatory Conference among Attorneys.** The mandatory Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7026(f) conference shall be conducted in conjunction with the case scheduling conference pursuant to Mont. LBR 7016-1(b). Attorneys are further encouraged to participate in non-court, pretrial discovery conferences to decrease contentious actions by the attorneys and parties and the filing of unnecessary discovery motions. A motion concerning a discovery dispute shall not be filed until all attorneys have explored the possibility of resolving the discovery matters in controversy. The Court will not consider any motion concerning a discovery matter unless the motion is accompanied by a statement from the attorney that a good faith effort has been made by the attorney to resolve the discovery matter at issue.

(f) **No Filing of Discovery with Court.** Discovery of any type shall not be filed with the Court at any time unless a discovery dispute occurs and appropriate motions concerning the dispute are



filed or the Court directs the parties to file discovery. A notice that some type of discovery is occurring shall not be filed with the Court.

(g) **Motions to Compel.** After a discovery request is objected to or not complied with in a timely manner, and if not otherwise resolved under subsection (e), it is the responsibility of the party initiating discovery to place the matter before the Court in a timely manner. To compel an answer, production, designation, or inspection, a motion must be filed under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7037, and in compliance with Mont. LBR 9013-1. However, a party properly noticed of a deposition must appear and submit to the deposition unless a motion to quash has been granted.

(h) **Other Discovery Motions.** Motions for a protective order under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7026(c) and motions to compel physical or mental examination, including Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7035, shall comply with Mont. LBR 9013-1 and subsection (f) hereof.

(i) **Discovery Replies.** A response to a discovery motion and request for hearing shall be filed in compliance with Mont. LBR 9013-1.

(j) **Compliance with Discovery Orders.** After the Court has ruled on a discovery motion, any answer, production, designation, inspection, or examination required by the Court shall be done within fourteen (14) days after the entry of the order of the Court, oral or otherwise, unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

(k) **Failure to Comply with Orders.** Should a party fail to comply with an order of the Court concerning discovery motions, it is the responsibility of the objecting party to place the matter before the Court by a proper motion for supplementary relief under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7037.

(l) **Unnecessary Discovery Motions or Objections.** The presentation to the Court of unnecessary discovery motions or requests, as well as unwarranted opposition to proper discovery proceedings, may subject the offender to remedies and sanctions, including the imposition of costs and attorney fees.

#### RULE 7055-1. Default and Default Judgment.

(a) **By the Clerk.** A judgment of default may be entered by the Clerk upon application for default judgment with affidavits and amount due, including costs and disbursements if any, filed by the party entitled to judgment other than under 11 U.S.C. §§ 523 or 727. The affidavit shall include a statement that no defense or other response of any kind has been received, or if received shall detail the defense or other response received. If the party in default has appeared in the proceeding, notice of the application for default judgment shall be served pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7055 as it incorporates Fed. R. Civ. P. 55(b)(2). The Court may order a hearing on any application for default judgment.

(b) **Documents to Submit.** When a party is entitled to have a default judgment entered by the Clerk pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7055 and Fed. R. Civ. P. 55(b)(1), the party must submit the following:

- (1) application for Clerk's entry of default pursuant to subsection (2) below;
- (2) the actual Clerk's entry of default, which will be completed by the Clerk's Office when the required information is verified;
- (3) a motion for entry of default judgment by the Clerk pursuant to (4) below; and
- (4) a proposed default judgment with a statement showing the following:
  - (A) the principal amount due, not to exceed the amount of the original demand, giving credit for any payments and showing the amounts and dates of all payments;
  - (B) a computation of accrued interest to the proposed date of judgment; and
  - (C) any costs and taxable disbursements claimed.

(c) **Affidavit.** An affidavit of counsel or the party seeking default judgment must be attached to the default request showing:

- (1) that the party against whom judgment is sought is not an infant, an incompetent person, or in the military service;
- (2) that service of the summons and complaint was properly made in compliance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7004;
- (3) that the party has defaulted in the obligation to appear or respond in the action;
- (4) that the amount shown by the statement is justly due and owing and that no part thereof has been paid except as stated; and
- (5) that the disbursement sought to be taxed has been made in the action or will necessarily be made or incurred.

The Clerk shall then enter judgment for principal, interest, and costs.

(d) **By the Court.** When applying for entry of default judgment pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7055 and Fed. R. Civ. P. 55(b)(2), the following papers must be filed:

- (1) a motion for entry of default judgment;
- (2) a proposed default judgment; and
- (3) an itemized statement regarding damages being requested and the basis therefor.

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RULE 7056-1. Summary Judgment.

(a) **Summary Judgment Motions.** In addition to the following requirements, Mont. LBR 9013-1 and Mont. LBR 9013-2 shall apply to summary judgment motions, except for provisions dealing with the noticing of hearings. No hearings shall be held in connection with summary judgment motions unless ordered by the Court.

(1) **Statement of Uncontroverted Facts.** A separate, short, and concise “Statement of Uncontroverted Facts” must accompany every motion for summary judgment. Failure to submit this statement constitutes grounds for denial of the motion. The statement shall set forth separately each fact, in serial, not narrative form, and shall specify the specific portion of the record where the fact can be found (e.g., affidavit, deposition, etc.)

(2) **Statement of Genuine Issues.** Opposition to a motion for summary judgment, if any, must be filed within fourteen (14) days after the motion is served and must comply with Mont. LBR 9013-1. A separately identified, short, and concise “Statement of Genuine Issues,” setting forth the specific facts which the opposing party asserts establish a genuine issue of material fact precluding summary judgment in favor of the moving party, must be filed by the party opposing the motion together with an opposition brief.

(3) **Facts Admitted.** All material facts in the moving party’s Statement of Uncontroverted Facts are deemed to be admitted unless controverted by a Statement of Genuine Issues filed by the opposing party.

(4) **Time for Filing.** Summary judgment motions must be filed by the date specified in the case scheduling order for the filing of pretrial motions.

(5) **Stipulation.** Alternatively, the parties may file a stipulation setting forth a “Statement of Stipulated Facts” with a representation that no genuine issues of material fact exist. Such stipulation is solely for the purpose of considering the summary judgment motion and is not otherwise binding.

(b) **No Tolling.** Even though a summary judgment motion may be filed by a party, such motion does not toll the period of time for filing a Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7012(b) motion or answer, or for complying with any other dates set forth in a pretrial scheduling order.

(c) **Consideration by the Court.** Nothing in this rule shall require the Court to review portions of the record in response to a motion where the moving papers do not make specific reference to portions of the record. To expedite a decision or for other good cause, the Court may, on notice to all parties, rule on a motion before the expiration of the fourteen (14) day period ordinarily permitted for filing opposition papers.

(d) **Oral Arguments.** Unless the Court orders otherwise, no formal hearing on a motion for summary judgment will be conducted and the Court shall proceed to consider and rule upon the

merits of any such motion upon the expiration of the reply deadline without oral arguments by the parties.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7056  
Fed. R. Civ. P. 56

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## PART IX

### RULE 9001-1. Definitions.

The terms “documents” and “papers” as used in these rules include those filed or transmitted by electronic means.

### RULE 9003-1. *Ex Parte* Contact.

No attorney, accountant, party in interest, or any of their employees shall engage in any *ex parte* meetings or communications with the Judge or with Chamber’s staff concerning any disputed issue of fact or law in a particular case, matter or proceeding. This rule does not limit or prohibit *ex parte* presentation of emergency or administrative matters, or *ex parte* applications contemplated by the Bankruptcy Code, the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, or these Local Rules.

### RULE 9004-1. Case Numbering for Pleadings.

The case number provided in every pleading filed with the Court shall be in the following format:

0:12-bk-34567-ABC

The first digit preceding the colon corresponds to the filing division. The year the case was filed follows the colon. Next, either “bk” for a bankruptcy case or “ap” for an adversary proceeding follows the hyphen. Next, the case number follows the hyphen. The initials of the assigned judge follows the last hyphen and completes the case number.

### RULE 9005-1. Constitutional Challenge to a Statute – Notice, Certification, and Intervention.

In any case in which the constitutionality of (a) an Act of Congress is brought into question and in which the United States or any agency, officer, or employee thereof is not a party, or (b) a statute of a state is brought into question and in which the state or any agency, officer or employee thereof is not a party, the party raising the constitutional issue shall comply with 28 U.S.C. § 2403, Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.1 or Mont. R. Civ. P. 24(d), or the applicable rule or statute of any other state.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7005 and 9006(f)  
Fed. R. Civ. P. 5(b)(2)(D)  
Mont. LBR 5009-1

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RULE 9007-1. Notice to Creditors and Others in Chapter 7 Asset Cases, and Chapter 12 and 13 Cases.

Unless otherwise specified in the Fed. R. Bankr. P., after the time for filing claims has expired in Chapter 7, 12 and 13 cases, notice need only be served on the debtor(s), the case trustee, and their respective attorneys, the U. S. Trustee, creditors having timely filed proofs of claim, and entities specifically requesting copies of all notices; provided, however, all creditors on the Clerk of Court's mailing list shall be served with copies of the final reports and accounts filed by Chapter 7 trustees; and only those creditors who filed timely proofs of claims shall be served with copies of final reports and accounts filed by Chapter 12 or 13 trustees.

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 2002(h)

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RULE 9009-1. Form of Chapter 12 and 13 Plans.

(a) **Chapter 12 Plans.** A Chapter 12 plan shall conform to Mont. LBF 14 and must include the projected income and expenses for the term of the plan, and a liquidation analysis.

(b) **Chapter 13 Plans.** Debtor's Chapter 13 plan shall conform to Mont. LBF 19.

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 1221 and 1321

Comment:

Debtors shall file and serve all creditors and the trustee with Debtors' Chapter 12 or 13 plans. In Chapter 13 cases, reference should be made to the special rules that pertain to estimated attorney fees and costs, as contained in Mont. LBR 2016(a), and the Committee Note pertaining to such Local Rule.

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RULE 9011-1. Signing of Papers; Representations to the Court.

(a) **Signing of Papers.** All pleadings, motions and other papers that are submitted for filing shall be signed by an attorney of record in the attorney's own name, or if there is no attorney, by the party, except that the petition, schedules, statements and plan, if any, shall be signed by the debtor(s). *See* Signature Compliance, Mont. LBR 5005-2(c).

(b) **Electronic Signatures.** Any person signing a document to be electronically filed shall use either “/s/ Joseph P. Smith [person's name]” or “Joseph P. Smith [electronic cursive signature]” when filing documents electronically. This shall constitute the signature of the person for purposes of Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9011. The original declaration under penalty of perjury relating to the petition, statements, schedules, and any amendment to any of these types of documents, shall be transmitted by personal delivery, mail, or electronic means to the Clerk and, if necessary, shall be scanned into the CM/ECF system. The signature appearing on the electronic document shall be the original. The Clerk shall not retain any originally signed documents, but shall return them to the submitting

person, provided such person has presented to the Clerk a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If no envelope is presented, the document will be disposed of by the Clerk. Any password required for electronic filing shall be used only by the entity to whom the password is assigned, and by authorized members and employees of an entity to whom the password is assigned.

#### RULE 9011-2. Reminders to Court.

In the event a Judge has under advisement any matter, including, but not limited to, a motion or decision in a bench trial, for a period of more than sixty (60) days, each party affected by the undecided matter shall send to the Judge a letter particularly describing the matter under advisement and stating the date the matter was taken under advisement. As long as the matter remains under advisement, at intervals of forty-five (45) days thereafter, each affected party shall send a similar letter to the Judge.

#### RULE 9013-1. Motion Practice.

(a) **Applicability.** This Rule applies to all motions, applications and other pleadings requesting an order, unless governed by Mont. LBR 9013-1(g), in all contested matters and adversary proceedings.

(b) **Form.** All motions, including objections to discovery, shall be in writing, except those made during trial or hearing.

(c) **Content of Motion.** Motions, in the body of the motion or in an accompanying brief, shall state with particularity the relevant law by section and the relevant procedure by rule upon which the moving party relies, shall specify all relief requested, and shall include a brief statement explaining why the relief should be granted. If a motion consists of several documents, the moving party shall serve to any party germane excerpts of all documents and all exhibits.

#### (d) **Service of Motion, Response and Other Pleadings.**

(1) **Minimum Service.** In addition to all parties entitled to service under the Fed. R. Bankr. P., at a minimum, parties shall electronically serve notice of their respective papers upon all opposing attorneys, the U.S. Trustee, the case trustee, if any, and any party appearing *pro per* and serve by mail any entity not receiving electronic service. The serving party shall file a Certificate of Service with the Clerk for all entities not receiving electronic service but receiving service by mail or other means.

(2) **Certificate of Service or Transmittal.** Unless otherwise noted herein, an original certificate of service shall be incorporated in, or attached to, each original pleading whenever service or transmittal of a document is accomplished by mail or other means, and shall be filed with the Clerk. A certificate of service does not need to include entities served electronically through CM/ECF. The copies served on other entities shall also reflect such proof of service. All proofs of service, except those made by the Clerk or by electronic service under Mont. LBR 9013-1(d)(3), shall be made by verified statement (i.e., “under penalty of perjury”) identifying the document and stating the date on which it was

served or transmitted, the method by which service was accomplished and shall include the name and address of each entity served. When a party relies upon a mailing matrix to serve or transmit a document, the party shall attach a copy of the mailing matrix relied upon by the party.

(3) **Service by Electronic Means.** For purposes of service of motions, documents, pleadings and other papers, Fed. R. Civ. P. 5(b), as amended, shall apply. Service by electronic means is allowed provided the entity being served consents in writing to such electronic service. All authorized users of CM/ECF have consented to receiving electronic service. An entity or the Court may make service under this Local Rule through electronic means by using the Court's transmission facilities, wherein the notice of electronic filing generated by CM/ECF (which contains a hyperlink to the filed document) shall constitute service of the motion, document, pleading or other paper, without the need for a separate certificate of service on those parties served by electronic means.

(e) **Notice of Opportunity to Respond.** After each motion, in bold and conspicuous print, the moving party shall include the following language, unless another applicable rule provides for a longer or shorter notice and response period than 14 days (See (f) below):

**NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND  
AND REQUEST A HEARING**

**If you object to the motion, you must file a written responsive pleading and request a hearing within fourteen (14) days of the date of the motion. The responding party shall schedule the hearing on the motion at least twenty-one (21) days after the date of the response and request for hearing and shall include in the caption of the responsive pleading in bold and conspicuous print the date, time, and location of the hearing by inserting in the caption the following:**

**NOTICE OF HEARING**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If no objections are timely filed, the Court may grant the relief requested as a failure to respond by any entity shall be deemed an admission that the relief requested should be granted.**

(f) **Longer or Shorter Notice and Response Periods.** If a Fed. R. of Bankr. P., or other applicable authority provides a notice period that is longer or shorter than 14 days, the Motion should include the Notice required by 9013-1(e), except the period within which a responsive pleading is required shall be amended to include the correct notice period, (7, 21, 28, or other notice period that may be required).

(g) **Response to Motion.** Unless otherwise provided by these Local Rules, any entity objecting to

a motion shall file a response and request a hearing within fourteen (14) days of the date of the motion and shall, in the response, notice the contested matter for hearing by including in the caption of the responsive pleading the date, time and location of the hearing by inserting in the caption in bold and conspicuous print the Notice of Hearing as specified in the subpart (e) above. The notice of the hearing shall provide that the hearing on the contested matter shall be scheduled at the earliest hearing day following the expiration of the twenty-one (21) days counted after the date of the response and request for hearing. If no response and request for hearing is filed within fourteen (14) days of the date of the motion, the Court may grant the relief requested as a failure to respond by any entity shall be deemed an admission that the relief requested should be granted. Any response must state with specificity the grounds for any and all objections, including citation to applicable statutes and case law, provisions of any executory contract or unexpired lease in question, and the facts regarding whether any default exists.

**(h) Exception for Specific Matters.**

**(1) Matters Governed by Other Rules.** The following matters are governed by the identified Rules and follow a similar procedure as set forth in Mont. LBR 9013-1:

(A) Motions to Modify Stay, Mont. LBR 4001-1;

(B) Objections to Proofs of Claim, Mont. LBR 3007-1;

(C) Objections to Exemptions, Mont. LBR 4003-3;

(D) Motions to Avoid Liens and Nonpossessory, Non-purchase Money Security Interests, Mont. LBR 4003-4;

(E) Motions for Assumption or Rejection of Executory Contracts and Unexpired Leases, Mont. LBR 6006-1;

(F) Motions to Dismiss or Convert, Mont. LBR 1017-1; and

(G) Objections to Late Filed Claims, Mont. LBR 3002-1.

**(2) Matters the Court Will Routinely Grant or Deny, with the Right to Request a Hearing.** Upon motion and the submissions of a proposed order, the following matters will be routinely granted or denied, without notice or hearing, in the Court's discretion, with any party in interest having the right to object, request a hearing and schedule a hearing to reconsider the issuance of any Order within fourteen (14) days of the date of the Order.

(A) Employment of Professionals, subject to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003(a);

(B) Change of Venue;

(C) Motion for Rule 2004 Examination;



- (D) Dismissal for Failure to Pay Filing Fee, *see* Mont. LBR 1006-1(b)(3);
- (E) Extending Time to Pay Filing Fee;
- (F) Redemption of Property;
- (G) Substitution of an Attorney;
- (H) Amending Schedules, or Statement of Financial Affairs;
- (I) Motion to Appear *pro hac vice*;
- (J) Reaffirmation Agreements (when signed by debtor, creditor, and attorney);
- (K) Continuance/Rescheduling of Hearing;
- (L) Debtor's Motion to Convert from Chapter 11 to Chapter 7;
- (M) Entry of Default;
- (N) Expediting Hearing;
- (O) Extending Time to File Proofs of Claim;
- (P) Participation in ASCS Program;
- (Q) Pay Filing Fees in Installments;
- (R) Recusal of Judge;
- (S) Reopening Chapter 7, 11, 12, or 13 Case;
- (T) Establish Bar Date for Proofs of Claim;
- (U) Conduct Appraisal by Creditor of Debtor's Property;
- (V) Withdrawal of Trustee's No Distribution Report;
- (W) Motion for Final Decree in Chapter 11 case;
- (X) Leave to Appeal;
- (Y) Stay Pending Appeal;
- (Z) Motion to File Briefs Longer than 15 pages;

- (AA) Extending Time to File Motion to Dismiss Under § 707(a) or (b);
- (BB) Extending Time to File Schedules and/or Statements of Financial Affairs;
- (CC) Notice of Amendment of Statement of Social Security Number;
- (DD) Compelling Turnover of Documents to the U.S. Trustee;
- (EE) Motion to Defer Entry of Discharge under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 4004(c)(2);
- (FF) Motion by Chapter 7 Trustee for Authority to Operate Business Under § 721;
- (GG) Motion to Extend Time to Obtain 15-Day Extension of Temporary Exemption from Credit Counseling Requirement Under § 109(h)(3); and
- (HH) Motion to Shorten Notice under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9006(c)(1).

(i) **Notice Required Instead of Motion.** Notices and not motions may be filed for the following matters:

- (1) Trustees' deposit of funds into Court registry;
- (2) Debtors' conversion of a case from Chapters 12 or 13 to another chapter; and
- (3) Debtors' amendment of petition, schedules, statement of financial affairs, and any other statement, *see* Mont. LBR 1007-1 and 1009-1.

(j) **Proposed Order.** Proposed orders shall be submitted via email by the moving party to the [bph\\_propord@mtb.uscourts.gov](mailto:bph_propord@mtb.uscourts.gov) email address. All proposed orders shall be submitted in a format compatible with Microsoft Word, unless expressly directed by the Court to be submitted in an alternative format.

(1) The subject line of the email submission of all proposed orders shall contain the following items in the following order: (1) date the item was ripe; (2) case number, in conformity with Mont. LBR 9004-1; (2) the last name or the business name of the debtor(s); (3) the docket number of the filed motion corresponding to the proposed order; and (4) a brief description (e.g. 8/3/22; 0:01-10001, Smith; ECF No. 10 (Order Granting Motion to Dismiss)).

(2) Except as otherwise provided in Mont. LBR 9013-(h)(2), proposed orders may not be submitted unless: (1) the applicable response or objection period has expired (including any additional time afforded to parties receiving service via mail under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9006(f)); (2) no timely responses or objections to the motion have been filed; and (3) the moving party has filed a certificate of no objection conforming with LBF 43. No party shall be entitled to the relief sought by motion until an appropriate proposed order is submitted in accordance with this rule.

(3) Submission of a proposed order constitutes counsel's representation that service has been completed in conformity with any applicable rules, that any applicable notice period has expired without objection, (including additional time for mailing) and the matter is ripe for entry of an order.

(4) If a timely objection has been filed and the subject motion has been set for hearing, or otherwise appears on the Court's calendar, a proposed order shall not be submitted unless requested by the Court.

(5) Form of Proposed Orders

(A) All proposed Orders shall be submitted in Times New Roman size 12 font.

(B) All proposed Orders in the case shall use the following caption:

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA**

In re

**NAME OF DEBTOR(S)**

Debtor(s).

**Case No. 0:00-bk-12345-ABC**

(C) All proposed Orders in an adversary proceeding shall use the following caption:

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA**

In re

**JOHN DOE,**

Debtor.

**Case No. 0:00-bk-12345-ABC**

**ROGER TRUSTEE,**

Plaintiff.

-vs-

**JOHN DOE,**

**Adv. No. 0:00-ap-78910-ABC**

Defendant.

(D) All proposed orders shall state with particularity the relevant law and/or rule upon which the moving party seeks the relief requested and include a brief statement explaining why the relief should be granted. See <https://www.mtb.uscourts.gov/local-forms>; see also Court's Guidelines on Proposed Orders for samples.

All forms of proposed orders submitted to the Court shall not include a signature line.

(k) **Attendance at Hearings.** Any party proposing or opposing a motion or application who does not intend to actively pursue or oppose the same shall immediately notify all attorneys of record, *pro per* parties, and the Clerk, so that the Court, all attorneys, and any *pro per* parties are not required to devote unnecessary attention to the matter or to appear in court. Unless excused by the Court, the failure of any party to attend a duly noticed hearing shall be deemed a waiver of the pleading, objection, or motion, and a consent to sustaining or granting the relief sought by the attending party.

(l) **Motion to Vacate or Amend an Order.** A motion under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9023 or 9024 (or under Fed. R. Civ. P. 59 or 60) must be filed within fourteen (14) days from the date of the order. Motions captioned as Motions to Reconsider shall be treated as Motions for Relief from a Judgment or Order and should set forth the grounds alleged to satisfy the criteria set forth in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9023 or 9024 (or Fed. R. Civ. P. 59 or 60).

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Related Authority:  
11 U.S.C. §§ 102(1)(B)(i)  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9007

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#### RULE 9013-2. Briefs and Memoranda of Law.

(a) **Memoranda of Law.** Motions, responses to motions, objections, and responses to objections shall be supported by a memorandum of law filed with or as a part of the motion, objection or response, except as provided in subsection (b) below. Such memoranda shall be succinct and shall not exceed 15 pages in length without prior leave of the Court and shall include a concise statement of the facts and each basis for the pleading with relevant citations to legal authorities. Memoranda opposing the motion or objection shall be filed within fourteen (14) days after service of the motion or objection, or as otherwise directed by the Court and shall not exceed ten (10) pages in length, without prior leave of the Court. Memoranda in support of or in opposition to motions for summary judgment shall not exceed 25 pages in length. Any reply memoranda by the party moving for summary judgment shall not exceed 10 pages. Parties who cite authority not generally available on Westlaw shall provide a copy to the Court. [*See also* Mont. LBR 7056-1 for special requirements applicable when the memorandum of law is being filed in support of a motion for summary judgment.]

(b) **Motions Not Requiring Memoranda of Law.** Unless otherwise directed by the Court,

memoranda of law are not required for the following motions:

- (1) to obtain an extension of time, provided that the request is made before the expiration of the period originally prescribed by applicable rule, statute, order, or as extended by previous order;
- (2) to continue a pretrial conference, hearing, motion, or the trial of an action;
- (3) to demand a more definite statement;
- (4) to waive the debtor's appearance at the 11 U.S.C. § 341 meeting;
- (5) to amend the petition or schedules or statements;
- (6) to affect a substitution of parties;
- (7) all motions routinely granted under Mont. LBR 9013-1(g)(2);
- (8) compelling turnover of property to the trustee; or
- (9) to modify the automatic stay under 11 U.S.C. § 362(a).

#### RULE 9014-1. Contested Matters.

Unless requested by a party and allowed by the Court, in its discretion, the Part VII rules identified in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9014(c) shall not apply to any contested matter. The subpoena powers of attendance and production allowed under Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9016 apply in contested matters, which are separate and distinct from the Part VII rules specified in Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9014(c).

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Related Authority:  
Fed. R. Bankr. P. 7004 and 9014  
Mont. LBR 7016-1

#### Comment:

Pursuant to Rules 7004(b)(9) and 9014(b), Fed. R. Bankr. P., all motions directed to a debtor, in addition to being served upon counsel for the debtor, must be served upon the debtor by mailing a copy of the motion "to the debtor at the address shown in the petition or to such other address as the debtor may designate in a filed writing." Such service can be accomplished by First Class Mail, but the debtor must be served as well as his or her counsel. Proof of service upon the debtor is required.

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#### RULE 9015-1. Jury Trials.

(a) **Applicability of Certain Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.** Fed. R. Civ. P. 38, 39, 47-51, and 81(c), insofar as they apply to jury trials, apply in all cases and proceedings in this Court, except that a demand made under Fed. R. Civ. P. 38(b) shall be filed in accordance with Fed. R. Bankr. P. 5005.

(b) **Consent to Have Jury Trial Conducted by Bankruptcy Court.** If the right to a jury trial applies and a timely demand has been filed under Fed. R. Civ. P. 38(b), the parties may consent to have a jury trial conducted by the Bankruptcy Court under 28 U.S.C. § 157(e). Parties must jointly or separately file a statement of consent no later than thirty (30) days after the date for demand. Failure to affirmatively file a consent to a jury trial shall be deemed to be a lack of consent.

(c) **Voir Dire.** Unless otherwise ordered, interrogation of prospective jurors on *voir dire* examination shall be conducted by the Court. The Court, in its discretion, may permit questions to be submitted in writing in advance of jury selection or orally at the side of the bar during *voir dire*.

(d) **Time for Filing a Demand for Jury Trial after Removal.** If at the time of removal all necessary pleadings have been served, a party entitled to a jury trial must demand one within twenty-one (21) days after the Notice of Removal is filed; otherwise, within twenty-one (21) days after service of the notice of filing of the Notice of Removal on the party entitled to a jury trial. A party making an express demand for trial by jury prior to removal, in accordance with federal or state law, need not make a demand after removal. If applicable state law in the court from which the case is removed does not require the parties to make express demands to claim a trial by jury, the parties must make demands after removal, in accordance with this paragraph, unless the Court directs them to do so within a specific time. The Court may make such a direction on its own motion and shall do so as a matter of course at the request of any party. The failure of a party to make a jury demand as directed under this sub-paragraph constitutes a waiver of trial by jury.

#### RULE 9018-1. Highly Sensitive Documents (HSDs)

A document is an HSD if its subject matter renders it of potential value to malicious nation-state actors seeking to harm the interests of the United States. Factors to be considered in making the determination include whether the document involves matters of national security; foreign sovereign interests; cybersecurity; intellectual property or trade secrets; terrorism; public officials; or the reputational interests of the United States.

(a) In order to have a document filed as an HSD, a party must submit to the Clerk's office for filing a motion to treat a document as an HSD, the HSD sought to be filed, and a certificate of service. The required documents shall be submitted nonelectronically to the Clerk's office in a sealed envelope marked "HIGHLY SENSITIVE DOCUMENT."

(b) Upon receipt, the Clerk's office will make an informational entry on the case docket indicating that an HSD motion was received and delivered to chambers.

(c) The Court will issue an order on the motion and, if granted, an informational entry will be made on the case docket indicating that the HSD has been filed with the Court. The Clerk's office will maintain the HSD in a secure format outside CM/ECF. If the motion is denied, the filing party is responsible for filing the document under existing procedures set forth in these rules.

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Comment:

This rule is specific to documents that satisfy criteria for Highly Sensitive Documents (HSD). Please refer to Fed. R.

**RULE 9019-1. Alternative Dispute Resolution and Settlement Conferences.**

The Court encourages the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”) in any adversary proceeding or contested matter where the parties believe the contested issues may be resolved through ADR. The Court will discuss ADR with the parties during the case scheduling conference. *See* Mont. LBR 9014-1 for applying ADR to contested matters.

**RULE 9022-1. Notice of Judgment or Order.**

Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 5(b), as amended, the Court may serve notice of entry of a judgment or order through several methods, including electronic means, upon an entity’s consent, by using the Court’s transmission facilities, wherein the notice of electronic filing generated by CM/ECF (which contains a hyperlink to the filed document) shall constitute service of the order or judgment.

**RULE 9029-1. Local Rules.**

**(a) Matters Not Covered by Local Rules.**

- (1) **Consistent Practice.** In any matter not covered by these Local Rules the Court may regulate practice in any manner not inconsistent with the Fed. R. Bankr. P. and the Fed. R. Civ. P.
- (2) **Suspension of Rules.** The Court, upon its own motion or the motion of any party, may change or dispense with any of these Local Rules in the interests of justice.
- (3) **Good Cause.** A motion for waiver of these Local Rules may be approved if the moving party demonstrates good cause for a waiver.

**(b) District Court Authorization to Amend.** The U.S. District Court Judges of the District of Montana, by a majority, authorizes by their approval of these Local Rules the Bankruptcy Judge(s) of the District to make and amend rules of practice and procedure pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 83, but not duplicative of, Acts of Congress, and the Fed. R. Bankr. P. and which do not prohibit or limit the use of the Official forms. This authorization is provided pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9029(a).

**RULE 9036-1. Notice by Electronic Transmission.**

The Clerk will provide electronic noticing agreements through the judiciary’s Bankruptcy Noticing Center (“BNC”) to any person requesting this service. The terms and procedures for electronic noticing are detailed in the Court’s noticing agreement provided by the Clerk and also available on the Court’s website at [www.mtb.uscourts.gov](http://www.mtb.uscourts.gov).

**RULE 9037-1. Privacy Protection for Filings Made with the Court.**

Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9037, adopted December 1, 2007, and as amended from time to time, applies in all cases and adversary proceedings, including all exhibits or other documents filed with the Court.

EFFECTIVE DATE

These Local Rules shall be in force and effect in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Montana from and after **December 31, 2022**, and shall supersede all former Local and Interim Rules and General Orders of the Court.

/s/ Benjamin P. Hursh  
CHIEF BANKRUPTCY JUDGE



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