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EMERGENCY INDIVIDUAL RULES AND PRACTICES IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

Gregory H. Woods, United States District Judge

Chambers Email:
WoodsNYSDChambers@nysd.uscourts.gov

These Emergency Individual Rules and Practices are no longer in effect. All parties must comply with Judge Woods' standard Individual Rules and Practices, which are available on the Court's website. These Emergency Individual Rules and Practices remain available *only* as a reference point for orders issued prior to February 8, 2023 that make specific reference to these Emergency Individual Rules and Practices.

1. **No Paper Submissions Absent Undue Hardship**

   A. No papers, including courtesy hard copies of any filing or document, may be submitted to Chambers. All documents must be filed on ECF or, if permitted or required under the Court's Individual Rules and Practices, emailed to WoodsNYSDChambers@nysd.uscourts.gov.

   B. In the event that a party or counsel is unable to submit a document electronically — either by ECF or email — the document may be mailed to the Court. To the maximum extent possible, however, this means of delivery should be avoided, as delivery of mail to the Court is likely to be delayed.

2. **Conferences and Proceedings**

   A. **In Civil Cases**. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, all conferences and proceedings in civil cases will be held by telephone. In some cases, the Court may direct one of the parties to set up a conference line. In all other cases, the parties should call into the Court's dedicated conference line at (888) 557-8511, and enter Access Code 747-0200, followed by the pound (#) key.

   B. **In Criminal Cases.** To the maximum extent possible, all conferences and proceedings will be held by either telephone or video. No later than one week before a scheduled appearance, counsel must confer and submit a letter to the Court indicating their views on whether the Court can, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure (*see, e.g.*, Rules 5(f), 10(b) & (c), and 43) and any other relevant law, conduct the matter by telephone or video and, if applicable, whether the Defendant either consents to appearing in that manner or to waiving his or her appearance altogether. Counsel should include the same information in any request for a conference or other proceeding.

   To the extent that a criminal conference has been scheduled solely to address scheduling matters, the parties are directed to submit a jointly composed letter to the Court no later than one week prior to the scheduled conference. The letter should describe the status of the case, and describe each of the parties' respective positions regarding the appropriate management of the case. The letter should also identify any issues with respect to which any of the parties seeks Court intervention. To the

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extent that the parties propose a schedule for ongoing proceedings that they believe the Court can act upon without the need for a conference, each of the parties is directed to present their respective views regarding the exclusion of time through the next proposed scheduled in-court appearance.

C. **Appearance Sheets for All Calls.** No later than five hours prior to any scheduled conference call with the Court, the parties are directed to jointly email to the Court an appearance sheet, using the template available on the Court's website. The appearance sheet should include the case caption, including the case number, and should list all of the attorneys who are anticipated to participate in the call. In the event that the parties anticipate that they will use uncommon words, or case names during the conference, they are directed to include that information in the location indicated in the template appearance form.

3. **Communications with Chambers**

A. **Telephone Calls.** Telephone calls will not be answered but will go to voicemail; and there may be significant delays in responding to any voicemail messages. Thus, parties are encouraged to make **any** requests or inquiries to the Court through ECF or, if permitted or required under the Court's Individual Rules and Practices, by email. If leaving a voicemail, a party should (1) briefly state the nature of the issue (including, if applicable, the case name and docket number); and (2) provide a call-back telephone number.

B. **Urgent Matters.** For *urgent* matters requiring immediate attention, parties should send an email to Chambers that (1) includes the word "URGENT" in the subject line; (2) specifies the case name and docket number; (3) briefly describes the nature of the issue; and (4) provides a telephone number at which the party (and any other relevant parties) can be reached.

C. **Faxes.** Faxes are *not* permitted for any purposes.

D. **Hand Deliveries.** Nothing may be delivered to Chambers absent advance permission from the Court.

E. **By *Pro Se* Parties.** *Pro se* parties are encouraged to (1) consent to electronic service (via ECF or email); or (2) seek the Court's permission to file documents through the ECF system or by email to the Court. Unless the Court grants permission to file documents electronically, all communications with the Court by a *pro se* party must be mailed to the Pro Se Intake Unit, Thurgood Marshall Courthouse, 40 Centre Street, Room 105, New York, New York 10007. Any questions should be directed to the Pro Se Intake Unit at (212) 805-0175.

F. **In New Criminal Cases.** Upon assignment of a new criminal case to Judge Woods, the Assistant United States Attorney must immediately email the Court to arrange

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for a prompt conference/arraignment. Absent unusual circumstances, the Court anticipates that it will refer the arraignment to magistrate's court.

4. **Applications for Temporary Restraining Orders ("TROs").**

Parties intending to file applications for TROs or other emergency relief must send all of their papers (in text-searchable PDF format) to the Court by email. The email should (1) include the word "URGENT" in the subject line; (2) provide a telephone number at which the party (and any other relevant parties) can be reached; and (3) provide the relevant parties' availability for a telephone conference in the next few days. As noted above, parties should not hand-deliver any documents without advance permission.