

UPDATE FROM U.S. TRUSTEE'S OFFICE

In order to protect public health due to the COVID-19 crisis, the United States and the State of Massachusetts, Federal and state authorities as well as the District Court, the Bankruptcy Court and the Office of the United States Trustee have taken certain actions to deter the spread of the virus. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced that COVID-19 is properly characterized as a pandemic. On March 17, 2020, the United States Trustee, in light of the enormity of the impact of these events on society and the legal system, issued a notice continuing all in-person section 341 meetings through April 10, 2020 in the district of Massachusetts in order to comply with various state and Federal declarations which, among other things, prohibited “mass gatherings.”

At present, the United States Trustee and the Trustees are working diligently to develop systems that will allow a majority of future (and certain rescheduled) 341 meetings to be conducted by some alternative method such as telephonically. As the first priority of the United States Trustee and the Trustees is the health and safety of all of those interacting with the bankruptcy system, procedures are being developed to ensure appropriate social distancing and the safety of all involved. While this step is unprecedented and the eventual system developed may be imperfect, it is the intent of the United States Trustee and the Trustees to develop a system which ensures the health and safety of the participants but which also allows cases to proceed so honest debtors are able to secure a discharge in a timely manner.

The United States Trustee and the Trustees are hopeful to have procedures in place in the very near future. It is the intention of the United States Trustee that these procedures will limit to the extent possible any burdens on the Trustees, Debtors, and Debtors' counsel as the United States Trustee is aware that all parties in interest are working under unusual conditions and may have limited access to staff, their clients, and ordinary resources. The United States Trustee is hopeful that if all parties work collaboratively we will be able to solve these issues in a reasonable and timely manner that best serves the bankruptcy system and all those involved in the bankruptcy system.

Temporary Policies and Procedures:

All 341 meetings **NOT ALREADY HELD** will be conducted remotely by telephonic means.

For debtors with counsel, Debtor's counsel will be provided with the necessary call in information.

UPDATE FROM U.S. TRUSTEE'S OFFICE

For debtors without counsel, the call in information will be provided directly to the debtor.

Creditors wishing to participate may obtain access to the connection details by contacting the trustee or counsel for the debtor.

Debtors and their counsel as well as any creditors or interested parties wishing to appear at a 341 meeting should **not** report to the physical location of the originally scheduled 341 meeting but should instead make plans to appear remotely by telephone.