

TELEPHONIC APPEARANCE PROCEDURES FOR BANKRUPTCY JUDGE KAREN K. SPECIE

I. SCHEDULING A TELEPHONIC APPEARANCE

Telephone appearances must be arranged by calling **CourtCall**, an independent conference call company, at **(866) 582-6878 not later than 3:00 P.M. one day prior to the hearing date**. In an emergency not of your making (e.g., your office forgot to contact CourtCall on time), you *may* be given permission by the Courtroom Deputy to appear via telephone after the deadline to register. In the event you cannot reach the Courtroom Deputy, you may contact Chambers for permission to appear by CourtCall.

There are charges for use of CourtCall; for information on calling rates, contact CourtCall directly. See WWW.COURTCALL.COM for more information.

II. POLICY GOVERNING TELEPHONIC APPEARANCES VIA COURTCALL

Telephonic appearances via CourtCall are allowed in all matters before the Court **EXCEPT**:

1. Trials and evidentiary hearings – all counsel and witnesses must appear in person;
2. Chapter 11 status conferences – debtor and debtor’s counsel must appear in person, other parties in interest may appear telephonically via CourtCall;
3. Chapter 11 confirmation hearings – debtor, and debtor’s counsel must appear in person;
4. Hearings on reaffirmation agreements – debtor must appear in person;
5. Any matter designated by the Court as one requiring a personal appearance.
6. **UNLESS OTHERWISE ORDERED, THE COURT WILL NOT TAKE TESTIMONY VIA TELEPHONE.**

All hearings noticed for CourtCall are noticed and handled telephonically, but parties may instead appear in person at the alternate location listed in the written notice of hearing.

If an individual schedules a telephonic appearance via CourtCall and then fails to respond to the call of a matter on calendar, the court may pass the matter or may treat the failure to respond as a failure to appear.

Pro Bono - A waiver of the CourtCall fees can be granted upon request to Chambers for pro se parties who have previously been granted IFP status and parties represented by Legal Services. All such requests must be made at least one full day prior to the hearing and approved by Judge Specie. If such request is approved, the Court will notify CourtCall prior to the hearing of such waiver of fees.

Individuals making use of CourtCall do so at their own risk. Hearings generally will not be rescheduled due to missed connections.

III. PROCEDURE FOR TELEPHONIC APPEARANCE

CourtCall will provide written confirmation of a telephonic appearance and a number to call for the telephonic appearance. Persons appearing telephonically must dial into the call **not later than 15 minutes prior to the start of court**. **CourtCall does not dial out to any party**. This time will be used by the Courtroom Deputy and the CourtCall Operator to assess the sound quality of each participant’s phone line. Any person who does not timely call and connect with the CourtCall operator will be billed for the call; the hearing may proceed in your absence.

Call quality is essential. The use of mobile phones, **cellular** phones, **speakerphones**, or phones in public places is **expressly prohibited** except in extreme emergencies or otherwise directed by the court.

At the time of your hearing, you may initially be in listening mode, in which case you will be able to hear the case before yours as if you were in the courtroom. After your call is connected to the courtroom, the Judge will call the case, request appearances, and direct the manner in which the hearing proceeds. Each time you speak, you should identify yourself for the record. When the Judge concludes your hearing, you may disconnect.

IV. Additional Information.

Cases in the Northern District of Florida may be filed in either the Central or Eastern Time zones. Hearings are noticed for the time zone that applies to each case, i.e., Gainesville and Tallahassee Division Cases – ET; Pensacola and Panama City Division Cases – CT, with the exception of telephonic hearings which will always be scheduled in the designated time zone listed in the written notice of hearing.

Under no circumstances may any participant record or broadcast the proceedings conducted by the Bankruptcy Court.