Bankruptcy Case Opening

This process shows the steps for attorneys to open a bankruptcy case on ECF. A number of bankruptcy software programs automatically upload the case information into ECF allowing attorneys to bypass this procedure. See the section on Bankruptcy Case Upload for more information.

Special Note: Amendments to the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure and the Official Bankruptcy Forms will take effect December 1, 2003. Key changes include the following:

- The petition will contain only the last four digits of the individual debtor's Social Security numbers. *The 9-digit case number will continue to be entered when the case is opened.*
- Amendments to Rule 1007 will require debtors to *submit* a verified statement containing the full nine-digit number.
- The new Form B21, Statement of Social Security Number(s) will not become part of the case available to the public at the court or over the Internet. (*The form is available on the court's website at www.wawb.uscourts.gov* in Documents/Forms/Statement of Social Security Number(s). It must be completed and converted to PDF prior to docketing.
- Rule 2002 will be amended to require the clerk to include the debtor's full Social Security number in the copy of the section 341 meeting notice sent to creditors, but the copy of the notice in the court file will only contain the last four digits.

Refer to instructions at the end of this lesson for filing the Statement of Social Security Number.

STEP 1 Click on the **Bankruptcy** hyperlink on the CM/ECF Main Menu Bar. **(See Figure 1.)**

Figure 1

STEP 2 The **BANKRUPTCY EVENTS** screen displays.

❑ Click on the **Open a BK Case** hyperlink.

➢ For further information on each of these categories, click the (Help) icon.

STEP 3 The **CASE DATA** screen displays.

❑ The **Case Type** defaults to **bk**. No action is necessary.

❑ The current date is displayed as the **Case Filed** date.

❑ Select the **Chapter** from the pick list. **7, 11** or **13.**

❑ The default value for **Joint** is **n**, for a Joint filing select **y**.

❑ If there are any items missing from the petition change the **Deficiencies** box from **n** to **y**. A deficiency list will then be presented on a later screen.

❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 4 The **SEARCH FOR A PARTY** screen displays.

❑ **Before adding a party, a search of the database for the party must be performed**. A search may be performed by Social Security Number, Tax Identification Number, Last Name or Business Name.

- Enter the last name or the first few characters of the last name to search. If this is a business filing, enter the first word or significant words of the name to search the database. The entire business name is stored in the **Last/Business name** field. The field size is 80 characters

Search Hints:

- **Enter one field of data for each search.**
- **Format Social Security Number or Tax ID with hyphens.**
- **Searching is case sensitive. (Smith, not smith)**
- **Include an apostrophe or hyphen if part of the name. (O'Brien)**
  Omit other punctuation, such as periods or commas.
- **Try alternate search clues if your first search is not successful.**
- **Partial names can be entered.**

- ❑ Click the **[Search]** button.

STEP 5 If there are no matches, the system will return a **No Person Found** message.

- ❑ Since the party is not already on the database, proceed to add the debtor. Click the **[Create New Party]** button.

STEP 6 The **PARTY INFORMATION** screen displays**.**

- ❑ Enter debtor **Name** and **Address** information in the appropriate boxes.

  - ! **REMINDER: CM/ECF is case sensitive. Capitalize the first letter of the first and last name and type the remainder of the name in lower case.**
  - ! **REMINDER: DO NOT USE COMMAS OR PERIODS WHEN ADDING DEBTOR NAME AND ADDRESS INFORMATION TO A CASE.**

- ❑ Select the debtor's **County** of residence from the pick list.

➢ **NOTE:** Refer to the list of cities and their corresponding counties in this guide. If the city is not listed, notify the court prior to opening the case and selecting a county of residence.

➢ **NOTE:** You may type the first letter of the county name to conduct a faster search.

- ❑ **Pro *se*** field should be **no**.
- ❑ The **Role Type** selection should be defaulted to **Debtor**. You should not be required to take action. However, if the Role Type default is not set, choose Debtor.
- ❑ Enter further descriptive text in the **Party Text** field, if appropriate. (A Connecticut Corporation, etc.)
- ❑ If the party has an alias, click the **[ALIAS]** button.

STEP 7 The **ALIAS** screen appears.

- ❑ You can enter up to 5 alias records. **Alias Role** selections include aka, dba, fdba, fka, whi, wwi, whw, www.

- ❑ Click **[Add aliases]**.

STEP 8 The **PARTY INFORMATION** screen appears once more.

- ❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 9 The **DIVISIONAL OFFICE** screen displays.

- ❑ Verify the filing location and click the **[Submit]** button.

➢ When the case is a joint filing, the joint debtor screen displays. Enter the joint debtor information as outlined above.

STEP 10 The **STATISTICAL DATA** screen displays.

- ❑ Select the **Type of Debtor** by clicking in the appropriate box(es).
- ❑ **Fee Status** values are Paid, Installment, and Credit Card. If the petition is accompanied by an Application to Pay Filing Fees in Installments, choose Installment from the pick list.
- ❑ Designate the **Type of Debtor** as Consumer or Business.
- ❑ The default value is for a **Voluntary** Petition. For Involuntary Petitions, select Involuntary from the pick list.
- ❑ The **Origin** code should be *Original*.
- ❑ **Date Split/Transfer** should NOT be used. Ignore and bypass this field.
- ❑ Choose Y or N for **Asset notice** designation.

  Chapter 7 & 11= n
  Chapter 13 = y

- ❑ Select the range of **Estimated Creditors** from the pick list.
  - 1 -15
  - 16 - 49
  - 50 - 99
  - 100 -199

- 200 - 999
- 1,000 - over

❑ Select the correct dollar range for **Estimated Assets**.

- Under $50,000
- $50,001 - 100,000
- $100,001 - 500,000
- $500,001 - 1 million
- $1,000,001 - 10 million
- $10,000,001 - 50 million
- $50,000,001 - 100 million
- More than $100 million

❑ Select the correct dollar range for **Estimated Debts**.

- Under $50,000
- $50,001 - 100,000
- $100,001 - 500,000
- $500,001 - 1 million
- $1,000,001 - 10 million
- $10,000,001 - 50 million
- $50,000,001 - 100 million
- More than $100 million

❑ Click **[Submit]** to continue.

STEP 11 If you have selected **y** for **Deficiencies** on the **Case Data** screen, the **DEFICIENCY LIST** screen displays.

❑ Select the check box for each item that is not included with this petition. When schedules A-J are missing, rather than clicking individual boxes, click **Schedules A-J**.

❑ Click **[Submit]** to continue.

STEP 12 The **PDF DOCUMENT SELECTION** screen displays.

❑ Click **[Browse]**, then navigate to the directory where the appropriate PDF file is located or type in the full directory and file path.

❑ To verify that this is the appropriate document, highlight the document name.

- Right click with your mouse.

- Select **open** to view the imaged document.
- Click **X** in the upper-right corner to exit to image.
- If correct, double-click the PDF file to select it.

❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 13 The **Incomplete Filing Submission** screen displays**.**

❑ The deadline for missing documents is calculated and displays. This will print on the final docket text and as a schedule record for queries and reports.

❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 14 The **Filing Fee Requirement** screen displays.

❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 15 A Miscellaneous Submit Screen displays.

❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 16 The **FINAL TEXT** screen is displayed.

❑ This is the last opportunity to verify the accuracy of text.

❑ Click the **[Submit]** button.

STEP 17 The **NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING** screen displays.

❑ The Notice of Electronic Filing is the verification that the filing has been sent electronically to the court's database. It certifies that the petition is now an official court document.

❑ To print a copy of this notice, click the browser **[Print]** icon.

❑ To save a copy of this receipt, click **[File]** on the browser menu bar and select **Save Frame As**.

- ❑ The save box that displays allows you to name and save the page in some format. The format type is generally defaulted to HTML.

➢ **Reminder:** After opening the case, click the **Judge/Trustee** hyperlink to assign the judge and trustee and schedules the 341 meeting.

File the **Statement of Social Security Number(s).**

STEP 1 Click on the **Bankruptcy** hyperlink on the CM/ECF Main Menu Bar.

STEP 2 The **BANKRUPTCY EVENTS** screen displays.

- ❑ Click on the **Other** hyperlink.

STEP 3 The **CASE NUMBER** screen displays.

- ❑ Enter the appropriate case number.
- ❑ Click **[Submit].**

STEP 4 The **EVENT SELECTION** screen displays.

- ❑ Scroll to and select **Social Security Number(s) Statement - PDF viewable by court only**.
- ❑ Click **[Submit].**

STEP 5 The **PARTY SELECTION** screen displays.

- ❑ Select the debtor(s) from the pick-list.

STEP 6 The **PDF ATTACHMENT** screen displays.

- ❑ Click **[Browse]**, then navigate to the directory where the imaged statement is located or type in the full directory and file path.
- ❑ Click **[Submit].**

- ❑ Click **[Submit].**

STEP 7 The **FINAL DOCKET** text screen displays.

- ❑ Verify the docket text. This information displays on the case docket.
- ❑ Click **[Submit]**.