

# United States Bankruptcy Court

Southern District of Georgia

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OFFICE OF THE CLERK

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

### RULES AMENDMENTS and FORMS REVISIONS (Effective December 1, 2003)

The Judicial Conference of the United States approved amendments to the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure and Official Bankruptcy Forms which will implement the Conference policy on privacy and public access to electronic court files. Barring Congressional action, these amendments will take effect December 1, 2003 and will change the information disclosed in bankruptcy cases.

The privacy amendments are consistent with the policy that documents in bankruptcy cases are generally available electronically. The Bankruptcy Code and Rules require that the court receive a debtor's full social security number but publicly disclose only the last four digits. Please note that the revisions add an explicit reference to §110 of the Bankruptcy Code which requires the disclosure of the full social security number of a bankruptcy petition preparer.

The privacy rule amendments require numerous forms to be revised, effective December 1, 2003. A new form, Statement of Social Security Number (Official Form 21), has also been proposed. The revisions of Bankruptcy Official Forms 1, 5, and 17 conform to statutory changes concerning multilateral clearing banks and child-support creditors. Official Forms 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16A, 16C, 17 and 19 are revised to implement the amendments to Rules 1005, 1007, and 2002 restricting the display of a debtor's social security number to the last four digits.

Key changes are:

- The petition, **Official Form 1**, will contain only the last four digits of individual debtors' social security numbers.
- **Rule 1007 (Lists, Schedules, and Statements; Time Limits)** will require debtor(s) to *submit* a verified statement containing his or her full nine-digit social security number. The statement is submitted, but it is not filed in the case and does not become a part of the court record. Therefore, the full social security number does not become part of the electronic case record available to the public either through internet access or by a search of the paper records at the court.
- **Rule 2002 (Notices to Creditors, Equity Security Holders, United States, and United**

**States Trustees**) will require the clerk to include the debtor's full social security number on the 341 meeting of creditors notice, Official Form 9, sent to creditors, the debtor, the trustee, and the United States trustee or bankruptcy administrator. The full number will be included only on the notices sent to these parties in interest and not on the copy of the notice that becomes part of the court record.

- **Official Form 10 (Proof of Claim)** will require a wage creditor to disclose only the last four digits of the creditor's social security number. Subtotals for unsecured, secured, and priority debts will be added and a box will be added for unsecured nonpriority claims.
- **Official Form 16A**, the full caption, will disclose only the last four digits of any debtor's social security number. Accordingly, subsequent notices (after the section 341 notice) will either include the last four digits or none, if Official Form 16B, the short caption, is used.
- **Filers** — not the Clerk's Office — are responsible for redacting social security numbers and other personal identifiers such as dates of birth, financial account numbers, and names of minor children in documents filed with the Court. Filers are strongly urged to review all documents before filing to ensure compliance. The Clerk's Office will not review each document for redaction.
- **Rule 1005 (Caption of Petition)** will require the debtor to list all names used in the six years preceding the filing of the petition, and to include on the caption appropriate numerical identifiers, but using only the last four digits of the social security number.

For more detailed information concerning rule and official form amendments, you may visit the federal judiciary website at [www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov) under the federal rulemaking section.

For The Court:  
Michael F. McHugh, Clerk

Dated: October 3, 2003