

United States Bankruptcy Court

WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

CHAMBERS OF
SCOTT W. DALES
BANKRUPTCY JUDGE

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GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503

January 25, 2016

Via ECF Notification

Members of the Bar
United States Bankruptcy Court
for the Western District of Michigan

Re: New Official Bankruptcy Forms

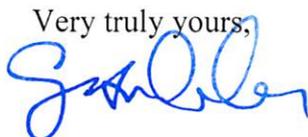
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Bar:

On December 1, 2015, the court began requiring the use of the substantially revised Official Bankruptcy Forms in cases filed on or after that date, and to all cases pending on that date -- "insofar as just and practicable." Most of us have been using the new forms for new cases but many of us have continued to use the old forms in cases filed before December 1, 2015, even though the new forms presumptively apply.

Because we understood that the transition to the new forms would be difficult in pending cases (given the available bankruptcy software), the Clerk has so far been quite lenient in accepting the prior versions of the forms. After consulting with Judges Boyd and Gregg, however, we think it is time to get more serious about requiring the new forms even in pre-December 1, 2015 cases.

Therefore, beginning on March 1, 2016, filings made on the former version of the Official Bankruptcy Forms may elicit an Order to Show Cause directing the filer to appear and defend the use of the former version. Because you have told us that in some instances your software precludes you from using the new forms in cases that were pending before December 1, 2015, we will continue to show leniency in general until March 1, 2016, but will require you to show that use of the new forms in a particular case is not "just and practicable."

I know that this transition has been difficult and perhaps expensive, but I trust that, as with other more dramatic changes we have endured, you will be able to comply with the requirements by March 1, 2016.

Very truly yours,


Scott W. Dales
Chief Judge