



RETURN TO IN-PERSON HEARINGS
Before Chief Judge Dales

Hon. Scott W. Dales
United States Bankruptcy Court
Western District of Michigan
Amended Sept. 23, 2021

Unless otherwise stated in a hearing notice or order, all matters scheduled for hearing before Chief Judge Dales, whether during a motion day or non-motion day, will take place in-person in a courtroom in the location designated pursuant to LBR 1014, in the same fashion as before the COVID-19 public health emergency, albeit with appropriate public health safeguards.

Recognizing, however, that some individuals may be reluctant to appear in person so soon after the relaxation of public health restrictions, Chief Judge Dales will liberally apply LBR 9017 and Fed. R. Civ. P. 43(a) until further notice. The phrase “for good cause in compelling circumstances” within the meaning of Fed. R. Civ. P. 43(a) may include *bona fide* physical and mental health concerns related to COVID-19.

Individuals seeking permission to attend a hearing through contemporary transmission from another location -- for reasons related to COVID-19 -- may send an email to SWD_Chambers@miwb.uscourts.gov, sufficiently in advance of the hearing for staff to make arrangements. The email must identify the hearing at issue, the person requesting permission, the requester’s phone number, and the reason for the request. The court may grant or deny permission in its discretion depending on the timing and circumstances of the request.

Chief Judge Dales, in his discretion and depending on local circumstances, may require all persons within the courtroom (including, but not limited to, attorneys, litigants, witnesses, visitors, employees, court security officers, or others) to (i) wear facial coverings (*e.g.*, masks) covering

mouth and nose; and (ii) practice social distancing, all in accordance with the advice and guidance of public health authorities. The Clerk will make masks available in the courtroom, as needed.

Dated: September 23, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott W. Dales", written above a horizontal line.

Scott W. Dales
Chief Judge