

## COURT SERVICES

### Check-Out the Court's External Procedure Manual

By Hon. Karen S. Jennemann, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge

Over the last five years, every person working at the Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida has worked together to develop consistent and internal procedures to process the common matters filed before our Bankruptcy Court. The work was tedious, difficult, and ultimately resulted in a manual our staff uses district-wide. We call it “The Source.” Our goal now is to transform these *internal* procedures into *external* procedures our attorneys, their staff, and our litigants can use to comply with our requests.

Now, I am so pleased to announce we recently posted our first attempt at an External Procedure Manual. If you go to the Procedures tab on our website, you can scroll down and find this link for the manual: <http://www.flmb.uscourts.gov/proguide/index.htm>.

In this initial version, you will see a list of items routinely filed with our Court. The items are divided between Adversary Proceedings and main case Bankruptcy items. They follow the procedures we internally use every day district-wide.

Each entry also contains (when appropriate) sample motions and orders you and your staff can use to draft your own papers. Remember, though, these forms are generic suggestions. Parties and their attorneys must revise them to address the unique circumstances of each case. But, they are starting templates. Every month we will add to and improve this list. Eventually, over the next year, we slowly will migrate other procedures into the manual. And, the External Procedural Manual will be the “one-stop shop” to answer your questions.

We also want to make the manual as user-friendly as possible. In three months, we will conduct a formal survey to get your input. But, prior to then, please email me questions or suggestions ([Karen\\_Jennemann@flmb.uscourts.gov](mailto:Karen_Jennemann@flmb.uscourts.gov)). This is truly a work in progress. We want to make this the best tool possible to help our attorneys and litigants.

The External Procedure Manual, even in this nascent stage of development, was the work of many people bringing special gifts to the project. **Jessica Ronay** and **Sarah Weiner** had the vision and prepared the initial draft, after scouring years of internal procedures. Our IT experts, **Bill Miguenes** and **Marco Eguia**, transformed the manual into a text searchable format we hope is user-friendly. **Raymond Waguespack** and **Christine Baker** oversaw the final revisions and the entire posting process, which involved a multitude of final decisions and revisions. Together these folks (and many others) converted every single internal procedure into an external version including checklists, sample forms, and sample orders. They each deserve a special thank you.

The best way for you to show your appreciation is to use the External Procedure Manual. We are keeping track of the “hits” on the website. So, every time you click on the manual, you are saying “Thank you for your work.” We hope you will use it OFTEN!