

Local Rules Update: Transitioning to a Comprehensive Four-Year Review Process

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The Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida is restructuring (pun intended) the Local Rules amendment process, moving from an annual review system to a comprehensive review system. The new process introduces a four-year cycle, a revised committee structure, and longer review periods.

Key Changes to the Local Rules Revision Process

- **Four-Year Review Cycle:** Amendments to the Local Rules will now occur on a regular basis every four years, rather than annually. This longer review period allows for a thorough review of all rules, impacts of any amendments thereto, and thoughtful consideration of suggestions solicited from the bankruptcy community.
- **Committee Structure:** The Local Rules Lawyers' Advisory Committee, appointed by the Chief Judge and Judicial Chair, will manage the process. The committee will have eight members: five attorneys in private practice (with at least one from each division), one U.S. Trustee attorney, one Judge (Judicial Chair), and one liaison from the Clerk of Court's office. An attorney member will co-chair the committee with the Judicial Chair.
- **Meetings:** Except for emergencies, the committee will meet twice a year. One meeting will be held in person in conjunction with the Tampa presentation of the Judge Michael G. Williamson View from the Florida Bankruptcy Bench.
- **Term Limits:** Committee members, excluding the judicial chair and Clerk's liaison, will serve four-year terms, renewable for one additional term.
- **Emergencies:** Emergency and time-sensitive matters can still be brought to the Committee for consideration outside the regular review process which will be addressed accordingly.
- Starting this year, the revamped Committee will conduct a complete review of all the Local Rules, suggesting amendments based upon their own findings and suggestions from the bankruptcy community. This restructuring aims to provide clear and consistent Local Rules for the bankruptcy community.