

NOTICE TO SALINAS BANKRUPTCY BAR COMMUNITY
RE SALINAS COURTHOUSE

Dear Members of the Salinas Bankruptcy Bar Community,

On behalf of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of California, I am writing to inform you of a decision regarding the courtroom at 1000 South Main, Room 214, Salinas, California. After careful consideration and evaluation, the Bankruptcy Court has decided not to reopen this non-resident courtroom.

The Bankruptcy Court's decision is motivated by several factors, most particularly operating costs. The Bankruptcy Court's space is not owned by the federal government but is leased from a private party. Previously, the space was shared with both the District Court and the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the United States Trustee. Both have discontinued use of the space. Going forward, the cost of renting the space would fall solely on the Bankruptcy Court. The space also requires computer and telephonic connections that are expensive to maintain. Ongoing reductions in the Bankruptcy Court's staffing have complicated the court's effort to maintain the space and the computer network. It is impossible to justify incurring these costs given the Bankruptcy Court's limited use of the space – one day per month. Finally, the security provided for employees is inadequate in view of current Judicial Conference specifications for remote facilities.

Since 2020, chapter 13 proceedings assigned to Salinas have been conducted exclusively by remote means, including by telephone and video conference. This has reduced travel and appearance time for the Bankruptcy Court, the lawyers, and parties in interest. Remote hearings have been an effective means of serving the community. The court intends to continue using remote hearings for Salinas cases. Should an evidentiary hearing be required in any Salinas case or adversary proceeding, the Bankruptcy Court will do its best to make suitable arrangements that are convenient to the parties.

The Bankruptcy Court remains committed to serving the Salinas chapter 13 community. If you have comments or suggestions, please inform me by writing in care of the Bankruptcy Court's San Jose Division, 280 S. First Street, San Jose, California, 95113.

Stephen L. Johnson
Chief Judge