UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE

EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

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IN RE: HURRICANE IDA CLAIMS

<u>ORDER</u>

This Order addresses two growing problems involving cases that are subject to the Hurricane Ida CMO: (1) the filing of Motions to Compel and/or for Sanctions related to allegedly deficient initial disclosures and (2) failure to timely pay Court-appointed neutrals for mediations that have been conducted pursuant to this Court's Streamlined Settlement Program.

1. **Disputes over Required Disclosures.** As of the date of this Order, except as to questions of privilege, no Motion to Compel shall be filed unless and until the parties seek a conference with the Chief Magistrate Judge for the purpose of resolving the dispute without formal motion practice. If that conference does not resolve the dispute, the Court will issue an Order permitting the filing of a motion to compel. Disputes over claims of privilege are not subject to this requirement and shall be handled pursuant to the terms of the CMO at Section 2.

2. **Timely Payment for Mediation Services.** Considering that the members of this Court's panel of neutrals are an integral part of this Court's Hurricane Ida Case Management Order, the Court will not allow payment for their services to be delayed

and dependent on law firm/client arrangements concerning the timing and auditing of billing for legal services. Therefore, as of this date, attorneys and their law firms are hereby notified that they are responsible to ensure that mediators are paid on a timely basis and in accordance with the terms set forth in their respective invoices. Failure to pay on those terms will be deemed a violation of this Order and the Court will address failures to pay timely for mediation services as such.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, this 17th day of June, 2024.

For the en banc court:

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NANNETTE JOLIVETTE BROWN
CHIEF JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA