

Cause No. D-1-GV-12-001713

THE STATE OF TEXAS,	§	IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF
Plaintiff	§	
	§	
	§	
v.	§	TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS
	§	
GRAMERCY INSURANCE	§	
COMPANY	§	
Defendant	§	53 <sup>RD</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT

**ORDER OF REFERENCE TO MASTER**

**I. FINDINGS**

This case is a delinquency proceeding brought pursuant to TEX. INS. CODE ANN. Chapter 443. Insurance receiverships are inherently exceptional cases requiring expert review by the Court. TEX. INS. CODE Chapter 443 imposes a duty on the Court to approve numerous complex actions during the course of the delinquency proceeding. Therefore, in order to provide the requisite judicial supervision of this proceeding, the Court finds that it is necessary to appoint a master herein under Rule 171 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

The Court further finds that both the State of Texas and the Receiver for the Defendant have consented to the appointment of a master, and that the Receiver has consented to the payment of the master's reasonable fees and expenses from the assets of the receivership estate.

**II. APPOINTMENT**

Tom Collins, State Bar No. 04619800, is appointed as master in this proceeding. He is not an attorney for any party. He is not related to any party. He is qualified by education and experience to serve as a master.

### III. POWERS

The master shall make recommendations to the Court regarding the matters listed below, with references to the applicable provisions of the Texas Insurance Code:

1. Sec. 443.005: Motions filed under Subsection (e) to stay proceedings.
2. Sec. 443.007: Motions filed under Subsection (g) to require an objecting party to pay the costs and fees of defending an action.
3. Sec. 443.008: Motions filed under Subsection (a) for orders or stays to carry out Chapter 443 or an approved rehabilitation plan, except for temporary restraining orders and injunctions; motions filed under Subsection (d) to extend a stay; motions filed under Subsection (h) for relief, termination, annulment, modification, or conditioning of a stay; and motions filed under Subsection (k) for sanctions for a violation of a stay.
4. Sec. 443.014: Applications filed under Subsection (l) to approve the payment of any settlement submitted to the Court for approval.
5. Sec. 443.015: Applications filed under Subsection (c) to approve the compensation and expenses of the Special Deputy Receiver and any contractors, or establish thresholds for Court approval for such compensation and expenses; applications filed under Subsection (d) to approve compensation, anticipated expenses, or incurred expenses; and applications filed under Subsection (g) to establish reporting periods.
6. Sec. 443.016: Requirements under Subsection (b) for financial reporting.
7. Sec. 443.056: Motions filed under Subsection (d) to terminate confidentiality obligations.
8. Sec. 443.102: Applications filed under Subsection (b) to cancel policies, contracts annuities, surety bonds or undertakings, or transfer policies, insurance and reinsurance contracts, or surety bonds or undertakings.
9. Sec. 443.103: Applications filed under Subsection (a) to approve a rehabilitation plan, and objections to a rehabilitation plan filed under Subsection (b).

10. Sec. 443.104: Motions filed under Subsections (a) or (b) for an order of liquidation, and motions filed under Subsection (c) for an order terminating rehabilitation.
11. Sec. 443.201: Motions filed under Subsection (b) to determine entitlement to property; motions filed under Subsection (c) claiming a right to retain property; and motions filed under Subsection (d) requesting the delivery of the property.
12. Sec. 443.203: Motions filed under Subsection (b) to determine remedies for a transferee or obligee of a voided transfer or obligation.
13. Sec. 443.204: Motions filed under Subsection (i) (2) regarding the preservation of a lien or the execution of a conveyance, and motions filed under Subsection (i) (3) to determine the value of the property or lien.
14. Sec. 443.207: Motions filed under Subsection (e) for the recovery of property or its value.
15. Sec. 443.208: Motions filed under Subsection (a) to extend the time to deliver money or property after the entry of a final judgment.
16. Sec. 443.210: Applications filed under Subsection (b) to approve assessments, or for an order to show cause; applications filed under Subsection (e) for orders directing the method of notice; and motions filed under Subsections (f) or (g) for orders determining the liability of a member.
17. Sec. 443.213: Applications filed under Subsection (d) to allocate collateral to secure a deductible agreement and other obligations.
18. Sec. 443.354: Applications for orders directing the disposition of records.
19. Sec. 443.355: External audits of the records of the receivership as ordered by the Court.
20. Any other matters submitted to the Court to approve an action by the Receiver or Special Deputy Receiver, and any other specific questions referred by the Court.

The master is further authorized to conduct conferences or hearings regarding the status of the delinquency proceeding, at his discretion.

#### IV. PROCEEDINGS

The parties must proceed before the master with regard to any matter referred to the master, provided that the master, in his discretion, may request that a District Court Judge hear any matter referred to him under this order. The master may consider the matter by oral hearing or written submission in accordance with the terms of this Order.

The master shall hear all matters that are set for oral hearing at the Texas Department of Insurance, in a location designated for that purpose by the Commissioner of Insurance. All matters submitted to the master shall be delivered to the docket clerk designated by the Commissioner of Insurance at the Texas Department of Insurance.

The Court finds that it is necessary and proper for the master to regulate proceedings before him pursuant to Rule 171 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. The Court therefore adopts the following procedures of practice, which shall apply to any applications or motions filed in this proceeding as specified in this Order, unless otherwise provided by law:

1. Any application or motion within the terms of this Order must be served on the master through his docket clerk, and on all interested parties as determined by the master. The master shall ensure that proper notice is given to all interested parties. The master shall establish a docket schedule for the submission and hearing of such matters.
2. The master may hear argument and testimony, and admit or exclude evidence as permitted under Rule 171 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. Such authority shall include, without limitation, the exclusion of any argument or evidence that is not raised in a timely filed objection.
3. Pursuant to Rule 171 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, and the discretion granted to the Court under TEX. INS. CODE § 443.007 (e) to determine the period for filing objections, the following procedures and deadlines are established:

- (a) The Applicant shall file an application or motion with the Travis County District Clerk and provide notice thereof to all interested parties at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the date on which the matter is set on the master's docket, unless the Applicant requests an expedited hearing for good cause. The Applicant shall give notice of the date on which the matter is set on the master's docket.
- (b) The deadline for the filing of an objection or response shall be not later than three (3) calendar days before the date on which the matter is set on the master's docket, unless the master authorizes additional time for the filing of an objection, or the Applicant and the objecting party otherwise agree. Any party objecting or responding to an application must file such objection or response with the Travis County District Clerk, and serve a copy by such date on the master through his docket clerk and on all interested parties, including those listed on the Applicant's Certificate of Service. The written objection must specify the basis for the objection, with references to and discussion of supporting legal authority.
- (c) If a matter is set for submission, an objecting party shall expeditiously coordinate with Applicant's counsel and the master's docket clerk to obtain an oral hearing, unless the master determines that an oral hearing is not necessary. The objecting party shall serve a Notice of Oral Hearing on applicant's counsel and all interested parties, including those listed on the Applicant's Certificate of Service.
- (d) The master shall promptly report his recommendation to the Court, and submit a proposed order. If no objection is timely filed to the application or motion as set forth above, the Court may enter the proposed order upon its submission to the Court by the master. If an objection is timely filed to the application or motion as set forth above, notice of the recommendation and order shall be provided by the master's docket clerk to the Applicant and the objecting party. If any party objects to the master's recommendation, the party shall file its objection within ten (10) days of the submission of the recommendation and proposed order to the Court, and set a hearing before the District Court Judge. A copy of any objection with notice of hearing shall be served on the master and all interested parties.

## **V. ASSISTANCE TO THE MASTER**

The District Clerk, the Receiver, and any Special Deputy Receiver are ORDERED to provide reasonable clerical and other assistance the master deems necessary to perform his duties. Any such expenses shall be payable as a cost of administration of the receivership.

