

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

Jane Doe I et al. v. Edwin Chaparro

Chaparro · No. Civil Action No. 25-13961 (ZNQ) (RLS) · Decided December 22, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of New Jersey grants Jane Doe I and Jane Doe II’s motion to proceed pseudonymously in their sexual-assault-related civil action against Edwin Chaparro. Applying the Third Circuit’s factors from Doe v. Megless, the court concludes that Plaintiffs’ reasonable fears of severe psychological and reputational harm outweigh the public interest in disclosure of their identities. The court orders that Plaintiffs be identified by their pseudonyms in all litigation materials and proceedings.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of New Jersey
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Rukhsanah L. Singh
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of New Jersey
DECIDED	December 22, 2025
DOCKET	Civil Action No. 25-13961 (ZNQ) (RLS)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiffs moved to proceed pseudonymously. The court decided the motion on the written submissions without oral argument and granted it.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court exercised its discretion to determine whether plaintiffs established a reasonable fear of severe harm from disclosure and whether the balance of the Megless factors favored proceeding pseudonymously.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court memorandum opinion and order; precedential status unknown

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- personal injury
- assault
- battery
- negligence

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiffs established a reasonable fear of severe harm from public disclosure of their identities.
2. Whether the factors identified in *Doe v. Megless* favored permitting Plaintiffs to proceed under pseudonyms despite the presumption of open judicial proceedings.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiffs established a reasonable fear of severe harm because their sworn certifications showed that disclosure could significantly harm their mental health and interfere with recovery from trauma and PTSD.
2. The balance of the *Megless* factors heavily favored allowing Plaintiffs to proceed pseudonymously because they had consistently protected their identities, faced substantial emotional and reputational harm from disclosure, and were members of a vulnerable class, while the public had no heightened interest in their identities.
3. Plaintiffs shall proceed pseudonymously as Jane Doe I and Jane Doe II, and the parties, counsel, witnesses, and court personnel must use those pseudonyms; Defendant may not file documents containing Plaintiffs' legal names without a specific court order.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Nonetheless, courts create an exception to permit a litigant to proceed anonymously upon a showing that: (1) there is a fear of severe harm from public disclosure of his or her name; and (2) the fear of severe harm is reasonable.” (at 4)

“Considering the weight of these factors in totality, the Court finds that the balance leans heavily in favor of granting Plaintiffs leave to proceed pseudonymously in this matter.” (at 10)

“Defendant is prohibited from filing or submitting any documents to the Court that contain references to Plaintiffs’ legal names without specific order of this Court.” (at 10-11)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiffs allege that Defendant sexually assaulted them when they were approximately eight years old and later pleaded guilty to two counts of second-degree sexual assault. Both plaintiffs certified that they had maintained the confidentiality of their identities and that public disclosure could aggravate PTSD-related symptoms, including anxiety, fear, misplaced guilt, and, for Jane Doe II, prior suicidal thoughts. Jane Doe II also feared reputational harm and harassment in her work as a social worker.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs filed this diversity action on July 31, 2025, using the pseudonyms Jane Doe I and Jane Doe II. They moved for permission to proceed anonymously; Defendant appeared pro se but did not oppose the motion. The court applied the Third Circuit's *Doe v. Megless* framework and granted the motion.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Doe v. Megless, 654 F.3d 404 (3d Cir. 2011)
- Doe v. Coll. of New Jersey, 997 F.3d 489 (3d Cir. 2021)
- Doe v. Shao, No. 24-9972, 2025 WL 942929, at *2 (D.N.J. Mar. 28, 2025)
- Doe v. Hillsborough Twp. Bd. of Educ., No. 23-22597, 2024 WL 4028293, at *4 (D.N.J. Aug. 30, 2024)
- Doe v. Provident Life and Acc. Ins. Co., 176 F.R.D. 464 (E.D. Pa. 1997)
- Doe v. Rutgers, No. 18-12952, 2019 WL 1967021 (D.N.J. Apr. 30, 2019)
- Doe v. Lyft, Inc., No. 23-3990, 2023 WL 8702729 (E.D. Pa. Dec. 15, 2023)
- Doe v. Oshrin, 299 F.R.D. 100, 103 (D.N.J. 2014)
- In re Allergan BIOCELL Textured Breast Implant Prod. Liab. Litig., No. 19-2921, 2020 WL 4745558, at *2 (D.N.J. Aug. 17, 2020)
- Doe v. Trishul Consultancy, LLC, No. 18-16468, 2019 WL 4750078 (D.N.J. Sept. 30, 2019)
- Doe v. Evans, 202 F.R.D. 173 (E.D. Pa. 2001)
- Strike 3 Holdings, LLC v. Doe, No. 24-9433, 2025 WL 37614, at *3 (D.N.J. Jan. 7, 2025)
- Y.F. v. ADT, LLC, No. 24-9012, 2025 WL 1645254, at *4, *6-7 (D.N.J. June 10, 2025)
- Doe v. Schuylkill Cnty. Courthouse, No. 21-477, 2022 WL 1424983, at *8 (M.D. Pa. May 5, 2022)
- L.A. v. Hoffman, No. 14-6895, 2015 WL 4461852, at *2 (D.N.J. July 21, 2015)
- Doe v. Princeton Univ., No. 20-4352, 2020 WL 3962268, at *3 (D.N.J. July 13, 2020)
- Doe v. Rider Univ., No. 16-4882, 2018 WL 3756950, at *1, *5 (D.N.J. Aug. 7, 2018)
- Doe v. Genesis HealthCare, 535 F. Supp. 3d 335, 341 (E.D. Pa. 2021)