

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Strike 3 Holdings, LLC v. John Doe Subscriber Assigned IP Address 98.234.250.188

Strike 3 Holdings · No. 3:26-cv-00160 · Decided January 29, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California grants Strike 3 Holdings, LLC leave to serve a third-party Rule 45 subpoena on Comcast Cable or another identified internet service provider to disclose the identity and address associated with IP address 98.234.250.188. The order establishes notice, preservation, objection, production, confidentiality, and limited-use requirements for the subpoenaed information.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	J. Cisneros
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	January 29, 2026
DOCKET	3:26-cv-00160
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff sought ex parte leave to serve a third-party Rule 45 subpoena on the Internet service provider associated with the anonymous defendant's IP address before the Rule 26(f) conference.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Good-cause standard for expedited third-party discovery before the Rule 26(f) conference.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished and nonprecedential district court order

TOPICS

- discovery dispute
- civil procedure
- copyright infringement
- intellectual property

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- copyright
- third-party discovery
- anonymous defendant identification

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff established good cause to serve a third-party Rule 45 subpoena before the Rule 26(f) conference.
2. What notice, confidentiality, preservation, and use restrictions should govern disclosure of the anonymous subscriber's identifying information.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff established good cause to serve a Rule 45 subpoena on Comcast Cable before the Rule 26(f) conference to obtain the true name and address of the subscriber assigned the identified IP address.
2. Any disclosure must be preceded by subscriber notice and an opportunity to contest, and the identifying information must be preserved, provisionally filed under seal, and used only to protect and enforce Plaintiff's rights in the action.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Plaintiff has established “good cause” to serve a third-party subpoena on Comcast Cable (the ISP).” (at 1)

“Each subscriber and ISP shall have 30 days from the date of service upon them to file a motion in this Court contesting the subpoena (including a motion to quash or modify the subpoena).” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Strike 3 Holdings alleged that the anonymous defendant was associated with IP address 98.234.250.188 and sought the defendant's true name and address from Comcast Cable, the relevant Internet service provider. The requested discovery was intended to identify the Doe defendant in a copyright action. The court conditioned disclosure on subscriber notice and procedural safeguards.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Strike 3 Holdings, LLC filed a copyright action against an unidentified subscriber associated with IP address 98.234.250.188. Before the Rule 26(f) conference, Plaintiff applied ex parte for leave to subpoena Comcast Cable and potentially other identified service providers to disclose the subscriber's identifying information. The court granted the requested leave subject to notice, an opportunity to move to quash or modify, preservation, confidentiality, and use restrictions.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- UMG Recording, Inc. v. Doe, 2008 WL 4104214, *4 (N.D. Cal. 2008)
- Arista Records LLC v. Does 1-19, 551 F. Supp. 2d 1, 6-7 (D.D.C. 2008)

