

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE
ISLAND

Allison L. MacDonald v. Hasbro Managerial Services, LLC and
Hasbro Inc.

MacDonald v. Hasbro Managerial Services, LLC, C.A. No. 1:25-cv-00096-MSM-AEM (D.R.I. June 18, 2026) ·
No. C.A. No. 1:25-cv-00096-MSM-AEM · Decided June 18, 2026

SUMMARY

The court partially granted and partially denied Plaintiff Allison L. MacDonald’s motion to compel discovery and denied her motion for sanctions in an employment discrimination and retaliation action against Hasbro Managerial Services, LLC and Hasbro Inc. The court ordered further negotiations and production concerning electronically stored information, employee and workplace records, interrogatory responses, and specified requests for production, while declining to waive privilege or impose sanctions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Amy E. Moses
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island
DECIDED	June 18, 2026
DOCKET	C.A. No. 1:25-cv-00096-MSM-AEM
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to strike discovery objections and compel discovery responses and separately moved for sanctions. The motions were referred to the magistrate judge for determination under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(A) and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(a).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Discovery disputes were decided under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, including relevance and proportionality under Rule 26(b), and the moving party's burden to show that requested discovery is relevant and proportional.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court memorandum and order; limited persuasive value

PARTIES

Allison L. MacDonald v. Hasbro Managerial Services, LLC, Hasbro Inc.

TOPICS

discovery dispute

civil procedure

employment discrimination

pregnancy discrimination

retaliation

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

employment law

employment discrimination

discovery

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether defendants should be compelled to provide additional responses and production to specified interrogatories and requests for production.
2. Whether the parties should be required to renegotiate search terms and use search-term hit reports to create a workable and proportional ESI protocol.
3. Whether defendants waived privilege objections by not yet identifying withheld documents or producing a privilege log.
4. Whether plaintiff was entitled to sanctions, expenses, and attorney fees under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 26(g) and 37(a)(5), or 28 U.S.C. § 1927.

HOLDINGS

1. A proposed ESI search returning more than three million potentially responsive documents, with extraordinary review costs and delay, was not proportional to the needs of the case. The parties were required to renegotiate search terms using the agreed custodial and non-custodial sources and to produce responsive, nonprivileged documents under a mutually agreeable protocol.
2. Plaintiff was entitled to partial relief on numerous interrogatories and requests for production. Defendants were ordered to negotiate and run workable search terms, produce responsive nonprivileged documents, provide agreed information concerning retained and terminated employees when their HR systems became accessible, narrow certain pattern-and-practice requests to employees in plaintiff's department from 2019 through 2024, supplement specified interrogatory answers, identify certain individuals, provide an organizational chart or clarify that none exists, and provide privilege logs.
3. Defendants did not waive privilege objections merely because they had not yet identified privileged documents or produced a privilege log. The privilege issue was premature in light of the additional discovery ordered, but defendants were required to provide a privilege log for documents withheld thus far within 30 days and to accompany future productions with a privilege log.
4. Sanctions, expenses, and attorney fees were not warranted because responsibility for the delay in reaching workable search terms rested with both parties, and plaintiff's motion was granted only in part while being significantly limited in other respects.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The burden and expense required for Defendants to review over 3 million documents are not proportional to the needs of this case, to say nothing of how significantly such an undertaking would delay the case.”
(Section II.B)

“The parties have already agreed to custodians and are now ordered to agree to a list of mutually agreeable search terms— that hit on a workable number of documents for both parties—within 30 days from the entry of this Order.” (Section II.B)

“Plaintiff’s Motion to Strike Objections and Compel Discovery Responses (ECF No. 32) is GRANTED IN PART and DENIED IN PART as specifically detailed herein.” (Section IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that Hasbro terminated her employment while she was on or near pregnancy- and parental-leave-related absences, discriminating and retaliating against her based on gender, sex, pregnancy, childbirth, and caregiver status. During discovery, the parties negotiated custodians and search terms for electronically stored information. A proposed search generated approximately 3.1 million documents and 2,547.6 gigabytes of data, with estimated processing, hosting, and attorney-review costs exceeding \$3.7 million, leading to the dispute before the court.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff served interrogatories and requests for production in an employment-discrimination action. After the parties disputed custodians, search terms, and the scope and burden of electronically stored information searches, they participated in two informal discovery conferences but failed to finalize a workable protocol. Plaintiff then moved to compel and for sanctions. The court granted the motion to compel in part and denied it in part, and denied sanctions.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Doelger v. JP Morgan Chase Bank, N.A., Civil No. 21-11042-AK, 2022 WL 22837136, at *4-5 (D. Mass. Oct. 20, 2022)
- Sun v. Geffen, 25 Civ. No. 995, 2026 WL 353608, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. Feb. 9, 2026)
- TSG Plastics Trading, Co. v. Toray Plastics, C.A. No. 09-336S, 2010 WL 936221, at *2 (D.R.I. Mar. 12, 2010)
- Aponte Navedo v. Nalco Chem. Co., 268 F.R.D. 31, 37 (D.P.R. 2010)