

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Patricia Laucella, Natalia Jovovich, and Nicole Rose Lomis v.
Medtronic, Inc., et al.

Laucella v. Medtronic · No. 2:25-cv-00466-SB-PVCx · Decided July 1, 2025

SUMMARY

This document is a stipulated protective order entered in Patricia Laucella et al. v. Medtronic, Inc., a wrongful-death products-liability action involving a medical device. It governs the designation, disclosure, use, filing, handling, and return or destruction of confidential discovery materials, including medical records and proprietary device information.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Pedro V. Castillo
DECIDED	July 1, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-00466-SB-PVCx
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The parties stipulated to entry of a protective order governing the treatment, disclosure, use, designation, and filing of confidential discovery materials.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Patricia Laucella, Natalia Jovovich, Nicole Rose Lomis v. Medtronic, Inc., Does 1 through 100

TOPICS

- discovery dispute
- medical records privacy
- civil procedure
- products liability
- wrongful death

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- discovery
- product liability
- wrongful death
- health law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether good cause supported entry of the parties' stipulated protective order governing confidential discovery materials.
2. What restrictions and procedures should govern the designation, disclosure, use, filing, return, and destruction of confidential information and inadvertently disclosed privileged material.

HOLDINGS

1. Good cause supported entry of the stipulated protective order, and the court ordered that discovery in the action be subject to its restrictions and procedures.
2. Information designated as confidential under the order may be used only in connection with the litigation and may be disclosed only to specified categories of persons subject to the order's conditions.
3. Inadvertent disclosure of confidential, privileged, or work-product material does not waive the applicable confidentiality, privilege, immunity, or protection, subject to the notice and dispute procedures established by the order.
4. The protective order does not itself authorize filing materials under seal; any party seeking to file protected material under seal must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5 and obtain a court order authorizing sealing of the specific material.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"This Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from the court to file material under seal." (Introduction)

"This Protective Order is intended to facilitate the disclosure of such information, not prevent it." (Stipulated Protective Order ¶ 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiffs allege that Erik Lomis died as a result of a manufacturing defect in a Medtronic Evera XT DR DDBB1D4 device implanted in him. Discovery is expected to include the decedent's confidential health records and Medtronic's trade secrets, research and development information, and other proprietary commercial and technical information. The parties sought a protective order to facilitate discovery while limiting disclosure and use of protected materials.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs brought a wrongful-death and product-liability action alleging that a manufacturing defect in a Medtronic cardiac device caused Erik Lomis's death. Because discovery was expected to involve confidential medical records, trade secrets, research and development information, and proprietary financial and technical information, the parties jointly petitioned the court to enter a stipulated protective order. The magistrate judge entered the order for good cause shown.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- United States ex rel. Dan Abrams Co. LLC v. Medtronic, Inc., No. 215CV01212JAKASX, 2021 WL 5113487, at *1 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 3, 2021)

OPINION

Patricia Laucella v. Medtronic, Inc.

PER CURIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

9 WESTERN DIVISION

10 PATRICIA LAUCELLA, individually Case No.: 2:25-cv-00466-SB-PVCx 11 and on behalf of
the Estate of ERIK

LOMIS; NATALIA JOVOVICH; and

12 NICOLE ROSE LOMIS STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER

13 Plaintiffs, 14 v. 15 MEDTRONIC, INC.; and DOES 1 through 100, 16 Defendants. 17 18 19 20
INTRODUCTION

21 Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, 22 proprietary, or
private information for which special protection from public 23 disclosure and from use for any
purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may 24 be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby
stipulate to and petition the Court to 25 enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. 26 The
parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections 27 on all disclosures or
responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from 1 entitled to confidential treatment
under the applicable legal principles. The parties 2 further acknowledge that this Stipulated
Protective Order does not entitle them to 3 file confidential information under seal; Civil Local
Rule 79-5 sets forth the 4 procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be applied
when a party 5 seeks permission from the court to file material under seal. Specifically, under
Civil 6 Local Rule 79-5, the parties acknowledge that if any party seeks to file under seal 7 any
Protected Material it must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected 8 Material may only be
filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the 9 sealing of the specific Protected
Material at issue. If a Party's request to file 10 Protected Material under seal is denied by the court,
then the Receiving Party may 11 file the information in the public record unless otherwise
instructed by the court. 12 Good cause exists to support the entry of this protective order.
Plaintiffs' 13 Complaint alleges that Plaintiffs were damaged by the wrongful death of Decedent,
14 Erik Lomis ("Decedent"). SAC ¶ 1. Plaintiffs further allege that a manufacturing 15 defect

present in the Medtronic Evera™ XT DR DDBB1D4 (“the Device”) 16 implanted in Decedent caused the event. Id. ¶ 2. As such, discovery in this action 17 will necessarily include disclosure of Decedent’s confidential health records as well 18 as trade secrets, valuable research and development information, and other financial, 19 technical, and proprietary information related to the Device for which special 20 protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than 21 prosecution of this action is warranted. See, e.g., United States ex rel. Dan Abrams 22 Co. LLC v. Medtronic, Inc., No. 215CV01212JAKASX, 2021 WL 5113487, at *1 23 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 3, 2021). Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to 24 facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery 25 materials, to adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep 26 confidential, to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of 27 such material in preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to address their handling 1 information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that information 2 will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that nothing be so 3 designated without a good faith belief that it has been maintained in a confidential, 4 non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public 5 record of this case.

6 STIPULATED PROTECTIVE ORDER

7 The parties have hereby stipulated and agreed, and therefore IT IS 8 ORDERED, that all discovery, including documents produced in this action, shall 9 be subject to the following restrictions, and that the following terms and conditions 10 shall govern the treatment of Confidential Information. 11 1. Confidential Information. “Confidential Information” refers to 12 information, documents, or other material that the designating party reasonably and 13 in good faith believes constitutes or reflects trade secrets or information whose 14 confidentiality is otherwise protectable under applicable law. This includes but is 15 not limited to confidential research, development, or commercial information, 16 personal medical information, private personal information, protected health 17 information, tax returns, and other information reasonably sought to be kept 18 confidential. 19 2. Designation of Confidential Information. Any party may 20 reasonably designate any document containing Confidential Information, or portion 21 thereof, which it may produce as “Confidential” by labeling the document to be so 22 designated substantially as follows: “CONFIDENTIAL: SUBJECT TO 23 PROTECTIVE ORDER.” The designation CONFIDENTIAL: SUBJECT TO 24 PROTECTIVE ORDER does not mean that the document has any status or 25 protection by statute or otherwise except to the extent and for the purposes of this 26 Order. 27 3. Use of Confidential Information. Anyone who is provided with 1 solely in connection with this action, shall keep such information strictly 2 confidential, and shall in no way disclose such information, or any portion, 3 summary, abstract or other derivation thereof, to any firm, person, or entity, except 4 as provided in paragraph 4. No party may withhold any responsive document from 5 production on the basis that it contains or constitutes Confidential Information. This 6 Protective Order is intended to facilitate the disclosure of such information, not 7 prevent it. 8 4. Disclosure of Confidential Information. Access to

Confidential Information shall be limited to: (a) Attorneys. Attorneys of record and other personnel in their law firm(s) (including other attorneys, paralegals, and other staff personnel) who require access for the purpose of representing any party in this action. (b) Named parties. The named parties in this action. (c) Experts and consultants. Outside experts or consultants retained in connection with this action, provided that they first shall be shown and shall read a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order, and shall execute a Confidentiality Agreement in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A. Counsel shall retain executed Confidentiality Agreements for consultants and experts, but shall not be required to produce them absent Court order upon showing of good cause. (d) Witnesses. Witnesses who testify at depositions, hearings, or trial, if any such further proceedings occur in this case. (e) Court reporters and videographers. Court reporters and videographers appearing at depositions, hearings, or trial, if any such further proceedings occur in this case. (g) Vendors. Vendors hired by a party to host data and maintain a database of electronic data or perform other work related to the collection, review, or production of documents in this case. (h) Other persons. Without the necessity of a Court order, any other person who the parties jointly agree may have access to the Confidential Information.

5. Non-Waiver of Confidentiality or Objection to Production. Review of Confidential Information by any person in paragraph 4 shall not waive the confidentiality of that information.

6. Inadvertent Disclosure of Confidential Information. The inadvertent, unintentional, or in camera disclosure of Confidential Information shall not be deemed a waiver, in whole or in part, of any party's claim of confidentiality. Within fifteen (15) days of discovering such inadvertent or unintentional disclosure, any party to this Order may advise the other parties that the Confidential Information is to be designated as Confidential under the terms of this Order.

7. Inadvertent Disclosure of Privileged Information. In the interest of expediting discovery in this proceeding and avoiding unnecessary costs, (a) inadvertent or unintentional disclosure in this litigation of privileged information and/or work product shall not be deemed a waiver, in whole or in part, of any otherwise valid claim of privilege, immunity, or other protection; and (b) failure to assert a privilege and/or work product in this litigation as to one document or communication shall not be deemed to constitute a waiver, in whole or in part, of the privilege, immunity, or other protection as to any other document or communication allegedly so protected, even involving the same subject matter. In the case of inadvertently produced privileged and/or work product documents, upon the recipient becoming aware that he or she has received such documents that were inadvertently produced, or upon a request made by the producing party, the documents shall be returned forthwith to the party claiming privilege and/or work product immunity. Any party may, within five (5) court days after notification of inadvertent disclosure under this paragraph, object to the claim of inadvertence by notifying the designating or producing party in writing of that objection and specifying the designated or produced material to which the objection is made. The parties shall confer within fifteen (15) days of service of any written objection. If the objection is not

resolved, the designating party shall, within fifteen (15) days of the conference, file and serve a motion to resolve the dispute. If a motion is filed, information subject to dispute shall be treated consistently with the designating or producing party's most recent designation until otherwise ordered by the Court.

8. Depositions. Any deposition which a party determines will or might reasonably include disclosure of Confidential Information shall be attended only by those persons entitled to receive such Confidential Information pursuant to this Order, but this shall not be construed to allow any such person to attend a deposition he or she otherwise would not be allowed to attend. During a deposition, any party may ask the reporter to designate certain portions of the testimony as confidential, in which case the confidential portions shall be separately transcribed and labeled as confidential. In addition, within thirty (30) days after a copy of the transcript taken at the deposition is delivered to the parties, counsel may designate the entirety or any specified portion of the transcript or exhibits thereto as Confidential by letter to the opposing party. Until such thirty-day period expires, the entirety of such transcripts and all exhibits thereto shall be treated as Confidential and subject to this Order. After such thirty-day period expires, such transcripts, exhibits or portions thereof designated as Confidential shall be treated as such under this Order. If no such designation is made within thirty days, such transcripts or exhibits shall not be subject to this Order, except as later agreed by the parties.

9. Filing With Court. In filing materials with the Court in pretrial deposition testimony designated as Confidential, and only those specific portions of briefs, applications, and other filings that either contain verbatim Confidential Information or set forth the substance of such Confidential Information. Pursuant to Civil Local Rule 79-5, protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue. Thus, the Court retains the power, either upon motion of any interested party or on its own motion, to determine whether materials filed under seal shall remain sealed. Any such Confidential Information shall be filed under seal, in a sealed envelope (or other sealed container) marked with the title of this action, the title of each such transcript or document being filed, and a statement substantially in the following form:

CONFIDENTIAL

Pursuant to the Stipulated Protective Order dated _____, 202__, this envelope containing the above-entitled transcripts or documents filed by [the name of the party], is not to be opened nor the contents thereof displayed or revealed, except in accordance with an Order of the Court.

10. Objection to Designation. If any party to the litigation disputes the designation of any document or information as Confidential Information, before seeking the assistance of the Court, the parties must first confer in good faith in an attempt to resolve the question of whether or on what terms the document or information is entitled to Confidential treatment. The party objecting to the Confidential designation shall notify the designating party in writing, and the designating party shall respond within fifteen (15) days. If the parties are unable to agree as to whether the document or information is properly designated as Confidential

Information, the designating party must file an appropriate motion with the Court within fifteen (15) days. The burden of proving the propriety of the 1 does not file an appropriate motion with the Court within fifteen (15) days, then the 2 document or information will lose its Confidential designation. Otherwise, until a 3 resolution of the dispute is achieved either through consent or Court order, the 4 parties shall treat the designated document or information as Confidential 5 Information. 6 11. Return of Confidential Information. Upon the termination of 7 this action, whether by Court order, judgment, settlement, or otherwise, including 8 the termination of any appeals, each party will return to the other or destroy all 9 documents (including copies and reproductions) designated as Confidential. The 10 return or destruction of Confidential materials shall be completed within thirty (30) 11 days after termination of this action. Any attorney of record in this action who 12 provides access to Confidential Information to any expert, consultant, witness, or 13 other person (as defined in paragraph 4) is responsible for the retrieval from any 14 such expert, consultant, witness, or other person of all documents designated as 15 Confidential; and the work product prepared by any such expert, consultant, 16 witness, or other person derived from that Confidential Information shall be 17 destroyed and/or returned to that attorney of record. This Order, and the obligation 18 to keep Confidential Information confidential, shall survive the final termination of 19 this action. 20 12. Request to Produce Confidential Information by Subpoena or 21 Otherwise. If any party who has received Confidential Information is asked to 22 produce such information, by subpoena or otherwise, for purposes of use in a 23 separate legal action, the party receiving such a request shall promptly inform the 24 producing party that such request has been received and shall object to such request 25 on the basis of this Order. 26 13. Waiver of Privilege and Admissibility. Nothing in this Order 27 shall be deemed a waiver of any type of privilege applicable to any type of 1 construed to affect the evidentiary admissibility of any Confidential Information, 2 and absent order of the Court, there will be no restrictions because of this Order on 3 the use of any document that may be introduced by any party during any hearing, 4 including trial. 5 14. Use at Trial. Nothing in this Order shall govern the use of 6 Confidential Information at any trial of this action. Questions regarding the 7 protection for Confidential Information during trial shall be presented to the Court 8 prior to or during trial as each party deems appropriate. 9 15. Non-Party's Confidential Information. Any non-party 10 producing discovery material or giving deposition testimony in this action may avail 11 herself, himself, or itself of the confidential treatment provided for in this Order for 12 her, his, or its discovery material or testimony by following the procedures provided 13 herein. 14 16. No Confidential Information shall be Impounded with the 15 Court. No Confidential Information or material that a party seeks to have 16 designated or treated as Confidential Information shall be impounded or stored with 17 the Court. 18 17. Modification. This Order shall not prevent any party from 19 applying to the Court for modification of the Order or for further relief. 20 18. Subject to Further Orders of the Court. This Order is subject 21 to the Court's further orders. 22 19. Failure to Comply. Failure to comply with this Order shall be a 23 basis for monetary sanctions or other

appropriate relief. 24 25 26 27 1 20. Subtitles. The subtitles in this Order have been provided for 2
|| convenience only and are not to be considered in construing or interpreting the 3 || meaning of
this Order. 4

5 || FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN BY THE PARTIES' STIPULATION, IT IS SO

6 || ORDERED on this the 1* day of July, 2025. 7 fae 9

10 HON. PEDRO V. CASTILLO

UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

1 EXHIBIT A

2 ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

3 4 I, _____ [full name], of _____ 5 [full address],
declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its entirety and 6 understand the Stipulated
Protective Order that was issued by the United States 7 District Court for the Central District of
California on [date] in the case of Laucella 8 et al. v. Medtronic, Inc, 2:25-cv-00466-SB-PVC. I
agree to comply with and to be 9 bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order and I
understand and 10 acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and
punishment 11 in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner
12 any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any 13 person or
entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order. 14 I further agree to submit to
the jurisdiction of the United States District Court 15 for the Central District of California for the
purpose of enforcing the terms of this 16 Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement
proceedings occur after 17 termination of this action. I hereby appoint
_____ [full 18 name] of
_____ [full address and 19 telephone number] as my
California agent for service of process in connection 20 with this action or any proceedings related
to enforcement of this Stipulated 21 Protective Order. 22 Date:
_____ 23 City and State where signed:
_____ 24 25 Printed name:
_____ 26 27 Signature: _____