

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

SHERI SHELTON v. GREAT AMERICAN INSURANCE
COMPANY; and DOES 1-50

No. 8:24-cv-02597-JVS-ADS, United States District Court for the Central District of California (November 5, 2025)

SUMMARY

This document is a Stipulated Protective Order entered in Sheri Shelton v. Great American Insurance Company in the United States District Court for the Central District of California. It governs the designation, disclosure, use, challenge, filing, and disposition of confidential discovery materials, and was signed by Magistrate Judge Autumn D. Spaeth on November 5, 2025.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Autumn D. Spaeth
DECIDED	November 5, 2025
DOCKET	8:24-cv-02597-JVS-ADS
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The parties stipulated to entry of a protective order governing confidential discovery material in this pending federal insurance action, and the court entered the order for good cause shown.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- discovery dispute
- civil procedure
- commercial litigation
- insurance

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- insurance
- commercial litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether good cause supported entry of a stipulated protective order governing confidential discovery material.

2. What procedures and restrictions should govern designation, use, disclosure, challenge, filing under seal, and final disposition of protected discovery material.

HOLDINGS

1. For good cause shown, the court entered the parties' stipulated protective order to protect qualifying confidential discovery material from public disclosure and use for purposes unrelated to prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle the action.
2. Protected material may be used only in connection with prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle the action and may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the conditions specified in the order.
3. A party or nonparty may challenge a confidentiality designation through the dispute-resolution process under Local Rule 37.1 et seq.; the designating party bears the burden of persuasion, and the material remains protected under its designation until the court rules on the challenge.
4. The protective order does not itself authorize filing protected material under seal; a party must comply with Central District of California Local Rule 79-5 and obtain a court order authorizing sealing of the specific material.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Once a case proceeds to trial, all of the information that was designated as confidential or maintained pursuant to this Protective Order becomes public and will be presumptively available to all members of the public, including the press, unless compelling reasons supported by specific factual findings to proceed otherwise are made to the trial judge in advance of the trial.” (at 5)

“Protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue.” (at 13)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The action is likely to involve trade secrets, customer and pricing lists, and confidential commercial, financial, technical, proprietary, and potentially privileged information. The parties sought protections to facilitate discovery, resolve confidentiality disputes, and limit use and disclosure of protected material. The order also addresses the handling of confidential material at trial and after final disposition of the action.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed the action on October 18, 2024. The parties submitted a stipulated protective order addressing the designation, use, disclosure, challenge, and disposition of confidential discovery material. Magistrate Judge Autumn D. Spaeth entered the order on November 5, 2025.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Kamakana v. City and County of Honolulu*, 447 F.3d 1172, 1180-81 (9th Cir. 2006)

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