

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
NEW YORK

**Juno (PKC), USA v. Constantin Film, USA, Germany; Highlight
Communications AG; Switzerland; Unknown Unnamed Associates**

Juno (PKC) · No. 25-CV-5120 (LTS) · Decided December 1, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of New York denies the pro se plaintiff’s motion to proceed under a pseudonym. The court grants 30 days to file an amended complaint using the plaintiff’s real name and either pay the filing fees or submit a properly identifying application to proceed in forma pauperis. The order also states that failure to comply will result in dismissal without prejudice and denies the pending motions without prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of New York
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Laura Taylor Swain
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of New York
DECIDED	December 1, 2025
DOCKET	25-CV-5120 (LTS)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff proceeding pro se moved to proceed under a pseudonym, for injunctive relief, to compel a ruling, and to present documentary evidence. The court considered the pseudonym motion and the filing-fee or in forma pauperis requirements at the outset of the action.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court applied the Second Circuit’s nonexclusive ten-factor framework for determining whether a litigant may proceed anonymously or under a pseudonym, balancing the asserted risk of disclosure against the presumption of public access to judicial proceedings.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- pleadings
- intellectual property

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

intellectual property

federal courts

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff demonstrated sufficiently particularized and serious risks of harm to warrant proceeding under a pseudonym.
2. Whether Plaintiff was required to amend the complaint using their real name, signature, and address.
3. Whether Plaintiff had to pay the filing and administrative fees or submit an IFP application containing their real name, signature, and address.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff failed to establish circumstances sufficient to overcome the presumption that court proceedings and filings should identify the parties publicly; the motion to proceed under a pseudonym was therefore denied.
2. Plaintiff was required, within 30 days, to file an amended complaint bearing their real name, address, and signature, unless Plaintiff instead sought voluntary dismissal without prejudice.
3. Within 30 days, Plaintiff had to either pay \$405 in filing and administrative fees or submit a signed IFP application using their real name, address, and signature.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“This requirement . . . serves the vital purpose of facilitating public scrutiny of judicial proceedings and therefore cannot be set aside lightly.”

“The Court grants Plaintiff 30 days’ leave to file an amended complaint and IFP application with their real name, signature, and address.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that Defendants and foreign investors or media producers had misappropriated creative works and personal medical information since 2001. Plaintiff asserted that the work involved sensitive personal and health-related data and claimed to fear retaliation, intimidation, emotional distress, and physical harm if their identity became public. The court found these allegations of potential retaliation and negative impact vague and insufficient to overcome the presumption of public access.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed the action under the name “Juno (PKC), USA,” along with an application to proceed in forma pauperis and several motions. The court denied permission to proceed under a pseudonym, granted 30 days to file an amended complaint using Plaintiff’s real name and either pay the required fees or submit a properly identified IFP application, and stated that failure to comply would result in dismissal without prejudice. No summons would issue at that time, and the other pending motions were denied without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Sealed Plaintiff v. Sealed Defendant, 537 F.3d 185, 188-90 (2d Cir. 2008)
- Doe 1 v. Branca USA, Inc., No. 22-CV-3806 (LJL), 2022 WL 2713543, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. July 13, 2022)
- Coppedge v. United States, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962)

OPINION

Juno (PKC), USA v. Constantin Film, USA, Germany; Highlight Communications AG; Switzerland; Unknown Unnamed Associates

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

JUNO (PKC), USA,

Plaintiff, -against-

25-CV-5120 (LTS)

CONSTANTIN FILM, USA, GERMANY;

ORDER

HIGHLIGHT COMMUNICATIONS AG;

SWITZERLAND; UNKNOWN UNNAMED

ASSOCIATES,

Defendants. LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN, Chief United States District Judge: Plaintiff, who is proceeding pro se, brings this action alleging claims under the Court's federal question jurisdiction and diversity of citizenship jurisdiction. Plaintiff filed the action under the name "Juno (PKC), USA," which is how they signed the complaint, application to proceed in forma pauperis ("IFP"), and motions to proceed under a pseudonym, for injunctive relief, to "compel ruling," and to present documentary "evidence."¹ (ECF 1-3, 5-8.) In the motion to proceed under a pseudonym, Plaintiff alleges that since 2001, Defendants and "foreign investors and media producers" "misappropriated" their "creative works and personal medical information." (ECF 3 at 1.) Their work allegedly "involves sensitive personal and health-related data," and "public disclosure of this identity would violate this right to informational privacy and place the person at risk of further emotional distress and physical harm." (Id.) Plaintiff claims to have "received anonymous threats and intimidation in connection 1 What appears to be Plaintiff's actual name appears in some of the documents, which are currently on the docket as "court-view only." with this dispute," and that they "fear retaliation by Defendant's local and foreign affiliates and hired agents if [Plaintiff's] true name becomes public." (Id.) For the reasons set forth below, the Court denies the motion to

proceed under a pseudonym and grants Plaintiff 30 days' leave to: (1) file an amended complaint with their real name, signature, and address; and (2) either pay the \$405.00 in fees required to bring an action in this Court or submit an IFP application with their real name, signature, and address. A. Plaintiff's identity Rule 10(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure provides that "[t]he title of [a] complaint must name all the parties." "This requirement . . . serves the vital purpose of facilitating public scrutiny of judicial proceedings and therefore cannot be set aside lightly." *Sealed Plaintiff v. Sealed Defendant*, 537 F.3d 185, 188-89 (2d Cir. 2008). Courts have, however, permitted parties to proceed under a pseudonym or anonymously in very limited circumstances. In deciding whether to permit a party to proceed anonymously, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit has articulated a nonexhaustive list of ten factors that courts should consider:

(1) whether the litigation involves matters that are highly sensitive and of a personal nature; (2) whether identification poses a risk of retaliatory physical or mental harm to the party seeking to proceed anonymously or even more critically, to innocent non-parties; (3) whether identification presents other harms and the likely severity of those harms, including whether the injury litigated against would be incurred as a result of the disclosure of plaintiff's identity; (4) whether the plaintiff is particularly vulnerable to the possible harms of disclosure, particularly in light of his age; (5) whether the suit is challenging the actions of the government or that of private parties; (6) whether the defendant is prejudiced by allowing the plaintiff to press his claims anonymously, whether the nature of that prejudice (if any) differs at any particular stage of the litigation, and whether any prejudice can be mitigated by the district court; (7) whether the plaintiff's identity has thus far been kept confidential; (8) whether the public's interest in the litigation is furthered by requiring the plaintiff to disclose his identity; (9) whether, because of the purely legal nature of the issues presented or otherwise, there is an atypically weak public interest in knowing the litigants' identities; and (10) whether there are any alternative mechanisms for protecting the confidentiality of the plaintiff. *Id.* at 190 (alterations, ellipses, quotation marks, and citations omitted). Plaintiff's submissions do not show that they should be granted leave to proceed under a pseudonym. Plaintiff asserts what appears to be an intellectual property claim, and states that the subject of their work relates to unspecified "personal medical information," and they "fear" they may be subject to unspecified retaliation if their identity is revealed. Although Plaintiff's desire to be shielded from public scrutiny is understandable, their allegations of a potential for retaliation or negative impact are vague and insufficient to overcome the presumption of public access to court documents. Cf. *Doe 1 v. Branca USA, Inc.*, No. 22-CV-3806 (LJL), 2022 WL 2713543, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. July 13, 2022) (explaining that courts "have put weight on the right of the public to know the identity of the litigants," and the burden is on the party seeking to proceed pseudonymously to "rebut the presumption of public access.") The Court therefore denies the motion to proceed under a pseudonym, and directs Plaintiff, within 30 days, to submit an amended complaint bearing their

real name, address, and signature. Should this matter proceed, Plaintiff may move to redact filings containing sensitive information, or ask the Court to limit public viewing of such documents. If Plaintiff does not wish to proceed in this matter under their real name, they may submit a letter asking the Court to voluntarily dismiss the case without prejudice under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a). B. Filing Fees or IFP Application To proceed with a civil action in this Court, a plaintiff must either pay \$405.00 in fees – a \$350.00 filing fee plus a \$52.00 administrative fee – or, to request authorization to proceed IFP, that is, without prepayment of fees, submit a signed IFP application. Within 30 days of the date of this order, Plaintiff must either pay the \$405.00 in fees or submit the attached IFP application with their real name, address, and signature. If the Court grants the IFP application, Plaintiff will be permitted to proceed without prepayment of fees. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1).

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth in this order, the Court denies the motion to proceed under a pseudonym. The Court grants Plaintiff 30 days' leave to file an amended complaint and IFP application with their real name, signature, and address. Plaintiff must submit these documents to the Court's Pro Se Intake Unit within 30 days of the date of this order, and they should be labeled with docket number 25-CV-5120 (LTS). An Amended Complaint form and an IFP application are attached to this order. No summons will issue at this time. If Plaintiff fails to comply with this order within the time allowed, the action will be dismissed without prejudice. The pending motions are denied without prejudice. (ECF 3, 6, 7.) The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore IFP status is denied for the purpose of an appeal. Cf. *Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962) (holding that an appellant demonstrates good faith when he seeks review of a nonfrivolous issue). SO ORDERED.

Dated: December 1, 2025 New York, New York /s/ Laura Taylor Swain

LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN

Chief United States District Judge

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

(Full name(s) of the plaintiff or petitioner applying (each person must submit a separate application)

CV C)¢

-against- (Enter case number and initials of assigned judges, if available; if filing this with your complaint, you will not yet have a case number or assigned judges.) (Full name(s) of the defendant(s)/respondent(s).)

APPLICATION TO PROCEED WITHOUT PREPAYING FEES OR COSTS

I am a plaintiff/petitioner in this case and declare that I am unable to pay the costs of these proceedings and I believe that I am entitled to the relief requested in this action. In support of this application to proceed in forma pauperis ("TFP") (without prepaying fees or costs), I declare that

the responses below are true:

1. Are you incarcerated? ☐ Yes ☐ No “No,” go to Question 2.)

I am being held at: Do you receive any payment from this institution? ☐ Yes ☐ No Monthly amount: If I am a prisoner, see 28 U.S.C. § 1915(h), [have attached to this document a “Prisoner Authorization” directing the facility where I am incarcerated to deduct the filing fee from my account in installments and to send to the Court certified copies of my account statements for the past six months. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(2), (b). understand that this means that I will be required to pay the full filing fee.

2. Are you presently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If “yes,” my employer’s name and address are: Gross monthly pay or wages: If “no,” what was your last date of employment? Gross monthly wages at the time:

3. In addition to your income stated above (which you should not repeat here), have you or anyone else

living at the same residence as you received more than \$200 in the past 12 months from any of the following sources? Check all that apply. (a) Business, profession, or other self-employment ☐ Yes ☐ No (b) Rent payments, interest, or dividends ☐ Yes ☐ No SDNY Rev: 12/12/2014 (c) Pension, annuity, or life insurance payments ☐ Yes ☐ No (d) Disability or worker’s compensation payments ☐ Yes ☐ No (e) Gifts or inheritances ☐ Yes ☐ No Any other public benefits (unemployment, social security, (f) Any Payments (unemployment, food stamps, veteran’s, etc.) (g) Any other sources ☐ Yes ☐ No If you answered “Yes” to any question above, describe below or on separate pages each source of money and state the amount that you received and what you expect to receive in the future. If you answered “No” to all of the questions above, explain how you are paying your expenses:

4. How much money do you have in cash or in a checking, savings, or inmate account?

5. Do you own any automobile, real estate, stock, bond, security, trust, jewelry, art work, or other financial instrument or thing of value, including any item of value held in someone else’s name? If so, describe the property and its approximate value:

6. Do you have any housing, transportation, utilities, or loan payments, or other regular monthly expenses? If so, describe and provide the amount of the monthly expense:

7. List all people who are dependent on you for support, your relationship with each person, and how

much you contribute to their support (only provide initials for minors under 18):

8. Do you have any debts or financial obligations not described above? If so, describe the amounts owed

and to whom they are payable: Declaration: I declare under penalty of perjury that the above information is true. I understand that a false statement may result in a dismissal of my claims.

Dated Signature Name (Last, First, MI) Prison Identification # {if incarcerated} Address City State Zip Code Telephone Number E-mail Address (if available) IFP Application, page 2

Civ. (i) (In the space above enter the full name(s) of the plaintiff(s).) AMENDED COMPLAINT

sheets	of	paper	as	necessary.	Rev.	12/2009	Street	Address
						County,	City	
						State &	Zip	Code
						Telephone	Number	
						Defendant No.	2	Name
						Street	Address	
						County,	City	
						State &	Zip	Code
						Telephone	Number	
						Defendant No.	3	Name
						Street	Address	
						County,	City	
						State &	Zip	Code
						Telephone	Number	
						Defendant No.	4	Name
						Street	Address	
						County,	City	
						State &	Zip	Code
						Telephone	Number	

II. Basis for Jurisdiction: Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction. Only two types of cases can be heard in federal court: cases involving a federal question and cases involving diversity of citizenship of the parties. Under

28 U.S.C. § 1331, a case involving the United States Constitution or federal laws or treaties is a federal question case. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1332, a case in which a citizen of one state sues a citizen of another state and the amount in damages is more than \$75,000 is a diversity of citizenship case. A. What is the basis for federal court jurisdiction? (check all that apply) ☐ Federal Questions ☐ Diversity of Citizenship B. If the basis for jurisdiction is Federal Question, what federal Constitutional, statutory or treaty right is at issue?

C. If the basis for jurisdiction is Diversity of Citizenship, what is the state of citizenship of each party? Plaintiff(s) state(s) of citizenship Defendant(s) state(s) of citizenship

III. Statement of Claim: State as briefly as possible the facts of your case. Describe how each of the defendants named in the caption of this complaint is involved in this action, along with the dates and locations of all relevant events. You may wish to include further details such as the names of other persons involved in the events giving rise to your claims. Do not cite any cases or statutes. If you intend to allege a number of related claims, number and set forth each claim in a separate paragraph. Attach additional sheets of paper as necessary. A. Where did the events giving rise to your claim(s) occur? B. What date and approximate time did the events giving rise to your claim(s) occur? C. Facts | OE you? did ee ee ee eee ee ee as anyone ee else involved? Who else Fee ee eee eee eee eee eee eee eee eee saw what | happened ? ee IV. Injuries: If you sustained injuries related to the events alleged above, describe them and state what medical treatment, if any, you required and received. Rev. 12/2009 V. Relief: State what you want the Court to do for you and the amount of monetary compensation, if any, you are seeking, and the basis for such compensation. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Signed this _ day of ,20_. Signature of Plaintiff ☐ Mailing Address Telephone Number Fax Number (if you have one) Note: All plaintiffs named in the caption of the complaint must date and sign the complaint. Prisoners must also provide their inmate numbers, present place of confinement, and address. For Prisoners: I declare under penalty of perjury that on this =——s day of ——““éc2zO Cd Lam delivering this complaint to prison authorities to be mailed to the Pro Se Office of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. Signature of Plaintiffs Inmate Number ee