

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA, EASTERN DIVISION

Isabel Valdez v. City of Fontana

Case No. 5:24-cv-02631-KK-SP (C.D. Cal. June 17, 2025) · No. 5:24-cv-02631-KK-SP · Decided June 17, 2025

SUMMARY

This document is a stipulated protective order in a federal civil-rights action brought by Isabel Valdez and minor plaintiffs against the City of Fontana and Officer Alex Yanez. It governs the designation, disclosure, use, challenge, filing, and final disposition of confidential discovery materials, including police-investigation records, personnel information, and training materials.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California, Eastern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sheri Pym
DECIDED	June 17, 2025
DOCKET	5:24-cv-02631-KK-SP
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The parties stipulated to entry of a protective order governing confidential discovery material, and the magistrate judge entered the order for good cause shown.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

discovery dispute civil procedure civil rights municipal law sanctions

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure civil rights municipal law discovery

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

- Whether good cause existed to enter the parties' stipulated protective order under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c).
- What procedures and limitations would govern designation, challenge, disclosure, use, filing, retention, and final disposition of confidential discovery material.

HOLDINGS

1. The court entered the stipulated protective order for good cause shown, subject to the order's provisions governing confidential discovery material.
2. Material designated as confidential under the order may be used only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle the action and may be disclosed only to persons and under the conditions specified in the order.
3. Designating parties must limit confidentiality designations to material that qualifies for protection, and the designating party bears the burden of persuasion in a challenge to a designation.
4. The protective order does not itself authorize filing protected material under seal; a party seeking sealing must comply with Local Rule 79-5 and obtain a court order authorizing sealing of the specific material.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Nonparty in connection with this Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action.”
(at 10)

“Protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue.” (at 13-14)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The discovery in the action was expected to involve confidential and private information, including personal and medical data, employee-benefit and employment records, peace-officer personnel files, police-investigation materials, department policies, and officer-training information. The defendants asserted that some materials were protected by the official-information privilege and that disclosure could create security, privacy, embarrassment, oppression, or physical-harm risks. The parties sought a protective order to limit use and disclosure of qualifying material while preserving reasonable use for litigation.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs brought a civil-rights action against the City of Fontana, Officer Alex Yanez, and Doe defendants. During discovery, the parties anticipated producing confidential, proprietary, private, privileged, and law-enforcement-related material, including police-investigation records and personnel information. The parties submitted a stipulated protective order, which the court approved and entered on June 17, 2025.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Sanchez v. City of Santa Ana, 936 F.2d 1027, 1033 (9th Cir. 1991)
- Kerr v. United States District Court for the Northern District of California, 511 F.2d 192, 198 (9th Cir. 1975), aff'd, 426 U.S. 394, 96 S. Ct. 2119, 48 L. Ed. 2d 725 (1976)

