

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
WASHINGTON

National Products Inc. v. Pioneer Square Brands Inc.

National Products · No. 2:25-cv-00666-DGE · Decided December 17, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Washington rules on Plaintiff’s unopposed motion to file under seal documents related to Defendant’s motion to dismiss for improper venue. Applying the Ninth Circuit’s compelling-reasons standard and Local Civil Rule 5(g), the Court grants sealing in part and denies it in part for specified portions of deposition transcripts, employment documents, financial documents, and the opposition brief. The Court orders Plaintiff to file revised redacted versions by December 24, 2025.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Washington
WRITING FOR THE COURT	David G. Estudillo
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Washington
DECIDED	December 17, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-00666-DGE
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed an unopposed motion to maintain under seal an opposition brief and exhibits relating to Defendant's motion to dismiss for improper venue. The Court ordered Defendant to show cause supporting the requested sealing and then ruled on the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The Court applied the Ninth Circuit's compelling-reasons standard for sealing judicial records and required any sealing request to be supported by a specific factual basis and narrowly tailored under Local Civil Rule 5(g)(3)(A).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; unpublished district court order

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- venue
- commercial litigation
- motions to dismiss

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Defendant established compelling reasons to overcome the strong presumption of public access to judicial records.
2. Whether the requested sealing was narrowly tailored under Local Civil Rule 5(g)(3)(A).
3. Which portions of the opposition brief and supporting exhibits should remain sealed or be disclosed.

HOLDINGS

1. A party seeking to seal judicial records must overcome the strong presumption of public access by establishing compelling reasons supported by a specific factual basis rather than hypothesis or conjecture.
2. Sealing must be limited to portions for which the movant demonstrates a compelling reason; unsupported or overbroad requests must be denied.
3. The motion to file under seal was granted in part and denied in part: specified portions of Exhibits A, E, H, the opposition brief, and Exhibits V-W and X-Z were sealed; other specified portions and Exhibit K were not sealed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Although ‘access to judicial records is not absolute,’ there is a ‘strong presumption in favor of access.’” (III.A)

“Under the compelling reasons standard, ‘a court may seal records only when it finds ‘a compelling reason and articulate[s] the factual basis for its ruling, without relying on hypothesis or conjecture.’” (III.A)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff sought to seal its opposition to Defendant's improper-venue motion and several deposition transcripts, employment documents, and internal financial documents. Defendant asserted that the materials contained confidential information concerning internal business operations, ownership, acquisitions, licensing, hiring practices, employee incentives, tax information, and non-party employees' employment terms and personal financial information. The Court reviewed the documents and found that some information could cause competitive or privacy harm, while other information—such as employee headcounts and boilerplate remote-work and communications policies—was not shown to warrant sealing.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff moved under Local Civil Rule 5(g) to file specified documents under seal based on Defendant's confidentiality designations under a stipulated protective order. After the Court required Defendant to provide a legal and factual basis for sealing each document or justify specific redactions, Defendant responded with supporting argument and a declaration. The Court granted the motion in part and denied it in part, and ordered Plaintiff to file revised redacted versions.

DISPOSITION

other

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

Plaintiff must file revised versions of its opposition to the motion to dismiss and the supporting declaration, with redactions conforming to the Court's order and Defendant's identified alterations, by December 24, 2025. The existing redacted versions remain on the docket but will not be considered in deciding the improper-venue motion.

CASES CITED

- *Kamakana v. City & County of Honolulu*, 447 F.3d 1172, 1178-79 (9th Cir. 2006)
- *Ctr. for Auto Safety v. Chrysler Grp., LLC*, 809 F.3d 1092, 1096-97 (9th Cir. 2016)
- *Foltz v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 331 F.3d 1122, 1135 (9th Cir. 2003)
- *Nixon v. Warner Commc'ns, Inc.*, 435 U.S. 589, 598-99 (1978)
- *In re Apple Inc. Device Performance Litig.*, No. 5:18-MD-02827-EJD, 2019 WL 1767158, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 22, 2019)
- *Transperfect Glob., Inc. v. Motionpoint Corp.*, No. C 10-2590 CW, 2013 WL 209678, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 17, 2013)
- *Shields v. Fed'n Internationale de Natation*, Case No. 18-cv-07393-JSC, 2022 WL 425359, at *16 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 11, 2022)
- *Shields v. World Aquatics*, Nos. 23-15092; 23-15156, 2024 WL 4211477 (9th Cir. Sept. 17, 2024)
- *Lin v. Suavei, Inc.*, Case No. 3:20-cv-0862-L-AHG, 2023 WL 7501403, at *2 (S.D. Cal. Nov. 13, 2023)
- *Jones v. PGA Tour*, Case No. 22-cv-04486-BLF, 2023 WL 6545413, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 5, 2023)
- *Fordemwalt ex rel. Baseline, Inc. v. HydroPoint Data Sys., Inc.*, Case No. 1:22-cv-00395-BLW, 2023 WL 2868571, at *9 (D. Idaho Apr. 9, 2023)
- *Nat'l Prods., Inc. v. Aqua Box Prods., LLC*, Case No. C12-605 RSM, 2012 WL 12106901, at *1 (W.D. Wash. Mar. 25, 2013)
- *Selling Source, LLC v. Red River Ventures, LLC*, No. 2:09-cv-01491-JCM-GWF, 2011 WL 1630338, at *2 (D. Nev. Apr. 29, 2011)
- *Heath v. Google Inc.*, Case No. 15-cv-01824-BLF, 2017 WL 3530593, at *2-3 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 14, 2017)
- *Flextronics Int'l USA, Inc. v. Murata Mfg. Co.*, Case No. 5:19-cv-00078-EJD, 2020 WL 14032219, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 16, 2020)
- *In re Elec. Arts, Inc.*, 298 F. App'x 568, 569 (9th Cir. 2008)
- *Petitt v. Exigency Healthcare Servs., LLC*, Case No. 21-cv-07639-VKD, 2023 WL 2940181, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 10, 2023)
- *Henning v. Arya*, Case No. 2:14-cv-00979-RFB-NJK, 2023 WL 6392747, at *7 (D. Nev. Sept. 30, 2023)
- *HSBC Bank USA, Nat'l Ass'n v. Chi. Title Ins. Co.*, Case No. 2:18-cv-02162-MMD-DJA, 2023 WL 6723619, at *2 (D. Nev. Oct. 11, 2023)

- W. Air Charter, Inc. v. Schembari, Case No. EDCV 17-420 JGB (KSx), 2018 WL 10157139, at *21 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 21, 2018)
- E. W. Bank v. Shanker, Case No. 20-cv-07364-WHO, 2021 WL 4916729, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 31, 2021)
- Aevoe Corp. v. AE Tech. Co., No. 2:12-cv-00053-GMN-NJK, 2013 WL 5923426, at *2 (D. Nev. Nov. 1, 2013)
- TriQuint Semiconductor, Inc. v. Avago Techs., Ltd., No. CV 09-1531-PHX-JAT, 2011 WL 4947343, at *3 (D. Ariz. Oct. 18, 2011)
- Carlson v. Home Depot USA Inc., Case No. C20-1150 MJP, 2021 WL 3367157, at *1 (W.D. Wash. Aug. 3, 2021)
- Monster Energy Co. v. Vital Pharms., Inc., Case No. EDCV 18-1882 JGB (SHKx), 2022 WL 17222293, at *2 (C.D. Cal. Oct. 26, 2022)
- Kimera Labs Inc. v. Exocel Bio Inc., Case No. 21-cv-2137-MMA-DDL, 2024 WL 3014639, at *1 (S.D. Cal. June 14, 2024)

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