

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
FLORIDA, TAMPA DIVISION

Direct Components, Inc. v. Microchip USA, LLC, et al.

Direct Components · No. 8:23-cv-1617-VMC-SPF · Decided January 9, 2026

SUMMARY

The court addresses Plaintiff Direct Components, Inc.'s omnibus pretrial motion, including four motions in limine seeking to exclude categories of evidence concerning electronically stored information, confidential information, hearsay, and settlement matters. Because the case will be tried to the bench, the court denies the motions in limine without prejudice and defers ruling on the request for sanctions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Virginia M. Hernandez Covington
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division
DECIDED	January 9, 2026
DOCKET	8:23-cv-1617-VMC-SPF
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court ruled on the plaintiff's omnibus pretrial motion, including four motions in limine and a request for sanctions, before a scheduled bench trial.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court did not apply an appellate standard of review. It exercised its discretion in managing pretrial evidentiary issues and deferred admissibility, relevance, and weight determinations until trial.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown

TOPICS

[motion in limine](#) [evidence](#) [relevance](#) [hearsay](#) [sanctions](#)

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should preemptively exclude, through motions in limine, categories of evidence and argument in a case scheduled for a bench trial.
2. Whether to rule at that time on Direct Components' request for sanctions.

HOLDINGS

1. In a bench trial, the court need not preemptively exclude categories of evidence before trial; instead, it may address admissibility, relevance, and evidentiary weight when and if the issues arise at trial.
2. The four motions in limine contained in Direct Components' omnibus pretrial motion were denied without prejudice, allowing Direct Components to reassert its evidentiary objections at trial if necessary.
3. The court deferred ruling on Direct Components' request for sanctions.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Here, because this case will be tried to the bench, it is neither necessary nor appropriate at this stage for the Court to preemptively exclude categories of evidence.”

“The Court will assess admissibility, relevance, and weight as appropriate in the context of the evidence presented at trial.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Direct Components sought to exclude evidence or argument concerning alleged discovery-related information, including Google Drive materials, electronically stored information containing confidential information or trade secrets, hearsay involving Robert Rohr and E-Hounds, and settlement negotiations or agreements. The case is scheduled for a bench trial rather than a jury trial. The court determined that the identified evidentiary issues could be addressed when the evidence was presented at trial.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Direct Components filed an omnibus pretrial motion seeking, among other relief, to preclude specified categories of evidence and argument and to obtain sanctions. Defendant Jeff Ruby opposed the motion. Because the case is set for a bench trial, the court denied the motions in limine without prejudice and deferred ruling on the sanctions request.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Singh v. Caribbean Airlines Ltd., No. 13-20639-CIV, 2014 WL 4101544, at *1 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 28, 2014)

- Aspen American Insurance Co. v. Landstar Ranger, Inc., No. 3:24-cv-721-ACC-SJH, 2025 WL 3527655, at *6 (M.D. Fla. Oct. 9, 2025)
- Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. v. CIBA Vision Corp., 616 F. Supp. 2d 1250, 1256 (M.D. Fla. 2009)
- Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Florida, Inc. v. Davita, Inc., No. 3:19-cv-574-BJD-MCR, 2022 WL 18493469, at *2 (M.D. Fla. June 3, 2022)
- Kremer v. Lysich, No. 3:19-cv-887-BJD-JBT, 2022 WL 18358955, at *3 (M.D. Fla. Mar. 25, 2022)

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