

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

LeGrand v. Abbott Laboratories

No. 22-cv-05815-TSH (N.D. Cal. July 15, 2025) · No. 22-cv-05815-TSH · Decided July 15, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California resolves five administrative motions to seal documents filed in connection with class-certification and Daubert proceedings in a putative consumer class action concerning allegedly misleading Ensure nutrition-drink labels. The court applies the compelling-reasons standard, grants Abbott’s second motion in full, grants LeGrand’s first motion in part, and denies the remaining motions, directing the parties to file specified materials publicly with appropriate redactions or without redactions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Thomas S. Hixson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	July 15, 2025
DOCKET	22-cv-05815-TSH
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Order resolving five administrative motions to file documents under seal in a putative consumer class action.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Motions to seal judicial records connected to motions more than tangentially related to the merits are governed by the compelling-reasons standard; documents attached to non-dispositive motions may be sealed upon a good-cause showing under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; persuasive but not binding outside the case
PARTIES	Condalisa LeGrand v. Abbott Laboratories

TOPICS

- class actions
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

consumer protection

class actions

trade secrets and confidential business information

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether documents filed in connection with class-certification motions and a Daubert motion addressing central class-certification issues were subject to the compelling-reasons standard for sealing.
2. Whether the parties established compelling reasons under the applicable standard and Civil Local Rule 79-5 to seal the identified documents or portions of documents.
3. Whether a party's failure to file the statement or declaration required by Civil Local Rule 79-5 justified denial of the sealing motion and public filing of the documents.

HOLDINGS

1. The compelling-reasons standard applies to documents filed in connection with motions for class certification because such motions and their attached documents are more than tangentially related to the merits of the action.
2. Specific confidential business information, including trade secrets, marketing strategies, product-development information, detailed product-specific financial information, and internal reports, may be redacted when the evidence establishes that public disclosure would cause competitive harm.
3. When the designating party fails to file the statement or declaration required by Civil Local Rule 79-5, the court may deny the sealing motion and direct that the documents be filed in the public record.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Historically, courts have recognized a ‘general right to inspect and copy public records and documents, including judicial records and documents.’” (at 1)

“a strong presumption in favor of access is the starting point.” (at 1)

“A party must . . . avoid wherever possible sealing entire documents (as opposed to merely redacting the truly sensitive information in a document).” (at 6)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

LeGrand challenged allegedly false or misleading statements on Abbott's Ensure nutrition-drink labels in a putative class action. The sealing motions concerned deposition excerpts, declarations, expert materials, class-certification briefing, and briefing concerning a Daubert motion. The materials included alleged confidential marketing strategies, market research, sales data, product-development information, and other business information.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

LeGrand filed a putative class action alleging that statements on Abbott's Ensure nutrition-drink labels were false and misleading. The parties filed administrative motions seeking to seal documents submitted in connection with

class-certification briefing and a Daubert motion. The court granted some sealing requests, denied others, and directed the parties to file documents publicly with specified redactions or without redactions.

DISPOSITION

other

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

No remand. The court directed Abbott or LeGrand, as applicable, to file specified documents in the public record within the stated three-to-seven-day periods, with narrowly tailored redactions where authorized.

CASES CITED

- Kamakana v. City and County of Honolulu, 447 F.3d 1172, 1178-80 (9th Cir. 2006)
- Nixon v. Warner Communications, Inc., 435 U.S. 589, 597 n.7 (1978)
- Center for Auto Safety v. Chrysler Group, LLC, 809 F.3d 1092, 1099-1100 (9th Cir. 2016)
- Guynn-Neupane v. Mahna Legal Services, LLC, No. 19-cv-02652-VKD, 2021 WL 4481661, at *1 n.3 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 30, 2021)
- Adtrader, Inc. v. Google LLC, No. 17-cv-07082-BLF, 2020 WL 6395513, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 4, 2020)
- Yan Mei Zheng v. Toyota Motor Corp., No. 17-cv-06591-BLF, 2019 WL 6841324, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 16, 2019)
- Fodera v. Equinox Holdings, Inc., 341 F.R.D. 616, 635 (N.D. Cal. 2022)
- Regis Metro Associates, Inc. v. NBR Co., LLC, No. 20-cv-02309-DMR, 2022 WL 267443, at *14 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 28, 2022)
- In re Apple Inc. Device Performance Litigation, No. 5:18-md-02827-EJD, 2019 WL 1767158, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 22, 2019)
- Bronson v. Samsung Electronics America, Inc., No. C 18-02300 WHA, 2019 WL 7810811, at *1 (N.D. Cal. May 28, 2019)