

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA**

**Kelly Hirt and Marshall Hirt v. Riverside County, Riverside Sheriff's
Office, Sheriff-Coroner Chad Bianco, and Does 1-10**

Hirt v. Riverside County · No. 5:25-cv-01472-SSS-SPx · Decided July 22, 2025

OPINION

Kelly Hirt v. Riverside County

PER CURIAM.

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as RIVERSIDE SHERIFF'S OFFICE)

8 and SHERIFF-CORONER CHAD BIANCO

9 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

10 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

11 12 KELLY HIRT and MARSHALL HIRT, Case No. 5:25-cv-01472-SSS-SPx Individually and
as Successors in 13 Interest for JAMES D. HIRT, DISCOVERY MATTER Deceased,

14 STIPULATED PROTECTIVE

Plaintiffs, ORDER 15 v. 16

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, RIVERSIDE

17 SHERIFF'S OFFICE, SHERIFF-
CORONER CHAD BIANCO, and

18 DOES 1-10,

19 Defendants. 20

21 1. A. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

22 Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, 23 proprietary, or
private information for which special protection from public 24 disclosure and from use for any
purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may 25 be warranted. Accordingly, the parties
hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to 26 enter the following Stipulated Protective Order.
The parties acknowledge that this 27 Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures
or responses to 1 only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment
2 under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in

3 Section 12.3, below, that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to
4 file confidential information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the 5 procedures that
must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a party 6 seeks permission from the
court to file material under seal.

7 B. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

8 This action alleging a wrongful death of a mentally-ill inmate in a Riverside 9 County
correctional facility is likely to involve the production of confidential 10 records, Decedent's
personal medical and mental-health records, and investigation 11 information that may implicate
third party information, materials protected by the 12 Official Information Privilege, employment
or financial information, and 13 confidential information relating to the County, its deputies, and
other inmates, for 14 which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any
purpose other 15 than prosecution of this action is warranted. Such information may implicate the
16 privacy interests of a party or non-party and are properly protected through a Fed. R. 17 Civ. P.
26(c) protective order. *Seattle Times Co. v. Rhinehart*, 467 U.S. 20, 35 n.21 18 (1984) ("Rule
26(c) includes among its express purposes the protection of a 'party 19 or person from annoyance,
embarrassment, oppression or undue burden or expense.' 20 Although the Rule contains no
specific reference to privacy or to other rights or 21 interests that may be implicated, such matters
are implicit in the broad purpose and 22 language of the Rule."); *Soto v. City of Concord*, 162
F.R.D. 603, 617 (N.D. Cal. 23 1995) (a party's privacy rights are to be protected through a
"carefully crafted 24 protective order."). 25 Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information,
facilitate the prompt 26 resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials,
adequately protect 27 information the parties are entitled to keep confidential, ensure that the
parties are 1 conduct of trial, address their handling at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends
2 of justice, a protective order for such information is justified in this Action. It is the 3 intent of
the parties that information will not be designated as confidential for 4 tactical reasons and that
nothing be so designated without a good faith belief that it 5 has been maintained in a confidential,
non-public manner, and there is good cause 6 why it should not be part of the public record of this
case.

7 2. DEFINITIONS

8 2.1 Action: Kelly Hirt and Marshall Hirt v. Riverside County, et al., USDC 9 Case No. 5:25-cv-
01472-SSS-SP. 10 2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation 11
of information or items under this Order. 12 2.3 "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items:
information (regardless of 13 how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that
qualify for 14 protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in
15 the Good Cause Statement. 16 2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as
well as 17 their support staff). 18 2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates
information or 19 items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as
20 "CONFIDENTIAL."

21 2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless 22 of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, 23 among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or 24 generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter. 25 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter 26 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as 27 an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action. 1 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside 2 counsel. 3 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or 4 other legal entity not named as a Party to this action. 5 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party 6 to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have 7 appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which 8 has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff. 9 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors, 10 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their 11 support staffs). 12 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or 13 Discovery Material in this Action. 14 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support 15 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or 16 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium) 17 and their employees and subcontractors. 18 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is 19 designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” 20 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material 21 from a Producing Party.

22 3. SCOPE

23 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only 24 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or 25 extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or 26 compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or 27 presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material. 1 Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of the 2 trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

3 4. DURATION

4 Once a case proceeds to trial, all of the information that was designated as 5 confidential or maintained pursuant to this protective order becomes public and will 6 be presumptively available to all members of the public, including the press, unless 7 compelling reasons supported by specific factual findings to proceed otherwise are 8 made to the trial judge in advance of the trial. See *Kamakana v. City and County of* 9 *Honolulu*, 447 F.3d 1172, 1180-81 (9th Cir. 2006) (distinguishing “good cause” 10 showing for sealing documents produced in discovery from “compelling reasons” 11 standard when merits-related documents are part of court record). Accordingly, the 12 terms of this protective order do not extend beyond the commencement of the trial.

13 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

14 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection. 15 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under 16 this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that 17 qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for 18 protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written 19 communications that qualify so that other portions of the material, documents, 20 items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept 21 unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order. 22 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations 23 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper 24 purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose 25 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating 26 Party to sanctions. 27 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it 1 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation. 2 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in 3 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise 4 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection 5 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or 6 produced. 7 Designation in conformity with this Order requires: 8 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic 9 documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial 10 proceedings), that the Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend 11 "CONFIDENTIAL" (hereinafter "CONFIDENTIAL legend"), to each page that 12 contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page 13 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected 14 portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins). All legends 15 affixed to documents must not interfere with legibility or cover up information. 16 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection 17 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated 18 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and 19 before the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be 20 deemed "CONFIDENTIAL." After the inspecting Party has identified the 21 documents it wants copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which 22 documents, or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before 23 producing the specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the 24 "CONFIDENTIAL legend" to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a 25 portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing 26 Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate 27 markings in the margins). 1 identify the Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the 2 deposition all protected testimony. 3 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary 4 and for any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place 5 on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the 6 legend "CONFIDENTIAL." If only a portion or portions of the information 7 warrants protection, the Producing Party, to the

extent practicable, shall identify the 8 protected portion(s). 9 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent 10 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive 11 the Designating Party's right to secure protection under this Order for such material. 12 Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable 13 efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this 14 Order.

15 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

16 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a 17 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court's 18 Scheduling Order. 19 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party shall initiate the dispute 20 resolution process under Local Rule 37.1 et seq. 21 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on 22 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper 23 purpose (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other 24 parties) may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating 25 Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties shall 26 continue to afford the material in question the level of protection to which it is 27 entitled under the Producing Party's designation until the Court rules on the

1 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

2 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is 3 disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this 4 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such 5 Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the 6 conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a 7 Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL 8 DISPOSITION). 9 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a 10 location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons 11 authorized under this Order. 12 7.2 Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items. Unless 13 otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a 14 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated 15 "CONFIDENTIAL" only to: 16 (a) the Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, 17 as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably 18 necessary to disclose the information for this Action; 19 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) 20 of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action; 21 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to 22 whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the 23 "Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound" (Exhibit A); 24 (d) the court and its personnel; 25 (e) court reporters and their staff; 26 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and 27 Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action 1 A); 2 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information 3 or a custodian or other person who otherwise

possessed or knew the information; 4 (h) during their depositions, witnesses ,and attorneys for witnesses, 5 in the Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing 6 party requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit 1 hereto; and (2) 7 they will not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the 8 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise 9 agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed 10 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may 11 be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except 12 as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and 13 (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting 14 personnel, mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement 15 discussions.

16 8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED 17 IN OTHER LITIGATION

18 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation 19 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as 20 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must: 21 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such 22 notification shall include a copy of the subpoena or court order; 23 (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or 24 order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the 25 subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include 26 a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and 27 (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be 1 If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with 2 the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this 3 action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the 4 subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s 5 permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking 6 protection in that court of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions 7 should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action 8 to disobey a lawful directive from another court.

9 9. A NON-PARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE 10 PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

11 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced 12 by a Non-Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such 13 information produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected 14 by the remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions 15 should be construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections. 16 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, 17 to produce a Non-Party’s confidential information in its possession, and the Party is 18 subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party’s 19 confidential information, then the Party shall: 20 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the 21 Non-Party that some or all of the information requested is subject to a 22 confidentiality agreement with a Non-Party; 23 24 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the 25 Stipulated Protective Order

in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific description of the information requested; and 1 the Non-Party, if requested. 2 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court 3 within 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving 4 Party may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the 5 discovery request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving 6 Party shall not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to 7 the confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the 8 court. Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and 9 expense of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

10 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

11 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed 12 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this 13 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in 14 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts 15 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or 16 persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order, 17 and (d) request such person or persons to execute the "Acknowledgment and 18 Agreement to Be Bound" that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

19 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE 20 PROTECTED MATERIAL

21 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain 22 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, 23 the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil

24 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever procedure 25 may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production without 26 prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar 27 as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or 1 parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted 2 to the court.

3 12. MISCELLANEOUS

4 12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any 5 person to seek its modification by the Court in the future. 6 12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this 7 Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to 8 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this 9 Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any 10 ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order. 11 12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any 12 Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may 13 only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the 14 specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material 15 under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the

information 16 in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

17 13. FINAL DISPOSITION

18 After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60 19 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return 20 all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in 21 this subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, 22 summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected 23 Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving 24 Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same 25 person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies 26 (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or 27 destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, 1 of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to 2 retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing 3 transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert 4 reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such 5 materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or 6 constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in

7 Section 4 (DURATION).

8 14. Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate 9 measures including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or monetary 10 sanctions. 11 12 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD. 13 14 Dated: July 18, 2025 THE LAW OFFICES OF JOHN BURTON

HELM LAW OFFICE PC

15 THE LAW OFFICE OF THOMAS C.

16 SEABAUGH

17 18 By: /s/ John Burton 19 John Burton 20 T. Kennedy Helm, IV Thomas C. Seabaugh 21 Attorneys for Plaintiffs,

KELLY HIRT and MARSHALL HIRT,

22 Individually and as Successors in 23 Interest for JAMES D. HIRT, Deceased 24 25 / / / 26 / / /

27 / / / 1 Dated: July 18, 2025 BURKE, WILLIAMS & SORENSEN, LLP 2 3 By: /s/ Zareh

Bursalyan 4 Nathan A. Oyster 5 Caylin W. Jones 6 Zareh Bursalyan Attorneys for Defendants 7

RIVERSIDE COUNTY (also sued

as RIVERSIDE SHERIFF'S OFFICE)

8 and SHERIFF-CORONER CHAD

9 BIANCO

10 11 FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED. 12

13 DATED: July 22, 2025 Honorable Sheri Pym 14 United States Magistrate Judge 15 16 17 18

19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

1 EXHIBIT A

2 ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

3 I, [print or type full name], of 4 [print or type full address], declare under penalty of perjury that
I have read 5 in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the 6
United States District Court for the Central District of California on [date] in the 7 case of Kelly
Hirt and Marshall Hirt v. Riverside County, et al., USDC Case No. 8 5:25-cv-01472-SSS-SP. I
agree to comply with and to be bound by all the terms of 9 this Stipulated Protective Order and I
understand and acknowledge that failure to so 10 comply could expose me to sanctions and
punishment in the nature of contempt. I 11 solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any
manner any information or item that 12 is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any person
or entity except in strict 13 compliance with the provisions of this Order. 14 I further agree to
submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the 15 Central District of
California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this 16 Stipulated Protective Order, even if
such enforcement proceedings occur after 17 termination of this action. I hereby appoint [print or
type 18 full name] of [print or type full address and 19 telephone number] as my California agent
for service of process in connection with 20 this action or any proceedings related to enforcement
of this Stipulated Protective 21 Order. 22 Date: 23 City and State where sworn and signed: 24 25
Printed name: 26 27 Signature: