UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Apple Inc. v. AliveCor, Inc.

No. 22-cv-07608-HSG (N.D. Cal. Sept. 19, 2025) · No. 22-cv-07608-HSG · Decided September 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California denied Apple Inc.’s motion concerning whether portions of Exhibit 6 should remain sealed in Apple’s opposition to AliveCor’s motion to stay proceedings pending inter partes review. The court applied the good-cause standard for materials related to a nondispositive motion and found that AliveCor’s generalized assertions of commercial sensitivity and competitive harm did not establish a particularized basis for sealing product codes and product release dates. The denial was without prejudice, allowing AliveCor seven days to submit a supporting declaration or the parties to request withdrawal of the document.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Haywood S. Gilliam, Jr.
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	September 18, 2025
DOCKET	22-cv-07608-HSG
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Apple moved to determine whether materials designated confidential by AliveCor should remain under seal in connection with Apple's opposition to AliveCor's motion to stay pending inter partes review.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For materials attached to a nondispositive motion that are only tangentially related to the merits, the court applied the good-cause standard under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c). The party seeking protection must make a particularized showing of prejudice or harm; generic or conclusory allegations are insufficient.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; district court order with no reporter citation
PARTIES	Apple Inc. v. AliveCor, Inc.

TOPICS

civil procedure trade secrets commercial litigation

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure trade secrets commercial litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether portions of Exhibit 6 should remain sealed under the good-cause standard applicable to materials related to a nondispositive motion.
2. Whether AliveCor made the particularized showing of prejudice or harm required to seal its internal product codes and product release dates.

HOLDINGS

1. The good-cause standard under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c) applies to materials related to a nondispositive motion to stay that are only tangentially related to the merits of the case.
2. AliveCor did not establish good cause to seal the requested portions of Exhibit 6 because its generalized assertions did not provide a particularized showing of prejudice or harm from disclosure.

KEY QUOTATIONS

> *"To overcome this strong presumption, the moving party must "articulate compelling reasons supported by specific factual findings that outweigh the general history of access and the public policies favoring disclosure, such as the public interest in understanding the judicial process.""* (at 1)

> *""Broad allegations of harm, unsubstantiated by specific examples of articulated reasoning" will not suffice."* (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Apple's Exhibit 6 contained tables describing AliveCor's internal product codes and product release dates. AliveCor had marked the exhibit confidential and argued that the tables contained commercially sensitive or trade-secret information whose disclosure could cause competitive harm. AliveCor's declaration used generalized descriptions of business strategies, customer information, technical details, and trade secrets but did not explain specifically how disclosure of the product codes or old release dates would cause harm.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Apple filed a motion concerning the sealing of Exhibit 6 to its opposition to AliveCor's motion to stay pending inter partes review. AliveCor timely responded and sought to seal portions containing internal product codes and product release dates. The court denied Apple's motion without prejudice, allowing AliveCor seven days to submit a declaration supporting continued sealing or allowing the parties to seek withdrawal of the document.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Pintos v. Pac. Creditors Ass'n, 605 F.3d 665, 678 (9th Cir. 2010)
- Kamakana v. City & Cnty. of Honolulu, 447 F.3d 1172, 1178-79 (9th Cir. 2006)
- Ctr. for Auto Safety v. Chrysler Grp., LLC, 809 F.3d 1092, 1099, 1101 (9th Cir. 2016)
- Phillips ex rel. Estates of Byrd v. Gen. Motors Corp., 307 F.3d 1206, 1210-11 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Beckman Indus., Inc. v. Int'l Ins. Co., 966 F.2d 470, 476 (9th Cir. 1992)
- E. W. Bank v. Shanker, No. 20-CV-07364-WHO, 2021 WL 4916729, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 31, 2021)
- Positive Techs., Inc. v. Sony Elecs., Inc., No. 11-CV-2226 SI KAW, 2013 WL 431343, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 1, 2013)
- Apple Inc. v. Samsung Elecs. Co., No. 11-CV-01846 LHK PSG, 2012 WL 4120541, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 18, 2012)