

**SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
NEW YORK COUNTY**

PRESENT: HON. PHAEDRA F. PERRY-BONDPART 35*Justice*-----X
JANE DOE,INDEX NO. 161704/2026

Plaintiff,

- v -

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, INC., CHI PHI CHAPTER HOUSE
ASSOCIATION, CHI PHI FRATERNITY, INC., CHI PHI
EDUCATIONAL TRUST, ALPHA BETA HOUSE
CORPORATION OF DELTA DELTA DELTA, DELTA DELTA
DELTA SORORITY, ZAREEN ENTERPRISE
LLC, MATTHEW INGALLS, JOHNATHAN NEWELL,
WINSTON LEE, GILLIO LOPES, DIEGO SARABIA, SCOTT
NORRIS, SCOTT KRETZSCHMAR, JOHN DOE, JOHN
DOE, JOHN DOES, and ORAZIO PETITO,

***Sua Sponte Decision and Order
Directing Sealing of Certain
Documents***

Defendants.
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The Court, on its own motion, *sua sponte* directs the County Clerk to seal NYSCEF Docs. 1, 6, 7, and 22, which contain the parties' purported addresses, and in the case of NYSCEF Doc. 6, erroneously listed a non-party's address. Once those documents are sealed, plaintiff is directed to refile redacted versions of those documents omitting the parties' addresses. Ordinarily, the Court does not *sua sponte* seal public documents due to the presumption of openness in civil litigation. However, the extraordinary events which have followed the filing of this action warrant this relief.

The First Department has held that trial courts must exercise their discretion to limit the public nature of proceedings sparingly, and only when unusual circumstances so require (*Anonymous v Anonymous*, 27 AD3d 356, 361 [1st Dept 2006]). That is because court dockets are presumptively open to the public. The presumption of openness exists for several reasons: it is believed that open proceedings are a disinfectant against injustice, incompetence, perjury, and

fraud (*Danco Laboratories, Ltd. v Chemical Works of Gedeon Richter, Ltd.*, 274 AD2d 1, 7 [1st Dept 2000]). Thus, when considering whether to seal certain documents, the Court must “use its discretion in balancing [parties’] privacy interest[s] against the presumption in favor of open trials.” (*Anonymous v Lerner*, 124 AD3d 487 [1st Dept 2015]).

In this case, unusual circumstances certainly require sealing certain documents, including a request for judicial intervention filed by the plaintiff, in which a purportedly erroneous address has been included leading a non-party’s family to be threatened and doxed.¹ This Court strongly condemns the reported acts of threats and doxing, which can only be characterized as brash, reckless, and ultimately dangerous internet vigilantism. Our society has developed procedures and legal mechanisms over the course of centuries to ensure justice and due process are afforded to all. When certain actors decide to work outside those robust and developed frameworks, innocent people often get hurt. That is precisely what has happened here. Certain “vigilantes” have used an erroneous address to inundate a former marine and his family with threats, simply because of a name shared with a defendant in this case. That behavior must cease immediately, is completely unacceptable, and provides more than ample cause to seal certain documents on this Court’s docket.

The Court takes the complaint’s allegations extremely seriously and appreciates attorneys’ zealous advocacy on behalf of all parties. However, everyone involved, be it the public, parties, or their attorneys, needs to do their part in bringing the temperature down before someone gets hurt. This Court holds the rule of law and due process sacrosanct and deeply appreciates that public debate on pertinent issues is a quintessential cornerstone of our democracy. However, public debate should never become so heated that people engage in misguided vigilantism to the point

¹ Doxing is the publishing of private or identifying information about a particular individual on the internet, typically with malicious intent.

that individuals, whether a party to litigation or mistakenly identified as a party, become inundated with malicious threats, or even worse, are physically harmed. In that situation, which is the point we are reaching here, the legal processes we as a society subscribe to are impeded. Therefore, the Court *sua sponte* directs the County Clerk to seal NYSCEF Docs. 1, 6-7 and 22 as those documents contain personal identifying information of parties and non-parties which have been used by certain observers to maliciously threaten and intimidate.²

Accordingly, it is hereby,

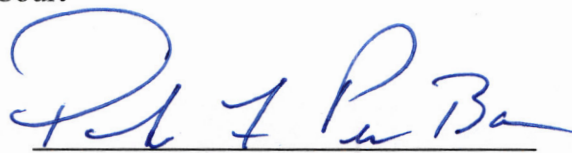
ORDERED that the Court *sua sponte* seals seal NYSCEF Docs. 1, 6-7 and 22 in accordance with the accompanying sealing order; and it is further

ORDERED that plaintiff is directed to re-file redacted versions of NYSCEF Docs. 1, 6-7 and 22 with the parties' purported addresses redacted from those documents; and it is further

ORDERED that upon notice of entry of this decision and order and the accompanying sealing order, the County Clerk shall immediately seal NYSCEF Docs. 1, 6-7 and 22.

This constitutes the Decision and Order of the Court

10/9/26
DATE


HON. PHAEDRA F. PERRY-BOND, J.S.C.

CHECK ONE:

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CASE DISPOSED

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NON-FINAL DISPOSITION

☐

GRANTED

☐

DENIED

☐

GRANTED IN PART

☒

OTHER

APPLICATION:

☐

SETTLE ORDER

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SUBMIT ORDER

CHECK IF APPROPRIATE:

☐

INCLUDES TRANSFER/REASSIGN

☐

FIDUCIARY APPOINTMENT

☐

REFERENCE

² The Court is mindful that this information is highly likely to already be disseminated on the internet. However, the Court issues this decision and order to do its part in mitigating the risk of harm and to caution all involved, whether parties or not, to act accordingly.