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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

CARRIE A. ANDERSON, in her Personal
Capacity and as Personal Representative of the
ESTATE OF KIRK DANIEL POWLESS,
deceased; *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

WHATCOM COUNTY, a political subdivision
of the State of Washington; *et al.*,

Defendants.

NO. 2:20-cv-01125

**AGREEMENT REGARDING
DISCOVERY OF
ELECTRONICALLY STORED
INFORMATION AND ORDER**

The parties hereby stipulate to the following provisions regarding the discovery of
electronically stored information (“ESI”) in this matter:

A. General Principles

1. An attorney’s zealous representation of a client is not compromised by conducting
discovery in a cooperative manner. The failure of counsel or the parties to litigation to cooperate
in facilitating and reasonably limiting discovery requests and responses raises litigation costs and
contributes to the risk of sanctions.

1 2. As provided in LCR 26(f), the proportionality standard set forth in Fed. R. Civ. P.
2 26(b)(1) must be applied in each case when formulating a discovery plan. To further the
3 application of the proportionality standard in discovery, requests for production of ESI and related
4 responses should be reasonably targeted, clear, and as specific as possible.

5 **B. ESI Disclosures**

6 Within 30 days of entry of this Order, or at a later time if agreed to by the parties, each
7 party shall disclose:

8 1. Custodians. The five custodians most likely to have discoverable ESI in their
9 possession, custody, or control. The custodians shall be identified by name, title, connection to
10 the instant litigation, and the type of the information under the custodian's control.

11 2. Non-custodial Data Sources. A list of non-custodial data sources (*e.g.*, shared
12 drives, servers), if any, likely to contain discoverable ESI.

13 3. Third-Party Data Sources. A list of third-party data sources, if any, likely to
14 contain discoverable ESI (*e.g.*, third-party email providers, mobile device providers, cloud
15 storage) and, for each such source, the extent to which a party is (or is not) able to preserve
16 information stored in the third-party data source.

17 4. Inaccessible Data. A list of data sources, if any, likely to contain discoverable ESI
18 (by type, date, custodian, electronic system or other criteria sufficient to specifically identify the
19 data source) that a party asserts is not reasonably accessible under Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(2)(B).

20 **C. ESI Discovery Procedures**

21 1. On-site inspection of electronic media. Such an inspection shall not be required
22 absent a demonstration by the requesting party of specific need and good cause or by agreement
23 of the parties.

1 2. Search methodology. The parties shall timely confer to attempt to reach agreement
2 on appropriate search terms and queries, file type and date restrictions, data sources (including
3 custodians), and other appropriate computer- or technology-aided methodologies, before any such
4 effort is undertaken. The parties shall continue to cooperate in revising the appropriateness of the
5 search methodology.

6 a. Prior to running searches:

7 i. The producing party shall disclose the data sources (including
8 custodians), search terms and queries, any file type and date restrictions, and any other
9 methodology that it proposes to use to locate ESI likely to contain responsive and discoverable
10 information. The producing party may provide unique hit counts for each search query.

11 ii. The requesting party is entitled to, within 14 days of the producing
12 party's disclosure, add no more than 10 search terms or queries to those disclosed by the
13 producing party absent a showing of good cause or agreement of the parties.

14 iii. The following provisions apply to search terms / queries of the
15 requesting party. Focused terms and queries should be employed; broad terms or queries, such
16 as product and company names, generally should be avoided. A conjunctive combination of
17 multiple words or phrases (*e.g.*, "computer" and "system") narrows the search and shall count as
18 a single search term. A disjunctive combination of multiple words or phrases (*e.g.*, "computer"
19 or "system") broadens the search, and thus each word or phrase shall count as a separate search
20 term unless they are variants of the same word. The producing party may identify each search
21 term or query returning overbroad results demonstrating the overbroad results and a counter
22 proposal correcting the overbroad search or query. A search that returns more than 250 megabytes

1 of data, excluding Microsoft PowerPoint files, audio files, and similarly large file types, is
2 presumed to be overbroad.

3 b. After production: Within 21 days of the producing party notifying the
4 receiving party that it has substantially completed the production of documents responsive to a
5 request, the responding party may request no more than 10 additional search terms or queries.
6 The immediately preceding section (Section C(2)(a)(iii)) applies.

7 c. Upon reasonable request, a party shall disclose information relating to
8 network design, the types of databases, database dictionaries, the access control list and security
9 access logs and rights of individuals to access the system and specific files and applications, the
10 ESI document retention policy, organizational chart for information systems personnel, or the
11 backup and systems recovery routines, including, but not limited to, tape rotation and
12 destruction/overwrite policy.

13 3. Format.

14 a. ESI will be produced to the requesting party with searchable text, in a
15 format to be decided between the parties. Acceptable formats include, but are not limited to, native
16 files, multi-page TIFFs (with a companion OCR or extracted text file), single-page TIFFs (only
17 with load files for e-discovery software that includes metadata fields identifying natural document
18 breaks and also includes companion OCR and/or extracted text files), and searchable PDF.

19 b. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, files that are not easily converted
20 to image format, such as spreadsheet, database, and drawing files, will be produced in native
21 format.

22 c. Each document image file shall be named with a unique number (Bates
23 Number). File names should not be more than twenty characters long or contain spaces. When a
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1 text-searchable image file is produced, the producing party must preserve the integrity of the
2 underlying ESI, *i.e.*, the original formatting, the metadata (as noted below) and, where applicable,
3 the revision history.

4 d. If a document is more than one page, the unitization of the document and
5 any attachments and/or affixed notes shall be maintained as they existed in the original document.

6 4. De-duplication. The parties may de-duplicate their ESI production across custodial
7 and non-custodial data sources after disclosure to the requesting party, and the duplicate custodian
8 information removed during the de-duplication process tracked in a duplicate/other custodian
9 field in the database load file.

10 5. Email Threading. The parties may use analytics technology to identify email
11 threads and need only produce the unique most inclusive copy and related family members and
12 may exclude lesser inclusive copies. Upon reasonable request, the producing party will produce
13 a less inclusive copy.

14 6. Metadata fields. If the requesting party seeks metadata, the parties agree that only
15 the following metadata fields need be produced, and only to the extent it is reasonably accessible
16 and non-privileged: document type; custodian and duplicate custodians (or storage location if no
17 custodian); author/from; recipient/to, cc and bcc; title/subject; email subject; file name; file size;
18 file extension; original file path; date and time created, sent, modified and/or received; and hash
19 value. The list of metadata type is intended to be flexible and may be changed by agreement of
20 the parties, particularly in light of advances and changes in technology, vendor, and business
21 practices.

22 7. Hard-Copy Documents. If the parties elect to produce hard-copy documents in an
23 electronic format, the production of hard-copy documents will include a cross-reference file that
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1 indicates document breaks and sets forth the custodian or custodian/location associated with each
2 produced document. Hard-copy documents will be scanned using Optical Character Recognition
3 technology and searchable ASCII text files will be produced (or Unicode text format if the text is
4 in a foreign language), unless the producing party can show that the cost would outweigh the
5 usefulness of scanning (for example, when the condition of the paper is not conducive to scanning
6 and will not result in accurate or reasonably useable/searchable ESI). Each file will be named
7 with a unique Bates Number (*e.g.*, the unique Bates Number of the first page of the corresponding
8 production version of the document followed by its file extension).

9 **D. Preservation of ESI**

10 The parties acknowledge that they have a common law obligation, as expressed in Fed. R.
11 Civ. P. 37(e), to take reasonable and proportional steps to preserve discoverable information in
12 the party's possession, custody, or control. With respect to preservation of ESI, the parties agree
13 as follows:

14 1. Absent a showing of good cause by the requesting party, the parties shall not be
15 required to modify the procedures used by them in the ordinary course of business to back-up and
16 archive data; provided, however, that the parties shall preserve all discoverable ESI in their
17 possession, custody, or control.

18 2. The parties will supplement their disclosures in accordance with Fed. R. Civ. P.
19 26(e) with discoverable ESI responsive to a particular discovery request or mandatory disclosure
20 where that data is created after a disclosure or response is made (unless excluded under Sections
21 (D)(3) or (E)(1)-(2)).

22 3. Absent a showing of good cause by the requesting party, the following categories
23 of ESI need not be preserved:

- a. Deleted, slack, fragmented, or other data only accessible by forensics.
- b. Random access memory (RAM), temporary files, or other ephemeral data that are difficult to preserve without disabling the operating system.
- c. On-line access data such as temporary internet files, history, cache, cookies, and the like.
- d. Data in metadata fields that are frequently updated automatically, such as last-opened dates (see also Section (E)(5)).
- e. Back-up data that are duplicative of data that are more accessible elsewhere.
- f. Server, system or network logs.
- g. Data remaining from systems no longer in use that is unintelligible on the systems in use.
- h. Electronic data (*e.g.*, email, calendars, contact data, and notes) sent to or from mobile devices (*e.g.*, iPhone, iPad, Android devices), provided that a copy of all such electronic data is automatically saved in real time elsewhere (such as on a server, laptop, desktop computer, or “cloud” storage).

E. Privilege

1. A producing party shall create a privilege log of all documents fully withheld from production on the basis of a privilege or protection, unless otherwise agreed or excepted by this Agreement and Order. Privilege logs shall include a unique identification number for each document and the basis for the claim (attorney-client privileged or work-product protection). For ESI, the privilege log may be generated using available metadata, including author/recipient or to/from/cc/bcc names; the subject matter or title; and date created. Should the available metadata provide insufficient information for the purpose of evaluating the privilege claim asserted, the producing party shall include such additional information as required by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Privilege logs will be produced to all other parties no later than 30 days after delivering a production unless an earlier deadline is agreed to by the parties.

1 2. Redactions need not be logged so long as the basis for the redaction is clear on the
2 redacted document.

3 3. With respect to privileged or work-product information generated after the filing
4 of the complaint, parties are not required to include any such information in privilege logs.

5 4. Activities undertaken in compliance with the duty to preserve information are
6 protected from disclosure and discovery under Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(3)(A) and (B).

7 5. Pursuant to Fed. R. Evid. 502(d), the production of any documents in this
8 proceeding shall not, for the purposes of this proceeding or any other federal or state proceeding,
9 constitute a waiver by the producing party of any privilege applicable to those documents,
10 including the attorney-client privilege, attorney work-product protection, or any other privilege
11 or protection recognized by law. Information produced in discovery that is protected as privileged
12 or work product shall be immediately returned to the producing party, and its production shall not
13 constitute a waiver of such protection.

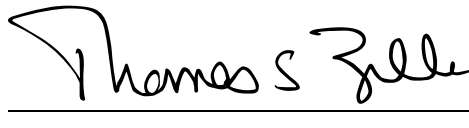
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1 **ORDER**

2 Based on the foregoing, IT IS SO ORDERED.

3 DATED: September 14, 2020.

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6 Thomas S. Zilly
7 United States District Judge