

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C.

In the Matter of

**CERTAIN DISPOSABLE VAPORIZER
DEVICES AND COMPONENTS AND
PACKAGING THEREOF**

INV. NO. 337-TA-1381

ORDER NO. 1: PROTECTIVE ORDER

(December 20, 2023)

WHEREAS, documents and information may be sought, produced or exhibited by and among the parties to the above captioned proceeding, which materials relate to trade secrets or other confidential research, development or commercial information, as such terms are used in the Commission's Rules, 19 C.F.R. § 210.5;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Confidential business information is information which concerns or relates to the trade secrets, processes, operations, style of work, or apparatus, or to the production, sales, shipments, purchases, transfers, identification of customers, inventories, amount or source of any income, profits, losses, or expenditures of any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other organization, or other information of commercial value, the disclosure of which is likely to have the effect of either (i) impairing the Commission's ability to obtain such information as is necessary to perform its statutory functions; or (ii) causing substantial harm to the competitive position of the person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other organization from which the information was obtained, unless the Commission is required by law to disclose such information.

The term “confidential business information” includes “proprietary information” within the meaning of section 777(b) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. § 1677f(b)).

2(a). Any information submitted, in pre-hearing discovery or in a pleading, motion, or response to a motion either voluntarily or pursuant to order, in this investigation, which is asserted by a supplier to contain or constitute confidential business information shall be so designated by such supplier in writing, or orally at a deposition, conference or hearing, and shall be segregated from other information being submitted. Documents shall be clearly and prominently marked on their face with the legend: “CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION, SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER,” or a comparable notice. Such information, whether submitted in writing or in oral testimony, shall be treated in accordance with the terms of this protective order.

2(b). The Administrative Law Judge or the Commission may determine that information alleged to be confidential is not confidential, or that its disclosure is necessary for the proper disposition of the proceeding, before, during or after the close of a hearing herein. If such a determination is made by the Administrative Law Judge or the Commission, opportunity shall be provided to the supplier of such information to argue its confidentiality prior to the time of such ruling.

3. In the absence of written permission from the supplier or an order by the Commission or the Administrative Law Judge, any confidential documents or business information submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 above shall not be disclosed to any person other than: (i) outside counsel for parties to this investigation, including necessary secretarial and support personnel assisting such counsel; (ii) qualified persons taking testimony involving such documents or information and necessary stenographic and clerical personnel thereof; (iii) technical experts and their staff who are employed for the purposes of this

litigation (unless they are otherwise employed by, consultants to, or otherwise affiliated with a non-governmental party, or are employees of any domestic or foreign manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer, or distributor of the products, devices or component parts which are the subject of this investigation); (iv) the Commission, the Administrative Law Judge, the Commission staff, and personnel of any governmental agency as authorized by the Commission; (v) the Commission, its employees and Offices, and contract personnel (a) for developing or maintaining the records of this investigation or related proceedings, or (b) in internal investigations, audits, reviews, evaluations relating to the programs, personnel, and operations of the Commission including under 5 U.S.C. Appendix 3; and (vi) U.S. government employees and contract personnel, solely for cybersecurity purposes.¹

4. Confidential business information submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 above shall not be made available to any person designated in paragraph 3(i)² and (iii) unless he or she shall have first read this order and shall have agreed, by letter filed with the Secretary of this Commission: (i) to be bound by the terms thereof; (ii) not to reveal such confidential business information to anyone other than another person designated in paragraph 3; and (iii) to utilize such confidential business information solely for purposes of this investigation.

The letter shall also include the following acknowledgement:

I, the undersigned, on behalf of _____, acknowledge that information submitted for purposes of this Investigation may be disclosed to and used:

- (i) by the Commission, its employees and Offices, and contract personnel (a) for developing or maintaining the records of this or a related proceeding, or (b) in internal investigations, audits, reviews, and evaluations relating to the programs, personnel, and operations of the Commission including under 5 U.S.C. Appendix 3; or

¹ See Commission Administrative Order 16-01 (Nov. 7, 2015).

² Necessary secretarial and support personnel assisting counsel need not sign onto the protective order themselves because they are covered by counsel's signing onto the protective order.

- (ii) by U.S. government employees and contract personnel, solely for cybersecurity purposes. I understand that all contract personnel will sign appropriate nondisclosure agreements.

5. If the Commission or the Administrative Law Judge orders, or if the supplier and all parties to the investigation agree, that access to, or dissemination of information submitted as confidential business information shall be made to persons not included in paragraph 3 above, such matter shall only be accessible to, or disseminated to, such persons based upon the conditions pertaining to, and obligations arising from this order, and such persons shall be considered subject to it, unless the Commission or the Administrative Law Judge finds that the information is not confidential business information as defined in paragraph 1 thereof.

6(a). Any confidential business information submitted to the Commission or the Administrative Law Judge in connection with a motion or other proceeding within the purview of this investigation shall be submitted under seal pursuant to paragraph 2 above. Any portion of a transcript in connection with this investigation containing any confidential business information submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 above shall be bound separately and filed under seal. When any confidential business information submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 above is included in an authorized transcript of a deposition or exhibits thereto, arrangements shall be made with the court reporter taking the deposition to bind such confidential portions and separately label them “CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION, SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.” Before a court reporter or translator receives any such information, he or she shall have first read this order and shall have agreed in writing to be bound by the terms thereof. Alternatively, he or she shall sign the agreement included as Attachment A hereto. Copies of each such signed agreement shall be provided to the supplier of such confidential business information and the Secretary of the Commission.

6(b). Submitters³ are strongly encouraged to encrypt nonpublic documents that are electronically transmitted to the Commission to protect your sensitive information from unauthorized disclosure. The USITC secure drop-box system and the Electronic Document Information System (EDIS) use Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 cryptographic algorithms to encrypt data in transit. Submitting your nonpublic documents by a means that does not use these encryption algorithms (such as by email) may subject your firm's nonpublic information to unauthorized disclosure during transmission. If you choose a non-encrypted method of electronic transmission, the Commission warns you that the risk of such possible unauthorized disclosure is assumed by you and not by the Commission.

7. The restrictions upon, and obligations accruing to, persons who become subject to this order shall not apply to any information submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 above to which the person asserting the confidential status thereof agrees in writing, or the Commission or the Administrative Law Judge rules, after an opportunity for hearing, was publicly known at the time it was supplied to the receiving party or has since become publicly known through no fault of the receiving party.

8. The Commission, the Administrative Law Judge, and the Commission investigative attorney acknowledge that any document or information submitted as confidential business information pursuant to paragraph 2 above is to be treated as such within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4) and 18 U.S.C. § 1905, subject to a contrary ruling, after hearing, by the Commission or its Freedom of Information Act Officer, or the Administrative Law Judge. When such information is made part of a pleading or is offered into the evidentiary record, the data set forth

³ "Submitters" of confidential business information are the same as "suppliers" of confidential business information as that term is used in the context of this order. *See* Commission Administrative Order 16-01 (Nov. 7, 2015).

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