

A Cautionary Tale of Contempt Proceedings for Potential Violation of a Standard Protective Order in Trade Secrets Litigation

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Though litigants routinely enter into stipulated protective orders in the course of discovery that may involve sensitive company information (or even trade secrets), a recent ruling is a cautionary tale on the potential consequences of failing to abide by a protective order.

In *Allstate Ins. Co. v. Cruz*, Allstate filed suit against Cruz, a former Allstate agent, alleging he breached his exclusive agency agreement and appropriated customers to start his own insurance agency in violation of the federal Defend Trade Secrets Act, and the Colorado Uniform Trade Secrets Act. The district court granted Allstate summary judgment on Cruz's counterclaims, and before trial on Allstate's remaining claims, the parties dismissed the action.

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