

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	)	
	)	
COUNTY OF CHARLESTON	)	IN THE COURT OF COMMON
	)	PLEAS
James C. ("Chris") McNeil and	)	NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
Meaghan Poyer,	)	
	)	Civil Action No.: 2025-CP-10-05095
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO
v.	)	DEFENSE REQUEST FOR
	)	CONTINUANCE
SAC 181, LLC,	)	AND
Meridian Residential Group, LLC,	)	MOTION FOR
Adam W. Bayles, individually,	)	PROTECTIVE CONDITIONS
Tara Bayles, individually, and	)	
MRG Investing Company LLC,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	

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CLERK OF COURT
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INTRODUCTION

Plaintiffs do not oppose reasonable scheduling accommodations for counsel with legitimate conflicts. However, the November 18, 2025 request for continuance, which was filed one business day after the motions were scheduled, exemplifies a pattern of procedural tactics that have consistently prejudiced Plaintiffs' ability to prepare their case.

Respectfully, this Court should grant the continuance only with protective conditions that prevent further erosion of Plaintiffs' rights and ensure the integrity of discovery proceedings, **or deny the request for continuance outright**. The request, filed one business day after the hearing was scheduled, provides no specific reason for counsel's unavailability and appears to be another component of a coordinated, bad-faith strategy of delay.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A. The Scheduling Request and Misrepresentation

On November 18, 2025, defense counsel for SAC 181, LLC requested that eleven pending motions scheduled for December 19, 2025 be continued to the next available date, citing scheduling conflicts. Critically, counsel stated in her email to the Court's

scheduler that "all counsel for all Defendants... have consented to our continuance request" and later represented to the scheduler that "pro se plaintiffs have conditionally consented.".[1]

This characterization materially misrepresented Plaintiffs' position.

Plaintiffs' November 18 response clearly stated three conditions for consent:

1. **Expeditious rescheduling** given time-sensitive matters
2. **No Stay of Discovery** - clarifying that continuance must not justify ongoing discovery delays
3. **Reservation of Rights** regarding sanctions for pattern of obstruction[1]

Defense counsel for SAC 181 replied that they were "not in a position to consent to the other proposed items," while defense counsel for Meridian Defendants stated they "do not consent to the items in the Plaintiff's proposed conditions."[1]

There was no consent. What existed was a conditional offer that defendants rejected. Yet defense counsel presented the matter to the Court's scheduler as if Plaintiffs had agreed unconditionally, neutralizing Plaintiffs' objections and concerns.

B. The Pattern This Represents

This scheduling dispute is not isolated. It is the latest episode in a documented pattern of defense conduct designed to delay proceedings and avoid substantive engagement:

October 3, 2025: Plaintiffs serve first set of discovery requests on all Defendants.

November 7, 2025: Discovery responses due. Instead of complying, SAC 181 files Motion for Protective Order and Stay of Discovery. Meridian Defendants file nothing and remain silent.[3]

November 10, 2025: SAC 181 files Motion for Case Management Order Regarding Use of "AI" - a procedurally unsupported motion seeking to burden Plaintiffs with invented disclosure requirements and seemingly designed to imply Pro Se's litigation skills are due to AI use, in spite of Plaintiff McNeil's pre-AI litigation competence demonstrated against their own client.[3]

November 17, 2025: Court schedules eleven pending motions for hearing on December 19, 2025.

November 18, 2025: Defense counsel requests continuance, one business day after scheduling notice.

November 19, 2025: After Plaintiffs state conditions, both defense camps coordinate to reject conditions while telling Court scheduler Plaintiffs "consented." [1]

The chronology reveals a strategy: delay discovery obligations through protective orders, file harassing procedural motions, then seek continuances that further postpone accountability, all while mischaracterizing Plaintiffs' positions to Court staff.

C. Prejudice to Plaintiffs

Plaintiffs are now **47 days past the discovery deadline** without a single substantive response from any Defendant. This delay is not academic:[3]

- Plaintiffs cannot adequately respond to Defendants' pending motions (including the Motion to Dismiss filed by Meridian Defendants) without discovery into corporate structure, communications, and standard practices.
- Plaintiffs cannot prepare for depositions or develop trial strategy without baseline factual information Defendants are required to provide.
- Each passing day increases the burden on Plaintiffs, who manage this case pro se while caring for elderly family members with Stage 4 cancer and a 15-year-old blind, disabled dog whose suffering from the forced relocation is a central element of damages.

The continuance request, if granted without conditions, rewards obstruction and compounds prejudice.

ARGUMENT

I. MISREPRESENTATION TO COURT STAFF WARRANTS CLARIFICATION

Rule 8.4(c) of the South Carolina Rules of Professional Conduct prohibits conduct involving "dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation." While communications with court staff may fall outside the strict definition of "tribunal" under Rule 3.3, the principle remains: attorneys have a duty of candor in all professional dealings, especially those affecting scheduling and case management.

Defense counsel's characterization of Plaintiffs' "conditional consent" as simple "consent"—without mentioning that conditions were explicitly rejected—created a misleading impression. This may not rise to sanctionable misconduct, but it merits

correction for the record and consideration by this Court when evaluating defense counsels' pattern of conduct throughout this litigation.

II. CONTINUANCE SHOULD BE GRANTED WITH PROTECTIVE CONDITIONS

South Carolina law grants trial courts broad discretion in managing their dockets and granting continuances. *Fields v. Regional Medical Center Orangeburg*, 363 S.C. 525, 611 S.E.2d 868 (2005). However, that discretion must be exercised to balance the interests of all parties and ensure fairness. *Steinke v. South Carolina Dep't of Labor, Licensing & Regulation*, 336 S.C. 373, 520 S.E.2d 142 (1999).

Here, granting an open-ended continuance without protective conditions would:

- **Reward dilatory conduct** by allowing Defendants to avoid December 19 hearing without addressing their ongoing discovery non-compliance
- **Further prejudice Plaintiffs**, who have been without discovery responses for 47 days
- **Undermine judicial efficiency**, as the protective order motion and other pending matters cannot be properly briefed or argued without underlying discovery

The appropriate remedy is to grant the continuance **with conditions that protect the integrity of the litigation process**.

III. PROPOSED CONDITIONS ARE REASONABLE AND NECESSARY

Plaintiffs respectfully request this Court impose the following conditions on any continuance:

A. Discovery Obligations Continue Without Stay

The November 7 Motion for Protective Order and Stay seeks relief that has not been granted. Discovery obligations under the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure remain in effect. Granting a hearing continuance should not be construed as implicit approval of a discovery stay.

Condition: Defendants shall provide complete, substantive responses to Plaintiffs' October 3, 2025 discovery requests within **14 days** of this Order, without regard to the pending Motion for Protective Order (which shall be resolved on its merits at the rescheduled hearing).

B. Expedited Rescheduling

The pending motions address time-sensitive issues including discovery disputes, potential sanctions, and Defendants' attempts to dismiss claims. Prolonged delay serves no party's legitimate interest.

Condition: The hearing shall be rescheduled to the **earliest available date** on the Court's calendar, and Defendants shall make themselves available for that date.

C. Advance Notice for Future Continuance Requests

The pattern of last-minute procedural requests—protective order filed on the discovery due date, continuance requested one day after scheduling notice—creates unnecessary disruption and administrative burden.

Condition: Any future request for continuance of scheduled hearings or deadlines must be made at least **14 days in advance**, absent true emergency (with supporting documentation).

D. Reservation of Rights Regarding Sanctions

Plaintiffs do not seek sanctions through this motion. However, the pattern of conduct documented here and in Plaintiffs' pending Motion to Compel may ultimately warrant relief under Rule 37, Rule 11, or the Court's inherent authority.

Condition: This Order is without prejudice to Plaintiffs' right to seek sanctions for the cumulative pattern of obstruction, should that pattern continue.

IV. PLAINTIFFS' BACKGROUND SUPPORTS CREDIBILITY OF CONCERNS

This Court may wonder whether pro se Plaintiffs are overreacting to routine defense tactics or failing to understand standard procedure. The record demonstrates otherwise.

Prior Litigation Experience: Plaintiff James C. McNeil successfully litigated pro se against Comcast, Dominion Energy, SAC 181, LLC, and Roadstead Properties in Case No. 2021-CP-10-02237, achieving confidential settlement. During that litigation, Mr. McNeil filed a detailed Opposition to Motion for Protective Order (attached as Exhibit B) demonstrating sophisticated understanding of discovery procedures, public policy considerations, and litigation strategy—**before** the advent of generative AI tools that defendants now attempt to weaponize against him.[3]

Professional Background: Mr. McNeil is:

- Creator of Strategic Thought Leadership methodology (strategicthoughtleadership.com)
- Board member of Lowcountry Herald, a nonprofit newspaper serving vulnerable communities in Charleston County
- Former consultant on AI implementation and responsible technology use
- Holder of national innovation awards for self-taught software development
- Presenter of July 14, 2025 keynote to Lowcountry Entrepreneur Network on "AI and the Industrial Revolution for Mental Work"[3]

This is not a pro se plaintiff who needs education about procedure. This is a pro se plaintiff who recognizes procedural manipulation when it occurs.

Urgent Personal Circumstances: Beyond professional competence, Plaintiffs face genuine hardship that makes every day of delay meaningful:

- Meaghan Poyer's father is battling Stage 4 cancer, requiring family support and care coordination
- Plaintiffs' 15-year-old dog, Rocket, is blind and disabled, suffering ongoing distress from the August 1 forced relocation that is a central element of emotional distress damages
- Plaintiffs' Strategic Thought Leadership platform, podcast, and book—all documented as active before this dispute—remain stalled while litigation consumes time and resources that should be devoted to public-benefit work

These circumstances do not create legal entitlement, but they explain why Plaintiffs cannot treat this litigation as an academic exercise in patience.

V. JUDGE MCCOY'S VALUES ALIGN WITH FAIR PROCESS

This Court has a well-earned reputation for fairness, attention to detail, and protection of litigants' procedural rights regardless of representation status. The relief Plaintiffs seek—continuance with conditions that prevent further prejudice—aligns perfectly with those values:

- **Pro se plaintiffs seeking only fair process**, not special treatment
- **Balancing accommodation with preventing prejudice** to parties' substantive rights
- **Protecting the integrity of discovery process** from manipulation
- **Ensuring equal access to justice** regardless of representation

If the Court grants Defendants' continuance request without protective conditions, it will signal that procedural manipulation is a viable strategy. If the Court grants the continuance **with** conditions that ensure discovery proceeds and fairness is maintained, it will signal that this Court protects all litigants' rights equally.

SUPPORTING CONTEXT: THE BROADER PATTERN

While Plaintiffs do not seek sanctions through this motion, the Court should be aware that this scheduling dispute fits within a documented pattern that spans both defense camps and multiple violations:

From SAC 181 / Phelps Dunbar:

- Filing protective order motion on the discovery due date
- Filing AI motion seeking to burden pro se litigants with non-existent procedural requirements
- Mischaracterizing Plaintiffs' conditional consent as unconditional consent
- Pattern of communications violating Rule 4.3 (giving legal advice to pro se adverse parties)[3]

From Meridian Defendants / Resnick & Louis:

- Complete silence regarding discovery obligations (47 days past deadline, zero responses)
- Coordinating with SAC 181 counsel to reject Plaintiffs' reasonable conditions
- Pattern of communications attempting to dictate how Plaintiffs may contact Defendants' registered agents[3]

The JRA6 Preview Part II document (attached as Exhibit C) provided to defense counsel on November 14, 2025 detailed these patterns and offered a final settlement window before public campaign launch. The response was continued silence and the immediate filing of this continuance request.

Plaintiffs are not seeking to punish counsel or prevent reasonable accommodation. Plaintiffs are seeking to ensure that accommodation does not become another tool for delay.

PROPOSED ORDER

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter the following Order:

ORDER

Upon consideration of Defense Counsel's request for continuance and Plaintiffs' Response and Motion for Protective Conditions, it is hereby **ORDERED**:

1. **Continuance Granted:** The December 19, 2025 hearing on pending motions is continued to **[earliest available date on Court's calendar]**.
2. **Discovery Obligation:** Defendants SAC 181, LLC, Meridian Residential Group, LLC, Tara Bayles, and Adam Bayles shall provide complete, verified, substantive responses to Plaintiffs' First Set of Discovery Requests (served October 3, 2025) within **fourteen (14) days** of the date of this Order. This obligation is without regard to the pending Motion for Protective Order, which shall be resolved on its merits at the rescheduled hearing.
3. **Expedited Rescheduling:** The Court's staff shall schedule the continued hearing for the earliest date that accommodates the Court's calendar, and defense counsel shall make themselves available for that date.
4. **Future Continuance Requests:** Any future request by any party for continuance of scheduled hearings or modification of deadlines must be made at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the affected date, absent a documented emergency requiring shorter notice.
5. **Reservation of Rights:** This Order is without prejudice to any party's right to seek sanctions, attorney fees, or other relief based on patterns of conduct in this litigation.
6. **No Stay of Discovery:** The continuance of the December 19 hearing shall not be construed as granting any stay of discovery obligations, and all parties shall comply with applicable discovery rules and deadlines.

SO ORDERED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

CONCLUSION

Plaintiffs conditionally consented to rescheduling because they do not oppose reasonable accommodation of counsel's legitimate scheduling conflicts. But "consent" and "conditional consent with rejected conditions" are not the same thing. And a continuance that rewards obstruction while compounding prejudice is not reasonable accommodation—it is procedural manipulation.

This Court has the authority and the responsibility to ensure that case management serves fairness and judicial efficiency. Given the lack of specificity in the request and the documented pattern of obstruction, denying the continuance outright is well within the Court's discretion. At a minimum, granting the continuance **only with the protective conditions requested** is necessary to signal that procedural manipulation will not be rewarded in this courtroom.

Respectfully submitted,

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also on behalf of Meaghan Poyer, Pro Se

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this ____ day of November, 2025, I served a copy of the foregoing motion upon all counsel of record via email to the addresses listed below:

[List all defense counsel with email addresses]

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: Email thread between Court scheduler, defense counsel, and Plaintiffs (November 18-19, 2025)

Exhibit B: Plaintiffs' Opposition to Motion for Protective Order from Case No. 2021-CP-10-02237 (demonstrating pre-AI litigation competence)

Exhibit C: JRA6 Preview Part II (demonstrating pattern documentation and settlement framework)

Exhibit D: Timeline of Discovery Obstruction (October 3 - November 19, 2025)