

# [***Aileen Cannon Grants Jack Smith's Request To Conceal Witnesses Against Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BS4-45R1-DXXD-700P-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GettyImages-1586103320-scaled-e1703177198157.jpg)

A federal judge ruled Tuesday to conceal the identities of witnesses in the classified documents case against Donald Trump.

Judge Aileen Cannon decided to redact the witnesses' names in the [*classified documents*](https://dailycaller.com/2023/11/02/judge-signals-she-may-delay-trump-classified-documents-trial/) case against Trump. This ruling follows extensive debates over the secrecy of court document details. Cannon sided with [*Special Counsel Jack Smith*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/19/florida-state-attorney-david-aronberg-donald-trump-classified-docs-case-jack-smith-red-button/), stating that disclosing witness names and details could put them at risk. Although she found the request for widespread redactions extensive, she recognized the need to shield witness information for now.

“The Court is satisfied that the Special Counsel has made an adequate showing on this issue under Rule 16, at least at this juncture pending final trial preparations,” [*according*](https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.flsd.648652/gov.uscourts.flsd.648652.438.0.pdf) to the court document. “The Court directs the Special Counsel ... to file under seal an index containing the name of each potential government witness and a corresponding pseudonym/anonymization for use in the redactions of Defendants' MTC.”

This decision allows for the release of more case documents to the public, using pseudonyms to protect witness identities. Cannon stated that witness statements could be public, but any identifying information would be left out.

Special counsel Jack Smith has spent months trying to convince U.S. District Court Judge Cannon to keep under seal government-agent witnesses in the case which charges Trump with mishandling classified documents and obstructing efforts to retrieve them. [*https://t.co/vqLkorDO9U*](https://t.co/vqLkorDO9U)

- The Washington Post (@washingtonpost) [*April 10, 2024*](https://twitter.com/washingtonpost/status/1777852251404427276?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“The Special Counsel shall file under seal an index identifying each potential government witness identified in any of the discovery

materials attached/referenced in the MTC, giving each a corresponding pseudonym/anonymization (e.g., “John Smith” - NARA Employee 1).”

Cannon also noted that the special counsel's office had failed to present all its arguments regarding witness anonymity earlier in the proceedings, leading to a reconsideration of an earlier order for more openness. [***(RELATED: Trump Says Letitia James Has 'Defrauded The Public,' Rips $18 Million Mar-A-Lago Valuation)***](https://dailycaller.com/2023/10/17/trump-says-letitia-james-has-defrauded-the-public-rips-18-million-dollar-mar-a-lago-valuation/)

“Although the record is clear that the Special Counsel could have, and should have, raised its current arguments previously, the Court elects, upon a full review of those newly raised arguments, to reconsider its prior Order,” she stated in the document.

Smith opposed making witness identities public, fearing harassment. The witness list could feature employees from Trump's [*Mar-a-Lago*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/08/trump-supreme-court-challenge-colorado-14th-amendment-ballot-case-mar-a-lago/) estate, [*according*](https://edition.cnn.com/2024/04/09/politics/witnesses-secret-trump-classified-documents/) to CNN. Trump's legal team had argued for the naming of potential witnesses, a common practice in criminal cases. However, the court has now decided against it in light of witness protection concerns, as previously reported. Trump and his two co-defendants have pleaded not guilty to charges of obstruction. The former president also denies allegations related to the improper handling of classified information. The case continues to unfold under Cannon's supervision.

**Graphic**

WASHINGTON, DC - AUGUST 01: Special Counsel Jack Smith delivers remarks on a recently unsealed indictment including four felony counts against former U.S. President Donald Trump on August 1, 2023 in Washington, DC. Trump was indicted on four felony counts for his alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election. (Photo by Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

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