

Apple hit again with US ban in watch patent feud

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An Apple Watch 9 displays blood-oxygen level detection settings.

A federal appeals court on Wednesday ordered Apple to halt US sales of its latest smartwatch models as part of a patent feud with health company Masimo.

The ban on certain Apple smartwatch models will come into effect

Thursday as the iPhone juggernaut is ordered to await the outcome of its appeal.

Masimo, based in southern California, filed a complaint to the US International Trade Commission (ITC) which decided in October to halt imports of the Apple Watch models over a patented technology for detecting blood-oxygen levels.

A court temporarily lifted the ban last month.

Apple manufactures the vast majority of its products overseas, predominantly in China, giving the ITC jurisdiction over the patent feud.

According to reports, Apple is planning to remove the technology for now from the smartwatches in question—the Series 9 and Ultra 2—in a solution that Masimo has welcomed.

Masimo contends it invented the technology and that Apple poached key employees to win access to the know-how.

But the iPhone-maker contends that the ITC finding was in error and should be reversed, and appealed the decision in the federal appeals court.

The wait for that decision could reportedly last a year or more.

Masimo chief executive Joe Kiani called the decision to allow the ban to be implemented a "victory" for the US patent system that shows even powerful companies such as Apple must respect intellectual property rights.

Apple did not immediately reply to a query from AFP.

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