

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

F. Hoffmann-La Roche AG v. Adam Robert
Case No. D2026-3021

1. The Parties

The Complainant is F. Hoffmann-La Roche AG, Switzerland, represented internally.

The Respondent is Adam Robert, United Kingdom.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <roche-hiv.com> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on July 9, 2026. On July 9, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On July 10, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (Redacted for Privacy, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on July 10, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on July 14, 2026.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amendment to the Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on July 21, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was August 10, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on August 14, 2026.

The Center appointed Dilek Zeybel as the sole panelist in this matter on August 18, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is F. Hoffmann-La Roche AG, a Swiss pharmaceutical and diagnostics company headquartered in Basel, Switzerland. The Complainant, together with its affiliated companies, operates globally in the fields of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics in more than 100 countries.

The Complainant's trademark ROCHE is protected by numerous trademark registrations in multiple jurisdictions worldwide, including, but not limited to, the following:

- International trademark ROCHE, no. 340483, registered on November 14, 1967;
- International trademark ROCHE, no. 346223, registered on June 19, 1968;
- International trademark ROCHE (figurative), no. 832631, registered on April 8, 2004;

The Complainant also owns and uses the domain name <roche.com>.

The Respondent registered the disputed domain name on December 4, 2019.

According to the evidence submitted with the Complaint, the disputed domain name previously resolved to a website containing information concerning the Complainant and links to third-party websites, including online casino websites. The website also contained a statement indicating that it was generated and maintained by the Complainant.

As of the time of the Complaint and as of the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name resolves to an inactive webpage.

There is no evidence of any relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

In particular, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its ROCHE trademark, which the Complainant submits is well known, as it incorporates the trademark in its entirety. The Complainant submits that the addition of the term "hiv", an abbreviation for "Human Immunodeficiency Virus", and a hyphen does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.

The Complainant further points out that the term "hiv" is related to its field of activity, stating that it was one of the first pharmaceutical companies to develop HIV medications.

The Complainant submits that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name and contends that the Respondent sought to capitalize on the reputation of the ROCHE trademark.

According to the Complainant, the disputed domain name previously resolved to a website containing links to third-party commercial websites, including online casino websites. The Complainant contends that the Respondent thereby sought to redirect Internet users looking for the Complainant or its products to third-party commercial websites, which does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use.

The Complainant further states that it sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Respondent on July 1, 2026, and that, shortly thereafter, the content of the website was changed to display scientific articles under the title "Roche HIV Resource Center". The Complainant further notes that the corresponding Whois record shows an update date of July 2, 2026, which, according to the Complainant, supports the timing of the changes made following the cease-and-desist letter.

Finally, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name was registered and has been used in bad faith. In particular, the Complainant submits that the Respondent must have been aware of the ROCHE trademark and relies on the statement appearing on the website that "all information contained in this website is generated and maintained by F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Ltd, Basel, Switzerland", which the Complainant states was made without authorization.

The Complainant further relies on the use of the website containing information concerning the Complainant together with links to third-party commercial websites, including online casino websites, which, according to the Complainant, was intended to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the ROCHE trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 15(a) of the Rules directs the Panel as to the principles to be applied in determining the dispute: "A Panel shall decide a complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted in accordance with the Policy, these Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable."

The Policy provides, at paragraph 4(a), that each of the three elements must be made for a complaint to prevail:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights;
- (ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name;
- (iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

Pursuant to paragraph 14(b) of the Rules, where a party does not comply with any provision of the Rules, the Panel may draw such inferences as it considers appropriate.

Considering the Parties' submissions, the Policy, the Rules, the Supplemental Rules, and applicable law, the Panel's findings with respect to each of the above elements are set out below.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between

the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of the term "-hiv" may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

The applicable Top-Level Domain ".com" is viewed as a standard registration requirement and as such is disregarded for the purposes of the first element test. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.11.1.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant and has not been authorized, licensed, or otherwise permitted to use the Complainant's ROCHE trademark or to register a domain name incorporating that trademark.

The record shows that the disputed domain name previously resolved to a website containing information concerning the Complainant together with links to third-party commercial websites, including online casino websites. In the circumstances of this case, the Panel finds that such use does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use.

The record further shows that the disputed domain name was subsequently used for a website displaying scientific articles under the title "Roche HIV Resource Center". The website contained the statement that "All information contained in this website is generated and maintained by F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Ltd, Basel, Switzerland".

In the absence of any authorization from the Complainant, the Panel finds that the website falsely purported to be associated with or maintained by the Complainant. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, falsely purporting to be associated with or maintained by the Complainant, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.13.1.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

The Panel finds that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and its ROCHE trademark when registering the disputed domain name. The Complainant's trademark registrations significantly predate the registration of the disputed domain name, which incorporates the distinctive ROCHE trademark in its entirety together with the term "-hiv", a term directly related to an area of the Complainant's pharmaceutical activities.

Given the well-known nature of the Complainant's ROCHE trademark and its international presence, and in view of the composition of the disputed domain name, the Panel finds it implausible that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name without awareness of the Complainant and its trademark. This finding is further supported by the evidence concerning the content previously displayed on the website, which expressly referred to the Complainant and purported to be maintained by the Complainant.

The evidence further shows that the disputed domain name was used for a website containing information concerning the Complainant together with links to third-party commercial websites, including online casino websites.

The Panel finds that such use was intended to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's ROCHE trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website. The circumstances therefore fall within paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Panels have found that seeking to cause confusion for a respondent's commercial benefit may support a finding that the respondent registered a domain name to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant's trademark. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.4. The Panel finds this principle applicable in the circumstances of the present case.

The Panel also notes that, following the Complainant's cease-and-desist letter of July 1, 2026, the website was changed to display scientific articles under the title "Roche HIV Resource Center" and contained a statement that the information on the website was generated and maintained by F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Ltd, Basel, Switzerland. In the absence of any authorization from the Complainant, and having reviewed the record, the Panel finds that the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name for a website purporting to be maintained by the Complainant further supports a finding that the disputed domain name was registered and used in bad faith.

The Panel finds the third element of the Policy has been established.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <roche-hiv.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Dilek Zeybel/

Dilek Zeybel

Sole Panelist

Date: September 1, 2026