

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Keya Morgan v. County of Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office

Morgan · No. 2:23-cv-10474-MRA-MAR · Decided April 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California entered judgment in favor of the County of Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Jackie Lacey, and Jeffrey C. Stodel, Jr. after granting their motion to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6). The judgment dismissed Keya Morgan’s claims against those defendants with prejudice pursuant to Rules 54(b) and 58(a), while claims against Joan Celia Lee and Kirk Schenk remained pending.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Monica Ramirez Almadani
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	April 18, 2025
DOCKET	2:23-cv-10474-MRA-MAR
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Judgment following the court’s order granting County Defendants’ motion to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The judgment followed dismissal under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6); the Rule 54(b) determination required findings that the judgment was final, that there was no just reason for delay, and that separate entry would not produce improper piecemeal appeals.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential federal district court judgment
PARTIES	Keya Morgan v. County of Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Jackie Lacey, Jeffrey C. Stodel, Jr.

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- motions to dismiss
- section 1983
- government liability
- municipal liability

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

municipal law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court could direct entry of a final judgment in favor of fewer than all parties under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 54(b) while claims against other defendants remained pending.
2. Whether there was no just reason for delay in entering judgment for the County Defendants.
3. Whether the judgment was final and sufficiently separate from the remaining claims to avoid improper piecemeal appeals.

HOLDINGS

1. A district court may direct entry of a final judgment as to fewer than all claims or parties when the judgment is final and there is no just reason for delay under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 54(b).
2. The judgment dismissing the claims against the County Defendants with prejudice was a final judgment for purposes of Rule 54(b).
3. There was no just reason to delay entry of judgment because the claims resolved against the County Defendants had minimal interrelationship with the remaining claims and separate judgment would not create improper piecemeal appeals.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“when an action involves multiple parties or claims, district courts have discretion to “direct entry of a final judgment as to one or more, but fewer than all, claims or parties only if the court expressly determines that there is no just reason for delay.”” (at 1)

“Because there is minimal “interrelationship of claims,” the Court finds that the judgment at issue will not lead to “piecemeal appeals.”” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff Keya Morgan asserted claims against multiple defendants, including the County Defendants and Joan Celia Lee and Kirk Schenk. The court had dismissed the First Amended Complaint against the County Defendants with prejudice, while claims against Lee and Schenk remained pending. Because the County Defendants sought a separate final judgment, the court evaluated finality, delay, interrelationship of claims, potential piecemeal appeals, and the equities.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On March 6, 2025, the court dismissed Plaintiff’s First Amended Complaint against the County Defendants with prejudice. The County Defendants requested entry of judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 58(d). Claims against Joan Celia Lee and Kirk Schenk remained pending, so the court considered whether to direct entry of a final judgment as to fewer than all parties under Rule 54(b).

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Romoland Sch. Dist. v. Inland Empire Energy Ctr., LLC, 548 F.3d 738, 747 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Noel v. Hall, 568 F.3d 743, 747 (9th Cir. 2009)
- Curtiss-Wright Corp. v. General Elec. Co., 446 U.S. 1, 7-8 (1980)
- AmerisourceBergen Corp. v. Dialysist W., Inc., 465 F.3d 946, 954 (9th Cir. 2006)
- S.E.C. v. Platforms Wireless Int'l Corp., 617 F.3d 1072, 1084 (9th Cir. 2010)

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA 10 11 KEYA MORGAN, Case No. 2:23-cv-10474-MRA-MAR 12 Plaintiff,
JUDGMENT FOLLOWING ORDER 13 vs. GRANTING DEFENDANTS COUNTY OF LOS
ANGELES 14 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, DISTRICT
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, LOS ANGELES COUNTY 15 LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, JACKIE DEPARTMENT, JEFFREY C. STODEL, LACEY, AND
JEFFREY C. STODEL, 16 JR., an individual, LOS ANGELES CITY JR.'S MOTION TO
DISMISS POLICE DEPARTMENT, JACKIE 17 LACEY, an individual, GABRIEL F. MUNOZ,
an individual, JOAN CELIA 18 "JC" LEE, as an individual and as Successor in Interest to the
STAN LEE 19 TRUST, KIRK SCHENK, an individual, and DOES 1-100, 20 21 Defendants.

22 23 24 25 26 27 1 On March 6, 2025, the Court granted Defendants County of Los Angeles
District 2 Attorney's Office, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Jackie Lacey, and Jeffrey
3 C. Stodel, Jr.'s ("County Defendants") Motion to Dismiss pursuant to Federal Rule of 4 Civil
Procedure 12(b)(6) and entered an Order dismissing Plaintiff Key Morgan's First 5 Amended
Complaint against County Defendants with prejudice.

ECF 100. County 6 Defendants thereafter requested the entry of Judgment in their favor and
against 7 Plaintiff pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 58(d). ECF 114. Plaintiff's claims 8
against Defendants Joan Celia Lee and Kirk Schenk remain pending. See ECF 103. 9 Ordinarily,
the Court's ability to issue a judgment is constrained by the "one final 10 judgment" rule.

See Romoland Sch. Dist. v. Inland Empire Energy Ctr., LLC, 548 F.3d 11 738, 747 (9th Cir. 2008).
However, when an action involves multiple parties or claims, 12 district courts have discretion to
"direct entry of a final judgment as to one or more, but 13 fewer than all, claims or parties only if
the court expressly determines that there is no 14 just reason for delay." Fed.

R. Civ. P. 54(b); see *Noel v. Hall*, 568 F.3d 743, 747 (9th Cir. 2009). Accordingly, the Court makes the following findings: 16 1. The judgment at issue is a “final judgment.” *Curtiss-Wright Corp. v. General Elec. Co.*, 446 U.S. 1, 7-8 (1980). 18 2. There is no “just reason for delay.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 54(b); 19 *AmerisourceBergen Corp. v. Dialysist W., Inc.*, 465 F.3d 946, 954 (9th Cir.

2006). 20 3. Because there is minimal “interrelationship of claims,” the Court finds that 21 the judgment at issue will not lead to “piecemeal appeals.” *S.E.C. v. Platforms Wireless Int’l Corp.*, 617 F.3d 1072, 1084 (9th Cir. 2010) (citation omitted). 23 4.

The equities, including “efficient judicial administration,” prejudice, and 24 delay, warrant a separate judgment. *Id.* 25 // 26 // 27 // 1 Pursuant to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 54(b) and 58(a), the Court hereby 2 || enters judgment in favor of the County Defendants and against Plaintiff. 3 4 IT IS SO ORDERED. 5 6 || Dated: April 18, 2025 oc Mae K. AC— 7 HO.

MONICA RAMIREZ ALMADANI United States District Court Judge 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28