

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

United African-Asian Abilities Club et al. v. Shapell Social Rental
Properties LLC

United African-Asian Abilities Club · No. 2:25-cv-02567-SB-KES · Decided March 26, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California ordered Plaintiffs to show cause why their California Unruh Civil Rights Act claim should not be dismissed without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(4). Relying on Ninth Circuit precedent concerning California’s reforms addressing high-frequency litigation, the Court indicated that declining supplemental jurisdiction may protect federal-state comity. Plaintiffs were ordered to identify the statutory damages sought and submit declarations addressing whether they and their counsel qualify as high-frequency litigants.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Stanley Blumenfeld, Jr.
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	March 26, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-02567-SB-KES
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court sua sponte issued an order to show cause why Plaintiffs' state-law Unruh Act claim should not be dismissed without prejudice for declining supplemental jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(4).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Abuse of discretion principles govern a district court's decision whether to exercise supplemental jurisdiction; the court's decision is guided by the discretionary factors in 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished federal district court order; persuasive but not generally binding precedent.

TOPICS

- subject matter jurisdiction
- civil procedure
- public accommodations discrimination
- ada / disability

PRACTICE AREAS

Civil procedure

Disability discrimination

Supplemental jurisdiction

Americans with Disabilities Act

California Unruh Civil Rights Act

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court had supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiffs' Unruh Act claim because it was closely related to the ADA claim.
2. Whether the circumstances identified by the Ninth Circuit in *Arroyo v. Rosas* potentially warranted declining supplemental jurisdiction over the Unruh Act claim under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(4).
3. Whether, because the case remained at an early stage and the court had not adjudicated the merits, Plaintiffs should be ordered to show cause why the Unruh Act claim should not be dismissed without prejudice.

HOLDINGS

1. Because the Unruh Act claim was closely related to the ADA claim, the court had authority to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over it under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).
2. The Ninth Circuit's identified concerns regarding federal-state comity and California's statutory reforms concerning high-frequency ADA-based Unruh Act claims constitute circumstances that may qualify as exceptional under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(4), potentially justifying declination of supplemental jurisdiction.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Unlike Arroyo, this case is still at a very early stage, and this Court has not yet addressed or adjudicated the merits of any of Plaintiffs’ claims.”

“Accordingly, the Court ORDERS Plaintiffs within 14 days after entry of this Order to show cause in writing why the Court should not dismiss without prejudice their Unruh Act claim under Section 1367(c)(4).”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff United African-Asian Abilities Club and its member James Lee, who has a vision disability and uses a mobility device because he cannot walk, alleged that physical and communication barriers at Defendant's property and website prevented Lee's access. Plaintiffs asserted claims under the ADA and California's Unruh Act, among other authorities. The case was at an early stage, and the court had not adjudicated the merits of any claim.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs filed claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the California Unruh Civil Rights Act, and other authorities concerning alleged physical and communication barriers at Defendant's property and website. Before addressing the merits of any claim, the court determined that the Unruh Act claim was closely related to the ADA claim and fell within supplemental jurisdiction. Relying on Ninth Circuit precedent concerning high-

frequency ADA/Unruh Act litigation, the court ordered Plaintiffs to show cause within 14 days why the Unruh Act claim should not be dismissed without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- City of Chi. v. Int'l Coll. of Surgeons, 522 U.S. 156, 172 (1997)
- Arroyo v. Rosas, 19 F.4th 1202 (9th Cir. 2021)

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