

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Judy West, et al. v. Ford Motor Company, et al.

West · No. 1:25-cv-01266-KES-CDB · Decided January 8, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California ordered counsel for Plaintiffs Judy West and Paula West-Moore to show cause in writing why sanctions should not be imposed for failing to timely appear at a mandatory scheduling conference. The order also directed Plaintiffs’ counsel to meet and confer with defense counsel and propose dates to reconvene the scheduling conference, warning that noncompliance could result in sanctions up to and including a recommendation to dismiss the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	January 8, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-cv-01266-KES-CDB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	After Defendants removed the action from the Kern County Superior Court, the district court convened an initial scheduling conference. Plaintiffs' counsel failed to appear timely, and the court issued an order requiring counsel to show cause in writing why sanctions should not be imposed.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- sanctions
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- sanctions

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiffs' counsel's failure to timely appear at the mandatory scheduling conference warranted an order to show cause regarding possible sanctions.
2. Whether the court had authority under Local Rule 110 and its inherent docket-management power to consider sanctions for failure to comply with a court order.

HOLDINGS

1. The district court may impose sanctions, where appropriate, for counsel's or a party's failure to comply with the court's rules or orders, pursuant to Local Rule 110 and the court's inherent power to control its docket.
2. Counsel for Plaintiffs was required to show cause in writing by January 12, 2026, why sanctions should not be imposed for failure to obey the court's scheduling-conference order.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Court has the inherent power to control its docket and may, in the exercise of that power, impose sanctions where appropriate.” (at 2)

“Failure to comply with this order to show cause may result in the imposition of sanctions, up to and including a recommendation to dismiss the case.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The court had ordered the parties to attend a mandatory scheduling conference by Zoom and had provided connection information in advance. Defendants' counsel appeared on time, but Plaintiffs did not timely appear personally or through noticed counsel. An attorney who was not listed as counsel eventually joined after a five-minute wait, experienced technical difficulties, and explained that she was covering for attorneys occupied with an unrelated trial and had only recently received the access link. The court found the explanation unsatisfactory and recessed the conference.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs filed the complaint in Kern County Superior Court on September 11, 2023. Ford removed the action to the Eastern District of California on September 23, 2025. The district court set an initial scheduling conference for January 8, 2026; Plaintiffs' counsel appeared late and unprepared after the conference began, prompting the court to issue this show-cause order.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Bautista v. Los Angeles County*, 216 F.3d 837, 841 (9th Cir. 2000)

