

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Ronald William Ward v. S. Batra, et al.

Ward v. Batra · No. 1:21-cv-00929-KES-SKO (PC) · Decided November 3, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California vacated the existing discovery and scheduling order and temporarily stayed proceedings in Ronald William Ward’s civil rights action against S. Batra and others. The stay was imposed to allow the court to resolve pending motions and conserve judicial resources, while permitting limited opposition and reply briefing concerning two recently filed motions. The court also prohibited additional motions or briefing until the stay is lifted.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sheila K. Oberto
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	November 3, 2025
DOCKET	1:21-cv-00929-KES-SKO (PC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court, acting sua sponte in a pending 42 U.S.C. § 1983 civil-rights action, vacated the existing discovery and scheduling order and temporarily stayed proceedings while it resolved seven pending motions.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Abuse-of-discretion principles govern a district court's decision to stay proceedings; the court exercises sound discretion after weighing the competing interests affected by a stay.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential district court order

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- discovery dispute
- prisoners rights
- civil rights
- section 1983

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- civil rights
- prisoner civil-rights litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should vacate the existing discovery and scheduling order because multiple pending motions required resolution before further deadlines could be enforced.
2. Whether the court should sua sponte impose a temporary stay of proceedings and restrict additional motions and briefing pending resolution of the pending motions.

HOLDINGS

1. The court may vacate the existing discovery and scheduling order to permit resolution of numerous pending motions and reset the deadline for pretrial dispositive motions afterward.
2. A district court may sua sponte stay proceedings as an incident of its inherent authority to control its docket when, after weighing the relevant interests, the stay promotes judicial economy and does not create undue harm or hardship.
3. During the temporary stay, the parties may file only the opposition and reply briefing expressly permitted by the order and may not file additional motions, requests, or briefing until the stay is lifted.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Court’s limited resources are overburdened.” (at 2)

“The exertion of this power calls for the exercise of sound discretion.” (at 2)

“Generally, stays should not be indefinite in nature” (at 3)

“In sum, the Court finds a temporary stay of these proceeding is warranted.” (at 4)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The action proceeds on Plaintiff’s Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim concerning serious medical needs. Since mid-July 2025, Plaintiff filed seven motions, several of which Defendant opposed or had not yet had an opportunity to oppose. Discovery had concluded, the matter had not been set for trial, and the court was managing a backlog of motions.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff Ronald William Ward, a pro se civil detainee proceeding in forma pauperis, brought an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Defendant Batra. The court had issued a discovery and scheduling order setting a discovery cutoff and a dispositive-motion deadline. After Plaintiff filed seven motions, the court vacated the scheduling order and stayed the action pending resolution of the motions, while permitting limited opposition and reply briefing.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Clinton v. Jones, 520 U.S. 681, 706 (1997)
- Landis v. North American Co., 299 U.S. 248, 254 (1936)
- CMAX, Inc. v. Hall, 300 F.2d 265, 268 (9th Cir. 1962)
- Ali v. Trump, 241 F. Supp. 3d 1147, 1152 (W.D. Wash. 2017)
- Dependable Highway Exp., Inc. v. Navigators Ins. Co., 498 F.3d 1059, 1066-67 (9th Cir. 2007)
- Hart v. Weyrich, No. 2:23-cv-884, 2023 WL 5015616, at *1-2 (W.D. Wash. Aug. 7, 2023)
- Hill v. Payne, No. 6:21-cv-6029, 2022 WL 22017673, at *3 (W.D. Ark. Feb. 18, 2022)
- Liberi v. Taitz, No. SACV 11-0485 AG (AJWx), 2011 WL 13143549, at *5 (C.D. Cal. June 14, 2011)
- Linear Technology Corp. v. Impala Linear Corp., No. C-98-1727 VRW, 2001 WL 36126932, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 21, 2001)
- Cole v. Xlibris Corp., No. 1:05 CV 303 M D (N.D. Miss. Apr. 12, 2006)

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA 10 11 RONALD WILLIAM WARD, Case No. 1:21-cv-00929-KES-SKO (PC) 12
Plaintiff, ORDER VACATING DISCOVERY AND SCHEDULING ORDER 13 v. (Doc. 43) 14 S.
BATRA, et al., ORDER ISSUING TEMPORARY STAY 15 Defendants. PENDING
RESOLUTION OF PENDING MOTIONS 16 17 18 Plaintiff Ronald William Ward is a civil
detainee proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis 19 in this civil rights action pursuant to 42
U.S.C. § 1983.

This action proceeds on Plaintiff's Eighth 20 Amendment deliberate indifference to serious
medical needs claim against Defendant Batra. 1 21 I. RELEVANT BACKGROUND 22 Since
mid-July 2025, Plaintiff has filed seven motions in this matter. (See Docs. 50-52, 23 59-60, 64-65.)
Defendant has opposed several motions thus far (see Docs. 55-57, 62-63), and 24 further
oppositions, if any, by Defendant are due on November 14 and November 17, 2025, 25
respectively.

26 27 1 On June 2, 2025, this action was reassigned to the undersigned "for all further
proceedings, including trial and entry of judgment." (See Doc. 49.) 1 The judges in this district
carry a heavy caseload and delays are inevitable. Simply put, the 2 Court's limited resources are
overburdened. Plaintiff's recent motions, while important to 3 Plaintiff, will further delay these
proceedings.

To conserve its limited resources, the Court will 4 vacate the scheduling order in this action and
issue a sua sponte stay of these proceedings as 5 discussed below. 6 II. DISCUSSION 7 Vacating
the Discovery and Scheduling Order 8 The Court issued a Discovery and Scheduling Order on
May 23, 2025. (Doc. 43.)

The 9 discovery cut-off deadline was set for October 23, 2025. (Id. at 1, 3.) That deadline has now 10 passed. The scheduling order also set a deadline for filing of pre-trial dispositive motions for 11 December 22, 2025. (Id.) Given the significant number of motions pending a decision in this 12 matter, the Court will vacate the scheduling order to allow for resolution of those motions.

The 13 deadline for filing pre-trial dispositive motions will then be reset. 14 Issuing a Temporary Stay of the Proceedings 15 The district court “has broad discretion to stay proceedings as an incident to its power to 16 control its own docket.” *Clinton v. Jones*, 520 U.S. 681, 706 (1997) (citing *Landis v. North 17 American Co.*, 299 U.S. 248, 254 (1936)).

The “power to stay proceedings is incidental to the 18 power inherent in every court to control disposition of the cases on its docket with economy of 19 time and effort for itself, for counsel, and for litigants.” *Landis*, 299 U.S. at 254.

The exertion of 20 this power calls for the exercise of sound discretion.” *CMAX, Inc. v. Hall*, 300 F.2d 265, 268 (9th 21 Cir. 1962). And courts have the power to consider stays sua sponte. *Ali v. Trump*, 241 F. Supp. 3d 22 1147, 1152 (W.D. Wash. 2017). 23 In considering a stay of proceedings, a court must the weigh competing interests that will 24 be affected by the grant or refusal to grant a stay, including: (1) the possible damage which may 25 result from the granting of a stay; (2) the hardship or inequity which a party may suffer in being 26 required to go forward; and (3) the orderly course of justice measured in terms of simplifying or 27 complicating of issues, proof, and questions of law which could be expected to result from a stay.

1 The Risk of Possible Damage 2 Here, there is no possible damage that might result from granting a stay of this action. 3 Discovery has concluded, 2 the matter has not yet been set for trial, and the stay considered by the 4 Court is not indefinite. See *Dependable Highway Exp., Inc. v. Navigators Ins. Co.*, 498 F.3d 5 1059, 1066-67 (9th Cir. 2007) (“Generally, stays should not be indefinite in nature”).

It is a 6 temporary stay that will not cause any unnecessary delay of the resolution of the case. And absent 7 a stay, Plaintiff may continue to file motions or requests that may tax additional resources and add 8 to the backlog of motions pending in this action.

Therefore, this factor weighs in favor of a stay. 9 The Possibility Hardship or Inequity 10 There is little possibility of hardship or inequity that may be suffered by any party by 11 issuance of a stay. Plaintiff has seven motions pending resolution by the Court. This temporary 12 stay will help ensure that all pending motions are resolved before any additional action can be 13 taken by the parties, including the filing of pre-trial dispositive motions, absent those permitted 14 by this order.

The Court finds this factor weighs in favor of a stay. 15 The Orderly Course of Justice 16 The Court finds this final factor also weighs in favor of a stay. The Court is currently 17 dealing with a

backlog of motions in this action.

The Court finds a stay will promote judicial economy as it will temporarily limit the filing of additional motions or requests while the Court addresses the motions previously filed. Finally, the Court finds a stay of these proceedings would not complicate issues, proof, or any applicable questions of law. In sum, the Court finds a temporary stay of these proceedings is warranted.

See also, e.g., *Hart v. Weyrich*, No. 2:23-cv-884, 2023 WL 5015616, at *1-2 (W.D. Wash. Aug. 7, 2023) (imposing sua sponte stay to allow court to address pending motions); *Hill v. Payne*, No. 6:21-cv-24 6029, 2022 WL 22017673, at *3 (W.D. Ark. Feb. 18, 2022) (finding temporary restriction of motion filing reasonable in light of court resources); *Liberi v. Taitz*, No. SACV 11-0485 AG 26 (AJWx), 2011 WL 13143549, at *5 (C.D.

Cal. June 14, 2011) (imposing motion filing restriction). To the extent resolution of any motion filed by Plaintiff requires additional discovery, the Court will do so and noting the “flood of filings before the Court”); *Linear Technology Corp. v. Impala Linear 2 Corp.*, No. C-98-1727 VRW, 2001 WL 36126932, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 21, 2001) (noting a “blizzard of motions,” staying further proceedings, and directing that no further motions may be filed without leave of court); see also *Cole v. Xlibris Corp.*, No. 1:05 CV 303 M D, 2006 WL 5 980808, at *2 (N.D.

Miss. Apr. 12, 2006) (noting pro se plaintiff “filed multiple motions and appeals” and stating “plaintiff shall file no further motions of any kind... Should the plaintiff attempt to file motions in violation of this order, the motions will not be filed, acknowledged or acted on at any time”). Limited Anticipated Briefing Will Be Permitted. The Court notes that Defendant has not yet had an opportunity to file an opposition to Plaintiff’s motions filed on October 24 and 27, 2025, and Plaintiff has not had an opportunity to file a reply.

See Local Rule 230(l). Therefore, any opposition or reply related only to those filings will be exempt from this stay. III. CONCLUSION AND ORDER For the foregoing reasons, the Court HEREBY ORDERS as follows:

The Discovery and Scheduling Order issued May 23, 2025 (Doc. 43) is VACATED; 2. This action is STAYED pending the Court’s issuance of rulings on the motions currently pending on its docket which will be decided in due course; 3. Defendant may file any opposition to Plaintiff’s motions filed October 24, 2025 (Doc. 64) and October 27, 2025 (Doc. 65), as set forth in Local Rule 230(l); 4.

Plaintiff may file a reply to any opposition filed by Defendant, and only as to those referenced above, as set forth in Local Rule 230(l); 5. The parties shall not file any additional motions or requests, or any additional briefing not expressly set forth in this Order until the Court lifts the stay of these proceedings; 6.

The deadline for filing pre-trial dispositive motions will be reset following the 2 resolution of the pending motions and the lifting of the temporary stay. 3 IT IS SO ORDERED. 4 5 Dated: October 31, 2025 /s/ Sheila K. Oberto. UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27