

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Christopher R. Castillo v. A. Ojeda, et al.

Castillo v. Ojeda · No. 1:25-cv-00569-CDB (PC) · Decided January 15, 2026

SUMMARY

The document contains findings and recommendations by a United States magistrate judge in a prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. It recommends dismissal without prejudice because the plaintiff failed to comply with a screening order and failed to prosecute, applying the Ninth Circuit’s dismissal factors.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	United States Magistrate Judge
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	January 15, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-cv-00569-CDB (PC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Findings and recommendations by a magistrate judge recommending dismissal without prejudice of a pro se prisoner's 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action for failure to comply with a screening order and failure to prosecute.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court weighed the five factors governing dismissal for failure to comply with a court order: the public interest in expeditious resolution, the court's need to manage its docket, the risk of prejudice to defendants, the availability of less drastic alternatives, and the public policy favoring disposition on the merits.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- sanctions
- civil procedure
- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- civil rights

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the action should be dismissed without prejudice because Plaintiff failed to comply with the court's screening order.
2. Whether dismissal without prejudice was appropriate under the five-factor test governing dismissal for failure to obey court orders and failure to prosecute.

HOLDINGS

1. After weighing the applicable five factors, dismissal without prejudice was appropriate because Plaintiff failed to respond to the screening order despite being warned that noncompliance could result in dismissal.
2. The district court's inherent authority to control its docket permits dismissal as a sanction for failure to obey court orders and failure to prosecute.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A pro se plaintiff must comply with orders of the court. Local Rule (“L.R.”) 183. Failure to comply with a court order may be grounds for imposition of sanctions, including dismissal or any other sanction appropriate under the Local Rules.” (at 7-11)

“In considering whether to dismiss an action for failure to comply with a court order, the Court must weigh the following factors: “(1) the public’s interest in expeditious resolution of litigation; (2) the court’s need to manage its docket; (3) the risk of prejudice to the defendants; (4) the availability of less drastic alternatives; and (5) the public policy favoring disposition of cases on their merits.”” (at 12-18)

“A district court need not exhaust every sanction short of dismissal before finally dismissing a case, but must explore possible and meaningful alternatives.” (at 12-16)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Christopher R. Castillo, a state prisoner proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis, filed a civil rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The court's first screening order identified some cognizable claims and deficiencies in other claims and directed Plaintiff to file an amended complaint, elect to stand on the screened complaint, or voluntarily dismiss the action. Plaintiff received the order and warning but failed to respond, delaying the litigation and interfering with docket management.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed the action on May 14, 2025. After screening the complaint on December 5, 2025, the court found some cognizable claims and directed Plaintiff either to file an amended complaint, notify the court that he would stand on the screened complaint, or voluntarily dismiss the action. Plaintiff was warned that failure to respond could result in a recommendation of dismissal. Plaintiff filed no response by the deadline, and the magistrate judge recommended dismissal without prejudice and closure of the case, subject to review by an assigned district judge after a 21-day objection period.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Thompson v. Hous. Auth., City of Los Angeles, 782 F.2d 829, 831 (9th Cir. 1986)
- Pagtalunan v. Galaza, 291 F.3d 639, 642-43 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Ferdik v. Bonzelet, 963 F.2d 1258, 1260-62 (9th Cir. 1992)
- Yourish v. Cal. Amplifier, 191 F.3d 983, 990-91 (9th Cir. 1999)
- Henderson v. Duncan, 779 F.2d 1421, 1424 (9th Cir. 1986)
- In re Phenylpropanolamine Prods. Liab. Litig., 460 F.3d 1217, 1228 (9th Cir. 2006)
- Wilkerson v. Wheeler, 772 F.3d 834, 839 (9th Cir. 2014)