

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Enright v. Centene Management Company, LLC d/b/a Health Net
Federal Services, LLC

No. 25cv0796-LL-MSB (S.D. Cal. June 27, 2025) · No. 25cv0796-LL-MSB · Decided June 27, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of California denied Paul C. Enright’s motion to remand his employment-law action against Centene Management Company, LLC to state court. The court held that diversity jurisdiction existed because the amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000 and the parties were completely diverse, and it denied the related motion to stay as moot.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Linda Lopez
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of California
DECIDED	June 27, 2025
DOCKET	25cv0796-LL-MSB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to remand an employment-law action removed from San Diego Superior Court on diversity-jurisdiction grounds and also moved to stay the case pending resolution of the remand motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The removing defendant bears the burden of establishing that removal is proper; remand is required if the federal court lacks subject-matter jurisdiction after removal.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court order; precedential status is unknown.
PARTIES	Paul C. Enright v. Centene Management Company, LLC d/b/a Health Net Federal Services, LLC

TOPICS

- subject matter jurisdiction
- civil procedure
- wrongful termination
- employment law

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000 for purposes of diversity jurisdiction.
2. Whether the parties were completely diverse for purposes of diversity jurisdiction.
3. Whether the removed action should be remanded to state court.
4. Whether Plaintiff's motion to stay should be granted while the remand motion was pending.

HOLDINGS

1. The amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000 because the complaint's allegations of more than three years of lost wages, bonuses, benefits, and other compensation, combined with its other damages requests, made the jurisdictional amount facially apparent; the removal petition independently supported that amount.
2. Complete diversity existed because Plaintiff was a California citizen and the defendant LLCs' citizenship, determined through their membership layers, was Delaware and Missouri rather than California.
3. The motion to remand was denied because the court possessed original diversity jurisdiction over the action and removal was proper.
4. The motion to stay was denied as moot because the court resolved the remand motion.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Because there is a “strong presumption” against removal, “the defendant always has the burden of establishing removal is proper.”” (1)

“An “LLC is a citizen of every state of which its owners/members are citizens.”” (2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, a former healthcare analyst, alleged that Defendant unlawfully terminated him in December 2021. He sought compensatory, general, and punitive damages, including damages for lost wages, bonuses, benefits, and other compensation. Although the complaint did not state a specific damages amount, the court concluded that more than three years of alleged lost compensation, together with the other requested damages, placed more than \$75,000 in controversy. Plaintiff was domiciled in California, while the defendant entities' members were alleged to be citizens of Delaware and Missouri.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Enright sued Centene Management Company, LLC in San Diego Superior Court for alleged violations of California employment laws. Defendant timely removed the action to the Southern District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1441, asserting diversity jurisdiction. The district court denied the motion to remand and denied the motion to stay as moot.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Gaus v. Miles, Inc., 980 F.2d 564, 566 (9th Cir. 1992)
- Singer v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co., 116 F.3d 373, 377 (9th Cir. 1997)
- Owen Equip. & Erection Co. v. Kroger, 437 U.S. 365, 373 (1978)
- Lew v. Moss, 797 F.2d 747, 749-50 (9th Cir. 1986)
- Hertz Corp. v. Friend, 559 U.S. 77, 88 (2010)
- Johnson v. Columbia Props. Anchorage, LP, 437 F.3d 894, 899 (9th Cir. 2006)
- Traeger Grills E., LLC v. Traeger Pellet Grills, LLC, No. 11-cv-0536-AC, 2011 WL 115439330, at *3 (D. Or. Nov. 9, 2011)
- Mason & Dixon Intermodal, Inc. v. Lapmaster Int'l LLC, 632 F.3d 1056, 1060 (9th Cir. 2011)

OPINION

Enright v. Centene Management Company, LLC

PER CURIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 11 PAUL C. ENRIGHT, Case No.: 25cv0796-LL-MSB 12 Plaintiff,

ORDER DENYING MOTION TO

13 v. REMAND CASE TO STATE COURT

AND DENYING AS MOOT MOTION

14 CENTENE MANAGEMENT

TO STAY

COMPANY, LLC d/b/a HEALTH NET

15

FEDERAL SERVICES, LLC,

[ECF Nos. 6, 7] 16 Defendant. 17 18 Plaintiff Paul C. Enright, acting pro se, sued Defendant Centene Management 19 Company, LLC d/b/a Health Net Federal Services, LLC for allegedly violating California 20 employment laws. ECF No. 1-2 (“Compl.”). Defendant timely removed the case from San 21 Diego Superior Court to this Court under diversity jurisdiction. ECF No. 1. Plaintiff moved 22 to remand the case to state court and to stay it in the interim. ECF Nos. 6, 7. These matters 23 are fully briefed, and the Court deems them suitable for determination on the papers and 24 without oral argument pursuant to Civil Local Rule 7.1. For the reasons below, the Court 25 DENIES Plaintiff’s Motion to Remand and DENIES AS MOOT his Motion to Stay.

26 I. LEGAL STANDARD

27 If a district court has “original jurisdiction” over a civil action, a defendant may 28 remove it from state to federal court. 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a). A form of original jurisdiction, 1 often called diversity jurisdiction, exists when (1) the “matter in controversy” exceeds 2 “\$75,000” and (2) the civil action is between “citizens of different States.” 28 U.S.C. 3 § 1332(a)(1). If a federal court lacks the proper jurisdiction after removal, “the case shall 4 be remanded” to state court. 28 U.S.C. § 1447(c). Because there is a “strong presumption” 5 against removal, “the defendant always has the burden of establishing removal is proper.” 6 *Gaus v. Miles, Inc.*, 980 F.2d 564, 566 (9th Cir. 1992).

7 II. DISCUSSION

8 A. Matter in Controversy 9 Plaintiff, a former healthcare analyst, alleges that Defendant unlawfully fired him in

10 December 2021. See Compl. Plaintiff seeks compensatory, general, and punitive damages.

11 See, e.g., *id.* ¶ 145 (“Mr. Enright has been damaged in that he was wrongfully and tortiously 12 deprived of future wages, bonuses, benefits, and other compensation to which he was and 13 remains entitled.”). Although Plaintiff does not quantify his damages, the only reasonable 14 reading of the complaint is that his claims for over three years of lost wages, bonuses, etc. 15 exceeds \$75,000, especially when coupled with his other requests. See *Singer v. State Farm* 16 *Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 116 F.3d 373, 377 (9th Cir. 1997) (“The district court may consider 17 whether it is ‘facially apparent’ from the complaint that the jurisdictional amount is in 18 controversy.”). Even if it were not facially apparent, Defendant’s petition also reveals that 19 the matter in controversy exceeds the requisite \$75,000. See *id.* (noting that the court may 20 “consider facts in the removal petition” when assessing “the amount in controversy”); 21 ECF No. 1 ¶ 24 (calculating Plaintiff’s salary as “\$114,685.87 per year”). 22 B. Citizens of Different States 23 Complete “diversity jurisdiction does not exist unless each defendant is a citizen of 24 a different State from each plaintiff.” *Owen Equip. & Erection Co. v. Kroger*, 437 U.S. 25 365, 373 (1978). A person is a “citizen” or “domiciled” where he or she resides and intends 26 to stay. *Lew v. Moss*, 797 F.2d 747, 749–50 (9th Cir. 1986). A corporation, meanwhile, has 27 two citizenships: the state where it was “incorporated” and the state where it has its 28 “principal place of business.” *Hertz Corp. v. Friend*, 559 U.S. 77, 88 (2010). An “LLC is | citizen of every state of which its owners/members are citizens.” *Johnson v. Columbia* 2 || *Properties Anchorage, LP*, 437 F.3d 894, 899 (9th Cir. 2006). Since the “Johnson court 3 || analyzed the state citizenship of each component member of the defendant’s entity,” courts 4 sitting in alleged diversity, like here, must “evaluate whether a defendant has discharged 5 burden for removal by looking at the layers of citizenship of each LLC member.” 6 || *Traeger Grills E., LLC v. Traeger Pellet Grills, LLC*, No. 11-cv-0536-AC, 2011 WL 7 115439330, at *3 (D. Or. Nov. 9, 2011). 8 Here, the parties are completely diverse. Plaintiff resides in California and does not 9 || allege any intention to move. See generally Compl. Plaintiff’s domicile is thus California. 10 || Next, looking at the layers of Defendant’s LLC

members, Centene Management Company 11 ||LLC's sole member is Centene Corporation, incorporated in Delaware with a principal 12 place of business in Missouri; and Health Net Federal Services, LLC's sole member is 13 || Health Net, LCC, whose sole member is Centene Corporation, the Delaware and Missouri 14 || citizen. ECF No. 4. Because the matter in controversy exceeds \$75,000 and the parties are 15 || citizens of different states, the Court has original diversity jurisdiction over this case.!

16 || TT. CONCLUSION

17 Accordingly, the Court DENIES Plaintiff's Motion to Remand Case to State Court 18 DENIES AS MOOT his Motion to Stay. 19 IT IS SO ORDERED. 20 || Dated: June 27, 2025 NO 21 DE | 22 Honorable Linda Lopez 33 United States District Judge 24 26 Contrary to Plaintiff's concern, removal did not discount his ability to recover under state 27 || law. See *Mason & Dixon Intermodal, Inc. v. Lapmaster Int'l LLC*, 632 F.3d 1056, 1060 28 (9th Cir. 201 1) ("When a district court sits in diversity, or hears state law claims based on supplemental jurisdiction, the court applies state substantive law to the state law claims."").