

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Barcimeo Merino Candelaria v. Tristan Lemon

Candelaria v. Lemon · No. 1:24-cv-01358-KES-SAB (HC) · Decided June 20, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California adopted the magistrate judge’s findings and recommendations and dismissed Barcimeo Merino Candelaria’s 28 U.S.C. § 2254 habeas petition without prejudice for failure to exhaust state judicial remedies. The court directed the clerk to close the case and declined to issue a certificate of appealability.

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	June 20, 2025
DOCKET	1:24-cv-01358-KES-SAB (HC)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	State prisoner’s petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254 was dismissed without prejudice after the magistrate judge recommended dismissal for failure to exhaust state judicial remedies. The district court adopted the findings and recommendations, closed the case, and declined to issue a certificate of appealability.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The district court conducted de novo review under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) (1) of the magistrate judge’s findings and recommendations. For the certificate-of-appealability determination, the court applied the Slack v. McDaniel standard for a petition denied on procedural grounds.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished

TOPICS

- federal habeas corpus
- post-conviction relief
- appellate procedure
- standard of review

PRACTICE AREAS

- federal habeas corpus
- post-conviction relief
- appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the petition for a writ of habeas corpus should be dismissed without prejudice for failure to exhaust state judicial remedies.
2. Whether the court should issue a certificate of appealability after dismissing the petition on procedural grounds.

HOLDINGS

1. The petition must be dismissed without prejudice because petitioner failed to exhaust state judicial remedies.
2. A certificate of appealability should not issue because reasonable jurists would not find debatable or wrong the determination that the petition should be dismissed or that petitioner should be allowed to proceed further.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Where, as here, the Court denies habeas relief on procedural grounds without reaching the underlying constitutional claims, the Court should issue a certificate of appealability “if jurists of reason would find it debatable whether the petition states a valid claim of the denial of a constitutional right and that jurists of reason would find it debatable whether the district court was correct in its procedural ruling.”” (at 2)

“Where a plain procedural bar is present and the district court is correct to invoke it to dispose of the case, a reasonable jurist could not conclude either that the district court erred in dismissing the petition or that the petitioner should be allowed to proceed further.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Barcimeo Merino Candelaria was a state prisoner who filed a pro se petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The record reflected that he had failed to exhaust state judicial remedies. He did not object to the magistrate judge’s recommendation that the petition be dismissed without prejudice.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Petitioner filed a § 2254 habeas petition and proceeded pro se. The matter was referred to a magistrate judge, who issued findings and recommendations on March 6, 2025, recommending dismissal without prejudice for failure to exhaust state remedies. Petitioner filed no objections within the prescribed period, and the district court conducted de novo review, adopted the findings and recommendations in full, dismissed the petition without prejudice, directed the clerk to close the case, and declined to issue a certificate of appealability.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 335-36 (2003)

- Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)

OPINION

(HC) Candelaria v. Lemon

PER CURIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10

11 BARCIMEO MERINO CANDELARIA, No. 1:24-cv-01358-KES-SAB (HC)

12 Petitioner, ORDER ADOPTING FINDINGS AND

RECOMMENDATIONS, DISMISSING

13 v. PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS

CORPUS WITHOUT PREJUDICE,

14 TRISTAN LEMON, DIRECTING CLERK OF COURT TO CLOSE

CASE, AND DECLINING TO ISSUE A

15 Respondent. CERTIFICATE OF APPEALABILITY 16 (Doc. 7) 17 18 Petitioner Barcimeo Merino Candelaria is a state prisoner proceeding pro se with a 19 petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254. This matter was referred to a 20 United States Magistrate Judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(B) and Local Rule 302. 21 On March 6, 2025, the assigned magistrate judge issued findings and recommendations 22 that recommended dismissing the petition without prejudice for failure to exhaust state judicial 23 remedies. Doc. 5. The findings and recommendations were served on petitioner and contained 24 notice that any objections thereto were to be filed within thirty days after service. To date, no 25 objection have been filed, and the time for doing so has passed. 26 In accordance with the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) (1), the Court has conducted a de 27 novo review of the case. Having carefully reviewed the file, the Court holds the findings and 28 recommendations to be supported by the record and proper analysis. 1 Having found that petitioner is not entitled to habeas relief, the Court now turns to 2 | whether a certificate of appealability should issue. A petitioner seeking a writ of habeas corpus 3 | has no absolute entitlement to appeal a district court's denial of his petition, and an appeal is 4 | allowed only in certain circumstances. *Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 537 U.S. 322, 335-36 (2003); 28 5 | U.S.C. § 2253. Where, as here, the Court denies habeas relief on procedural grounds without 6 | reaching the underlying constitutional claims, the Court should issue a certificate of appealability 7 | "if jurists of reason would find it debatable whether the petition states a valid claim of the denial 8 | of a constitutional right and that jurists of reason would find it debatable whether the district court 9 | was correct in its procedural ruling." *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000). "Where a 10 | plain procedural bar is present and the district court is correct to invoke it to dispose of the case, a 11 | reasonable jurist could not conclude either that the district court erred in

dismissing the petition or 12 | that the petitioner should be allowed to proceed further.” Jd. 13 In the present case, the Court finds that reasonable jurists would not find the Court’s 14 | determination that the petition should be dismissed debatable or wrong, or that petitioner should 15 | be allowed to proceed further. Therefore, the Court declines to issue a certificate of appealability. 16 Accordingly: 17 1. The findings and recommendations issued on March 6, 2025, Doc. 7, are ADOPTED 18 in full; 19 2. The petition for writ of habeas corpus is DISMISSED without prejudice; 20 3. The Clerk of Court is directed to close the case; and 21 4. The Court declines to issue a certificate of appealability. 22 23

94 | ☐ ☐ SO ORDERED. _

25 Dated: _ June 19, 2025 4h

UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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