

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Zajonc v. T-Mobile US, Inc.

No. 3:25-cv-02860-JSC (N.D. Cal. Aug. 21, 2025) · No. 3:25-cv-02860-JSC · Decided August 21, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California grants T-Mobile’s motion to dismiss Paula Zajonc’s First Amended Complaint. The court holds that the complaint does not plausibly allege a bona fide religious belief conflicting with T-Mobile’s COVID-19 vaccination requirement or termination based on religious beliefs. The court also dismisses the California Unfair Competition Law claim for lack of Article III standing and failure to state a claim, while granting one final opportunity to amend.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jacqueline Scott Corley
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	August 21, 2025
DOCKET	3:25-cv-02860-JSC
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) to dismiss Plaintiff's First Amended Complaint for failure to state a claim. Defendant also challenged Plaintiff's standing to seek prospective injunctive relief under the California Unfair Competition Law.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim, the court accepts well-pleaded factual allegations as true and determines whether they plausibly state a claim for relief; conclusory allegations and threadbare recitals of elements are insufficient. Article III standing for prospective injunctive relief requires a substantial risk of future injury.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished_nonprecedential
PARTIES	Paula Zajonc v. T-Mobile US, Inc.

TOPICS

motions to dismiss

religious discrimination

employment discrimination

standing

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

employment law

employment discrimination

civil rights

remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the First Amended Complaint plausibly alleged a religious-discrimination claim under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.
2. Whether the First Amended Complaint plausibly alleged a California Unfair Competition Law claim under the unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent prongs.
3. Whether Plaintiff had Article III standing to seek prospective injunctive relief under the Unfair Competition Law.
4. Whether Plaintiff should receive leave to amend after previously amending her complaint.

HOLDINGS

1. The First Amended Complaint failed to state a FEHA religious-discrimination claim because it alleged only the conclusory assertion that Plaintiff had bona fide religious beliefs preventing vaccination, without facts plausibly describing those beliefs or their conflict with the vaccination requirement. It also failed to plausibly allege that Plaintiff was terminated because of her religious beliefs.
2. Plaintiff lacked Article III standing to seek prospective injunctive relief because she did not allege that T-Mobile had a policy of terminating employees who refused COVID-19 vaccination or that, as a former employee, she faced a substantial risk of future injury.
3. Plaintiff could not pursue UCL equitable relief for the same alleged harm because her FEHA claim sought damages and therefore supplied an adequate remedy at law. Her suggestion that she sought restitution did not establish equitable jurisdiction.
4. The UCL claim failed under each asserted prong. The unlawful theory depended on the deficient FEHA claim; the unfair theory added no supporting facts; and the fraudulent theory did not plausibly allege a business practice likely to deceive the public.
5. The court granted Plaintiff one final opportunity to amend because she represented at oral argument that she could plead additional facts supporting her claims.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To state a claim for religious discrimination under Title VII or FEHA “a plaintiff must allege, among other things, that she holds ‘a bona fide religious belief’ that conflicts with an employment requirement.”” (ECF 2)

“To establish a right to forward-looking relief, Plaintiff must demonstrate that she faces “a substantial risk of future injury.”” (ECF 4)

“Because Plaintiff represented at oral argument that she could plead additional facts in support of her claims, the Court will give her one final opportunity to amend.” (ECF 5)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Paula Zajonc challenged T-Mobile's denial of her requested religious exemption from its COVID-19 vaccination requirement. She alleged that she had bona fide religious beliefs preventing vaccination and that T-Mobile initially approved her accommodation request before later refusing accommodations, resulting in termination of her employment. Her First Amended Complaint referred to, but did not identify or attach, a pastor's letter describing the religious reasons for her refusal. She also sought relief under California's Unfair Competition Law based on the alleged employment practices.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a putative class action in Alameda County Superior Court. Defendant removed the action to federal court based on diversity jurisdiction, and the court previously granted Defendant's motion to dismiss the original complaint. Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint; the court granted Defendant's renewed motion to dismiss but allowed one final opportunity to amend.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Bolden-Hardge v. Office of California State Controller, 63 F.4th 1215, 1222-23 (9th Cir. 2023)
- Heller v. EBB Auto Co., 8 F.3d 1433, 1438 (9th Cir. 1993)
- Friedman v. Southern California Permanente Medical Group, 102 Cal. App. 4th 39, 45 (2002)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Sturgill v. American Red Cross, 114 F.4th 803, 806-12 (6th Cir. 2024)
- Bazinet v. Beth Israel Lahey Health, Inc., 113 F.4th 9, 16-17 (1st Cir. 2024)
- Passarella v. Aspirus, Inc., 108 F.4th 1005, 1007, 1010-12 (7th Cir. 2024)
- Bube v. Aspirus Hospital, Inc., 108 F.4th 1017, 1019-20 (7th Cir. 2024)
- Lucky v. Landmark Medical of Michigan, P.C., 103 F.4th 1241, 1242-44 (6th Cir. 2024)
- Ringhofer v. Mayo Clinic, Ambulance, 102 F.4th 894, 900-01 (8th Cir. 2024)
- Peterson v. Wilmur Communications, Inc., 205 F. Supp. 2d 1014, 1018, 1021-22 (E.D. Wis. 2002)
- Cel-Tech Communications, Inc. v. Los Angeles Cellular Telephone Co., 20 Cal. 4th 163, 180 (1999)
- Sonner v. Premium Nutrition Corp., 971 F.3d 834, 842, 844 (9th Cir. 2020)
- Guaranty Trust Co. of New York v. York, 326 U.S. 99, 105 (1945)
- Guzman v. Polaris Industries, 49 F.4th 1308, 1313 (9th Cir. 2022)
- Graham v. Central Garden & Pet Co., No. 22-CV-06507-JSC, 2023 WL 2744391, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 30, 2023)
- TransUnion LLC v. Ramirez, 594 U.S. 413, 431 (2021)
- Murthy v. Missouri, 603 U.S. 43, 69 (2024)
- Aleksick v. 7-Eleven, Inc., 205

- Davis v. HSBC Bank Nevada, N.A., 691 F.3d 1152, 1169 (9th Cir. 2012)
- Morgan v. AT&T Wireless Services, Inc., 177 Cal. App. 4th 1235, 1256-57 (2009)
- Eminence Capital, LLC v. Aspeon, Inc., 316 F.3d 1048, 1051 (9th Cir. 2003)

Retrieved from lawtools.ai · <https://lawtools.ai/cases/state/united-states-district-court-for-the-northern-district-of-california-united-states-district-court-fo/2025/zajonc-v-t-mobile-us-inc-8v24ozba>