

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Victor Molinero Puente v. Warden

Puente v. Warden · No. 1:23-cv-00083-CDB (HC) · Decided September 11, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California ordered counsel for the respondent in a federal habeas corpus action to show cause within five days why sanctions should not be imposed. The order cites repeated failures to comply with filing deadlines and court orders, and warns that failure to respond may result in sanctions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Christopher D. Baker
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	September 11, 2025
DOCKET	1:23-cv-00083-CDB (HC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner filed a federal habeas petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. After granting Respondent an extension of time to respond, the court issued an order directing Respondent's counsel to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed for failing to comply with the extended deadline and prior court orders.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court exercised its inherent authority to control its docket and its discretion to impose coercive sanctions for noncompliance with court orders.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished, nonprecedential order
PARTIES	Victor Molinero Puente v. Warden

TOPICS

- sanctions
- contempt
- federal habeas corpus
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court may impose sanctions, including coercive sanctions for civil contempt, when counsel repeatedly fails to comply with court orders and applicable local rules.
2. Whether Respondent's counsel should be required to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed for failing to respond to the habeas petition by the court-ordered deadline.

HOLDINGS

1. The court has inherent power to control its docket and may impose sanctions, including dismissal where appropriate, when counsel or a party fails to comply with court rules or court orders.
2. The court may impose sanctions for civil contempt to coerce obedience to a court order, and the record warranted requiring Respondent's counsel to show cause why such sanctions should not be imposed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Court has the inherent power to control its docket and may, in the exercise of that power, impose sanctions where appropriate, including dismissal of the action.” (at 2)

“The Court also may impose sanctions for civil contempt “to coerce obedience to a court order.”” (at 2)

“Based on AUSA Rodriguez’s pattern of disregarding the Court’s orders, the failure of counsel for Respondent to implement measures to adhere to the local rules as represented by AUSA Hemesath and the escalating severity of counsels’ failures thereof, the Court finds the imposition of sanctions to be warranted to coerce compliance with its orders.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Victor Molinero Puente, a federal prisoner proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis, filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. Respondent obtained an extension of time to respond through September 9, 2025, but failed to file a response, request a further extension, or explain the delinquency. The court noted that Respondent's counsel had previously been admonished in five unrelated habeas actions regarding untimely extension requests and nevertheless failed to comply with the local rules or the court's order.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Respondent requested and received an extension through September 9, 2025, to respond to the § 2241 petition. Respondent failed to file a response, seek another extension, or explain the delinquency. The court therefore ordered counsel to respond within five days why sanctions should not be imposed.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Blanc v. Taylor*, No. 1:24-cv-01212-KES-CDB, 2025 WL 437661, at *1 (E.D. Cal. Feb. 7, 2025)
- *Bautista v. Los Angeles County*, 216 F.3d 837, 841 (9th Cir. 2000)
- *Gen. Sig. Corp. v. Donallco, Inc.*, 787 F.2d 1376, 1380 (9th Cir. 1986)
- *Gen. Sig. Corp. v. Donallco, Inc.*, 9 F.2d 1013 (9th Cir. 1991)
- *Richmark Corp. v. Timber Falling Consultants*, 959 F.2d 1468, 1480 (9th Cir. 1992)

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