

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Hector Martin Prieto v. State of California, et al.

Prieto v. State of California · No. 1:25-cv-00618-SAB (PC) · Decided June 25, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California transferred a pro se prisoner's civil rights action to the Central District of California because the claims arose from events at California State Prison in Lancaster and the defendants appeared to reside there. The court ordered the clerk to close the action in the Eastern District of California.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Stanley A. Boone
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	June 25, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-00618-SAB (PC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A state prisoner filed a pro se civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 in the Eastern District of California. The court sua sponte determined that venue was improper and transferred the case to the Central District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1406(a).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown

TOPICS

- venue
- civil procedure
- section 1983
- prisoners rights

PRACTICE AREAS

- Civil procedure
- Prisoner civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether venue was proper in the Eastern District of California when the alleged events occurred and the defendants appeared to reside in the Central District of California.

2. Whether the court should transfer the action to the Central District of California rather than dismiss it.

HOLDINGS

1. Venue was improper in the Eastern District of California because the claims arose from events in Los Angeles County and the defendants appeared to reside in the Central District of California.
2. The action should be transferred to the Central District of California in the interest of justice rather than dismissed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“In the interest of justice, a federal court may transfer a complaint filed in the wrong district to the correct district.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff Hector Martin Prieto, a state prisoner proceeding pro se, filed a civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The complaint concerned events at California State Prison in Lancaster, Los Angeles County, which lies within the Central District of California. The defendants were employed at that facility and appeared to reside in the Central District.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed the action and a motion to proceed in forma pauperis on May 27, 2025. The in forma pauperis motion was granted on May 28, 2025. After reviewing the complaint, the court found that the claims arose from events at a facility in Los Angeles County and transferred the matter to the Central District of California in the interest of justice, directing the clerk to close the Eastern District action.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Costlow v. Weeks, 790 F.2d 1486, 1488 (9th Cir. 1986)
- District No. 1, Pacific Coast Dist., M.E.B.A. v. State of Alaska, 682 F.2d 797, 799 n.3 (9th Cir. 1982)

OPINION

(PC)Prieto v. The State of California

PER CURIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10

11 HECTOR MARTIN PRIETO, No. 1:25-cv-00618-SAB (PC)

12 Plaintiff,

13 v. ORDER TRANSFERRING CASE

14 STATE OF CALIFORNIA, et al., 15 Defendants. 16 17 Plaintiff Hector Martin Prieto, a state
prisoner proceeding pro se, filed a civil rights 18 action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 on May 27, 2025.
On that same date, he also filed a motion 19 to proceed in forma pauperis, (ECF No. 2), which was
granted on May 28, 2025, (ECF No. 7). 20 The general federal venue statute pursuant to 28 U.S.C.
§ 1391(b) provides that a civil 21 action “may be brought in (1) a judicial district in which any
defendant resides, if all defendants 22 are residents of the State in which the district is located; (2)
a judicial district in which a 23 substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim
occurred, or a substantial part 24 of property that is the subject of the action is situated; or (3) if
there is no district in which an 25 action may otherwise be brought as provided in this section, any
judicial district in which any 26 defendant is subject to the court's personal jurisdiction with
respect to such action.” If a court 27 determines the appropriate venue for a case lies in another
division or district, the court “shall 28 dismiss, or if it be in the interest of justice, transfer such
case to any district or division in which it 1 | could have been brought.” 28 U.S.C. § 1406(a). Even
if venue is proper, a court may transfer an 2 | action to another district under 28 U.S.C. § 1404(a)
“[for the convenience of parties and 3 || witnesses, in the interest of justice.” A court may raise
and decide the issue of venue sua sponte. 4 | See *Costlow v. Weeks*, 790 F.2d 1486, 1488 (9th Cir.
1986). 5 Here, a review of the complaint reveals that the claims arose out of events at 6 | the
California State Prison in Lancaster, Los Angeles County, which is in the Central District of 7 |
California. All defendants are employed at that facility and appear to reside in that district. 8 |
Therefore, Plaintiff’s claim should have been filed in the United States District Court for the 9 |
Central District of California. Indeed, Plaintiff's complaint is directed to and filed on the Central
10 | District of California form complaint. (ECF No. 1.) In the interest of justice, a federal court
may 11 | transfer a complaint filed in the wrong district to the correct district. See 28 U.S.C. §
1406(a); 12 | District No. 1, Pacific Coast Dist., *M.E.B.A. v. State of Alaska*, 682 F.2d 797, 799 n.
3 (9th Cir. 13 | 1982). 14 Accordingly, the Court HEREBY ORDERS that: 15 1. This matter is
transferred to the United States District Court for the Central District 16 of California; and 17 2.
The Clerk of Court is directed to close this action. 18

19 IT IS SO ORDERED. DAM Le

20 | Dated: _June 25, 2025 _ ee

STANLEY A. BOONE

21 United States Magistrate Judge 22 23 24 25 26 27 28