

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Robert Smyth v. Yeon Lee, M.D.

Smyth v. Lee · No. 1:25-cv-01285-BAM (PC) · Decided September 30, 2025

SUMMARY

The court orders the Clerk to randomly assign a district judge and recommends denying Robert Smyth’s motion to proceed in forma pauperis. The recommendation is based on Plaintiff’s substantial inmate trust-account balance and his stated ability to pay, and directs him to pay the \$405.00 initial filing fee, subject to a fourteen-day objection period.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Barbara A. McAuliffe
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	September 30, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-01285-BAM (PC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A state prisoner proceeding pro se under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 filed a motion to proceed in forma pauperis. The magistrate judge issued findings and recommendations that the motion be denied and that Plaintiff be ordered to pay the initial filing fee.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- prisoners rights
- civil rights

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- prisoner civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

- Whether Plaintiff should be permitted to proceed in forma pauperis based on the balance in his prison trust account and his stated ability and willingness to pay the filing fee.

2. Whether Plaintiff should be required to pay the \$405.00 initial filing fee to proceed with the action.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff Robert Smyth is a state prisoner who initiated a civil rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. His prison trust account statement showed an available balance of \$35,898.52. The court also noted that Plaintiff repeatedly stated in his application that he would pay the filing fee.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff initiated this civil rights action on September 29, 2025, and filed an application to proceed in forma pauperis supported by a certified prison trust account statement. The magistrate judge directed the clerk to randomly assign a district judge and recommended denial of in forma pauperis status, subject to the fourteen-day objection period and review by the assigned district judge.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Wilkerson v. Wheeler, 772 F.3d 834, 838–39 (9th Cir. 2014)
- Baxter v. Sullivan, 923 F.2d 1391, 1394 (9th Cir. 1991)