

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Phillip Chatman v. T. Mobile USA, et al.

Chatman · No. 2:25-cv-07334-SVW-JPR · Decided January 5, 2026

SUMMARY

The U.S. District Court dismissed Phillip Chatman's civil action without prejudice after he failed to pay the filing fee or submit a complete in forma pauperis request. The court also terminated all other pending matters pursuant to its authority to dismiss for lack of prosecution.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Stephen V. Wilson
JURISDICTION	U.S. District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	January 5, 2026
DOCKET	2:25-cv-07334-SVW-JPR
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court dismissed the civil action without prejudice after Plaintiff failed to pay the filing fee or submit a complete in forma pauperis request within the time ordered by the court.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court exercised its authority to dismiss sua sponte for failure to prosecute and failure to comply with the court's filing-fee and in forma pauperis requirements.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Phillip Chatman v. T. Mobile USA, et al.

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- motions to dismiss

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- federal courts

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court could dismiss the action without prejudice when Plaintiff failed to pay the filing fee or submit a complete in forma pauperis request after being ordered to do so.
2. Whether the court could dismiss the action sua sponte for failure to prosecute and failure to comply with a court order.

HOLDINGS

1. A civil action in a federal district court requires payment of the filing fee unless the plaintiff is granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis.
2. The court may dismiss an action without prejudice when the plaintiff fails to comply with an order requiring payment of the filing fee or submission of a complete in forma pauperis request.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The authority . . . to dismiss sua sponte for lack of prosecution . . . [is] vested in courts to manage their own affairs so as to achieve the orderly and expeditious disposition of cases.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff instituted a federal civil action but did not pay the required filing fee. His request to proceed in forma pauperis was incomplete and inconsistent with a request he had filed in another action. After the court ordered him to submit a complete request and supporting statement or pay the fee within 30 days, Plaintiff failed to respond.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a request to proceed in forma pauperis. On November 7, 2025, the court postponed ruling because the request was incomplete and inconsistent with a request filed in another action, and ordered Plaintiff either to submit a completed request with a one-page statement or pay the filing fee within 30 days. Plaintiff did not respond, so the court dismissed the action without prejudice and terminated all other pending matters.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Link v. Wabash R.R. Co., 370 U.S. 626, 629-31 (1962)
- Roberts v. Soc. Sec. Dep't, 2022 WL 4088755, at *2 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 6, 2022)

OPINION

JS-6 CIVIL MINUTES – GENERAL Case No. 2:25-cv-07334-SVW-JPR Date: January 5, 2026
Title: Phillip Chatman v. T. Mobile USA, et al. Present: The Honorable STEPHEN V. WILSON,
U.S. District Judge Daniel Tamayo Not Reported Deputy Clerk Court Reporter / Recorder
Attorneys Present for Plaintiff: Attorneys Present for Defendants: None Present None Present

Proceedings (In Chambers): ORDER DISMISSING CASE FOR FAILURE TO PAY FILING FEE OR FILE COMPLETE IN FORMA PAUPERIS REQUEST All parties instituting a civil action, suit, or proceeding in a district court of the United States must pay a filing fee.

28 U.S.C. § 1914(a). An action may proceed despite a party's failure to pay the filing fee only if the party is granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1). On November 7, 2025, the Court postponed ruling on Plaintiff's request to proceed in forma pauperis ("Request") because it was incomplete and inconsistent with a Request he filed in another action.

Dkts. 2, 9. The Court directed Plaintiff to refile a fully completed Request along with a one-page statement, or pay the filing fee, and it warned that if he did not comply within 30 days the case would be dismissed without prejudice. Dkt. 9.

To date, Plaintiff has not responded to the Court's Order. Accordingly, this action is DISMISSED without prejudice, and all other pending matters are TERMINATED. See *Link v. Wabash R.R. Co.*, 370 U.S. 626, 629-31 (1962) JS-6 CIVIL MINUTES – GENERAL Case No. 2:25-cv-07334-SVW-JPR Date: January 5, 2026 Title: Phillip Chatman v. T. Mobile USA, et al. ("The authority... to dismiss sua sponte for lack of prosecution... [is] vested in courts to manage their own affairs so as to achieve the orderly and expeditious disposition of cases."); *Roberts v. Soc.*

Sec. Dep't, 2022 WL 4088755, at *2 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 6, 2022) (action may be dismissed without prejudice where plaintiff fails to establish in forma pauperis status and does not pay the required filing fee). IT IS SO ORDERED.