

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Terence C. Davis v. General Atomics

Case No. 2:25-cv-09430-WLH-JDE · No. 2:25-cv-09430-WLH-JDE · Decided November 14, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California ordered Plaintiff Terence C. Davis to show cause why his action against General Atomics and others should not be dismissed with prejudice. The court identified potential claim-preclusion and issue-preclusion bars based on a prior employment-related action that was dismissed with prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Wesley L. Hsu
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	November 14, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-09430-WLH-JDE
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court issued an order to show cause on its own motion, directing Plaintiff to explain why his newly filed employment-related action should not be dismissed with prejudice as barred by res judicata and collateral estoppel.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; district court order to show cause
PARTIES	Terence C. Davis v. General Atomics, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., Rosenberg Sphall and Zeigen, Onslow Bay Financial LLC, Mr. Cooper/Nationstar, Does 1–50

TOPICS

- res judicata
- civil procedure
- employment law
- civil rights
- pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- employment law
- civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff's claims against General Atomics, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., and Rosenberg Sphall and Zeigen appear barred by res judicata because they were or could have been litigated in the prior action.
2. Whether Plaintiff's employment-related and defamation issues appear barred by collateral estoppel because identical issues were previously litigated and resolved in a final judgment on the merits.

HOLDINGS

1. Res judicata, or claim preclusion, bars claims that were raised or could have been raised in a prior action when there is an identity of claims, a final judgment on the merits, and identity or privity between the parties.
2. Collateral estoppel bars relitigation of an issue when the issue necessarily decided in the prior proceeding is identical to the issue sought to be relitigated, the prior proceeding ended with a final judgment on the merits, and the party against whom preclusion is asserted was a party or in privity with a party in the prior proceeding.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Res judicata, or claim preclusion, prohibits lawsuits on any claims that were raised or could have been raised in a prior action.” (at 2)

“Collateral estoppel bars relitigation of issues adjudicated in an earlier proceeding if three requirements are met: (1) the issue necessarily decided at the previous proceeding is identical to the one which is sought to be relitigated; (2) the first proceeding ended with a final judgment on the merits; and (3) the party against whom collateral estoppel is asserted was a party or in privity with a party at the first proceeding.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, proceeding pro se, filed a federal action concerning the termination of his employment and related alleged discrimination, unequal treatment, defamation, and due process violations. Before filing this action, he brought an employment-related case involving General Atomics, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., Rosenberg Sphall and Zeigen, and other defendants. The prior case was dismissed in its entirety with prejudice, and the Ninth Circuit dismissed Plaintiff's appeal as frivolous. The present complaint seeks to relitigate the employment termination and related issues.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed this action on October 1, 2025, asserting discrimination, breach of an at-will employment contract, unlawful termination, unequal pay or treatment, defamation or blacklisting, and due process claims. Plaintiff had previously litigated an employment-related action against several of the same defendants in Case No. 8:23-cv-00132-WLH-JDE; that action was dismissed in its entirety with prejudice on June 20, 2025. The Ninth Circuit later denied Plaintiff's motion to proceed in forma pauperis and dismissed his appeal as frivolous. The court concluded that the new complaint appeared to relitigate matters resolved in the prior action and ordered Plaintiff to show cause by December 5, 2025, rather than entering a final dismissal in this order.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Stewart v. U.S. Bancorp, 297 F.3d 953, 956 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Int'l Union of Operating Eng'rs-Employers Construction Industry Pension, etc. v. Karr, 994 F.2d 1426, 1429 (9th Cir. 1993)
- Owens v. Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., 244 F.3d 708, 713 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Santos v. Todd Pacific Shipyards Corp., 585 F. Supp. 482, 486 (C.D. Cal. 1984)
- Headwaters Inc. v. U.S. Forest Service, 399 F.3d 1047, 1052 (9th Cir. 2005)
- Reyn's Pasta Bella, LLC v. Visa USA, Inc., 442 F.3d 741, 746 (9th Cir. 2006)

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