

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Timothy Bumb v. Steven Gobin

Bumb · No. 25-cv-04729-SVK · Decided November 7, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California conditionally grants Fennemore LLP’s motion to withdraw as counsel for defendant Steven Gobin. The court requires counsel to continue accepting service until Gobin files a pro se appearance or obtains substitute counsel, and directs Fennemore to assist Gobin with electronic filing registration if he proceeds pro se.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Susan Van Keulen
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	November 7, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-04729-SVK
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant's counsel moved to withdraw as counsel of record. The court conditionally granted the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A decision whether to permit counsel to withdraw is reviewed under the trial court's sound discretion.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- motions to dismiss

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- legal ethics and professional responsibility

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

- Whether the court should permit defendant's counsel to withdraw when the client consents and intends to proceed pro se.

2. What conditions were necessary to protect the parties and administration of justice upon withdrawal of counsel.

HOLDINGS

1. The court conditionally granted Fennemore LLP's motion to withdraw because defendant consented to withdrawal, intended to proceed pro se, and the early stage of the case weighed in favor of withdrawal, subject to specified conditions.
2. Fennemore was required to continue accepting service of papers for forwarding purposes until Gobin filed a notice of appearance pro se or substituted new counsel, and to assist Gobin in registering his email with the court's ECF system.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Counsel may not withdraw from an action until relieved by order of Court after written notice has been given reasonably in advance to the client and to all other parties who have appeared in the case.” (at 1)

“The decision to permit counsel to withdraw is within the sound discretion of the trial court.” (at 1)

“Fennemore shall “continue to accept service of papers for forwarding purposes until Mr. Gobin files a notice of appearance pro se or substitutes new counsel” pursuant to Civ. L.R. 11-5(b).” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Fennemore LLP represented defendant Steven Gobin and moved to withdraw as counsel of record. Gobin stated that he intended to represent himself and consented to the withdrawal. Because the case was at an early stage and Gobin resided in Idaho, the court required continued forwarding of service and assistance with electronic filing registration to limit prejudice.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The action was pending at an early stage, with no answer filed and discovery scheduled to close on June 1, 2026. Defendant Steven Gobin consented to Fennemore LLP's withdrawal and indicated that he intended to proceed pro se. Plaintiff filed a partial non-opposition requesting that Gobin immediately appear pro se and provide an email address for service of papers.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Robinson v. Delgado, No. 02-cv-1538-NJV, 2010 WL 3259384, at *1-*2 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 18, 2010)
- LaGrand v. Stewart, 133 F.3d 1253, 1269 (9th Cir. 1998)
- Williams v. County of Fresno, 562 F. Supp. 3d 1032, 1035 (E.D. Cal. 2021)

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