

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Tanbeer Singh Brar v. State of California

Brar · No. 1:25-cv-01046-JLT-CDB · Decided September 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California denied Tanbeer Singh Brar’s motion to disqualify the assigned magistrate judge and District Judge Jennifer L. Thurston under 28 U.S.C. § 455. The court held that the motion relied on conclusory allegations and adverse judicial rulings in other cases, which did not establish actual or apparent bias.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	September 18, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-01046-JLT-CDB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved under 28 U.S.C. § 455 to disqualify the undersigned magistrate judge and the assigned district judge based principally on adverse judicial rulings in this and other matters.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 455, disqualification is required when a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts would conclude that the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned; the judge whose impartiality is challenged decides the motion.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished and nonprecedential district court order
PARTIES	Tanbeer Singh Brar v. State of California

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- civil rights

PRACTICE AREAS

- judicial disqualification
- civil procedure
- civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the alleged adverse judicial rulings and conclusory assertions of bias required disqualification under 28 U.S.C. § 455.
2. Whether the motion was sufficient when it alleged no facts showing personal bias, prejudice, or personal knowledge of disputed evidentiary facts.

HOLDINGS

1. Judicial rulings alone, without supporting facts showing actual or apparent bias, almost never constitute a valid basis for a motion to disqualify a judge.
2. A motion for recusal must be decided by the judge whose impartiality is being questioned.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The United States Supreme Court has held that “judicial rulings alone almost never constitute a valid basis for a bias or partiality motion.”” (Discussion)

“a party challenging a judge for bias needs to show facts, not merely her opinion, to demonstrate the judge’s actual or apparent bias to justify recusal.” (Discussion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that he was falsely arrested on April 22, 2021 and sought to hold California liable for personal injury and civil-rights violations. He sought disqualification based on judicial actions taken by the magistrate judge and assigned district judge in this and two other cases, including dismissals of his prior complaints. The motion did not identify supporting facts showing personal bias, prejudice, or personal knowledge of disputed evidentiary facts.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Brar filed a civil-rights action against the State of California concerning an alleged false arrest. While findings and recommendations to dismiss the action as time-barred and barred by the Eleventh Amendment were pending, he moved to disqualify the assigned judicial officers. The court denied the motion.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- United States v. Baca, 610 F. Supp. 2d 1203, 1211 (E.D. Cal. 2009)
- United States v. Holland, 519 F.3d 909, 912 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Perry v. Schwarzenegger, 630 F.3d 909, 911 (9th Cir. 2011)
- United States v. Sierra Pac. Indus., 759 F. Supp. 2d 1198, 1205-06 (E.D. Cal. 2010)
- In re Bernard, 31 F.3d 842, 843 (9th Cir. 1994)

- United States v. Studley, 783 F.2d 934, 940 (9th Cir. 1986)
- United States v. Bell, 79 F. Supp. 2d 1169, 1173 (E.D. Cal. 1999)
- Liteky v. United States, 510 U.S. 540, 555 (1994)
- Leslie v. Grupo ICA, 198 F.3d 1152, 1160 (9th Cir. 1999)
- Jensen v. Santa Clara Cnty., 32 Fed. Appx. 203, 206 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Preston v. United States, 923 F.2d 731, 734 (9th Cir. 1991)
- Saddozai v. Carwithen, No. 21-cv-01352 BLF (PR), 2022 WL 6584457, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 21, 2022)

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