

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Pittman v. Sanchez

Pittman · No. 25-cv-05263-SVK · Decided July 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California orders plaintiff Randy Dewayne Pittman to submit a supplemental declaration concerning his application to proceed in forma pauperis. The Court identifies inconsistencies regarding his residency, sources of income, residence, and reported expenses. The supplemental declaration is due by August 15, 2025, and failure to submit it may result in analysis and possible denial of the application as filed.

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	July 18, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-05263-SVK
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed a civil-rights complaint and an application to proceed in forma pauperis. The court deferred ruling on the application and ordered Plaintiff to submit a supplemental declaration addressing inconsistencies concerning his residency, income, residence, and expenses.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court exercises discretion to make a factual inquiry into a plaintiff's claim of poverty when evaluating an application to proceed in forma pauperis.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- first amendment
- fourteenth amendment
- constitutional law

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should require a supplemental declaration before deciding Plaintiff's application to proceed in forma pauperis.
2. Whether inconsistencies between Plaintiff's IFP application and complaint justified a factual inquiry into his claimed inability to pay filing fees.

HOLDINGS

1. A court may exercise discretion to make a factual inquiry into a plaintiff's claim of poverty and may require a supplemental declaration when the application and complaint contain inconsistent information relevant to the plaintiff's ability to pay.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The right to proceed without prepayment of fees in a civil case is a privilege and not a right." (at 1)

"Accordingly, the Court ORDERS Plaintiff to file a supplemental declaration answering the following questions:" (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that he was an Alabama resident and sought to proceed without prepaying filing fees. His IFP application stated that he received \$150 per month in general assistance from Santa Clara County or California and reported no monthly expenses for rent, food, utilities, or clothing. The complaint also alleged that mail connected to the dispute had been returned unopened by the USPS, raising questions about Plaintiff's current residence and how his basic expenses were being paid.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On June 23, 2025, Randy Dewayne Pittman filed a complaint seeking injunctive and declaratory relief and damages for alleged First and Fourteenth Amendment violations, together with an application to proceed in forma pauperis. The court found the application technically complete but identified inconsistencies between the application and complaint. It ordered a supplemental declaration by August 15, 2025 and stated that failure to file it could result in denial of IFP status.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Elmer v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, No. 22-cv-01045-SAB, 2022 WL 5237463, at *1 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 21, 2022)
- *Rowland v. California Men's Colony, Unit II Men's Advisory Council*, 506 U.S. 194, 198 n.2 (1993)
- *Balik v. City of Cedar Falls*, No. 16-CV-04070-LHK, 2016 WL [citation truncated in source]

- Escobedo v. Applebees, 787 F.3d 1226, 1236 (9th Cir. 2015)

Retrieved from lawtools.ai · <https://lawtools.ai/cases/federal/united-states-district-court-for-the-northern-district-of-ca/2025/pittman-v-sanchez-kcpvns0>