

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA**

Marisol Almeyda, Tony Scott, and C.A. v. County of Kern, et al.

Almeyda · No. 1:26-cv-00250-JLT-CDB · Decided January 14, 2026

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA 10 11 MARISOL ALMEYDA, et al., Case No. 1:26-cv-00250-JLT-CDB 12
Plaintiffs, ORDER DIRECTING PLAINTIFFS TO FILE MOTIONS FOR APPOINTMENT OF
GUARDIAN 13 v. AD LITEM FOR C.A. OR A REPORT WHY SUCH MOTION IS NOT
NECESSARY 14 COUNTY OF KERN, et al., ORDER DIRECTING PLAINTIFFS TO FILE 15
Defendants.

MOTION TO PROCEED UNDER PSEUDONYM FOR C.A. OR A REPORT WHY SUCH
MOTION 16 IS NOT NECESSARY 17 (Doc. 1) 18 14-DAY DEADLINE 19 20 Plaintiffs Marisol
Almeyda, Tony Scott, and C.A., by and through her purported guardian ad 21 litem Marisol
Almeyda (collectively, “Plaintiffs”) initiated this action with the filing of a complaint 22 against
Defendants County of Kern (“County”), Logan Bebee, Nathan Lloyd, Daniel Pietrangelo, Ryan 23
Smith, Erik Hallmark, Joanne Teel, Jackie Maxwell, Sabrina Neubauer, and Nicole Pockerandt 24
(collectively, “Defendants”) on January 12, 2026.

(Doc. 1). 25 Order Directing Plaintiffs to File a Motion for Appointment of Guardian Ad Litem 26
The complaint alleges that Plaintiff C.A., a minor child, proceeds in this action by and through 27
her mother and purported guardian ad litem, Plaintiff Marisol Almeyda. (Doc. 1 at 1-2); see id. ¶¶
5, 7, 28 58. 1 Pursuant to Eastern District of California Local Rule 202, 2 Upon commencement of
an action or upon initial appearance in defense of an action by or on behalf of a minor or
incompetent person, the attorney 3 representing the minor or incompetent person shall present (1)
appropriate evidence of the appointment of a representative for the minor or 4 incompetent person
under state law or (2) a motion for the appointment of 5 a guardian ad litem by the Court, or, (3) a
showing satisfactory to the Court that no such appointment is necessary to ensure adequate
representation of 6 the minor or incompetent person.

7 Local Rule 202(a) (citing Fed. R. Civ. P. 17(c)). Because the claims of minor Plaintiff C.A. may
only 8 be brought “by a next friend or guardian ad litem,” a guardian must be appointed by the
Court to protect 9 the interests of the minor Plaintiff. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 17(c)(2).

Although the complaint refers to 10 Marisol Almeyda as the mother and purported guardian ad
litem for C.A., as of the date of entry of this 11 order, Plaintiffs have presented neither
“appropriate evidence of the appointment of a representative for 12 [the] minor or incompetent

person under state law” or a motion in this Court for the appointment of a guardian ad litem for minor Plaintiff C.A.

14 Accordingly, as set forth below, the Court will order Plaintiffs to file either (1) evidence of the
15 appointment of a guardian ad litem for minor Plaintiff C.A., or (2) a motion for the
appointment of a guardian ad litem for minor Plaintiff C.A. consistent with Federal Rule of
Civil Procedure 17 and Local 17 Rule 202. 18 Order Directing Plaintiffs to File a Motion to
Proceed Under Pseudonym 19 As noted above, the complaint identifies Plaintiff C.A. as a “minor”
that resides in the County 20 of Kern.

(Doc. 1 at 2); see id. ¶¶ 7, 58. 21 The default rule is that parties to an action in federal district
court must identify themselves by 22 their true names. However, “many federal courts, including
the Ninth Circuit, have permitted parties to 23 proceed anonymously when special circumstances
justify secrecy.” *Doe I thru XXIII v. Advanced 24 Textile Corp.*, 214 F.3d 1058, 1067 (9th Cir.

2000). “In this circuit...parties [may] use pseudonyms in 25 the ‘unusual case’ when
nondisclosure of the party’s identity ‘is necessary...to protect a person from 26 harassment, injury,
ridicule or personal embarrassment.” Id. at 1067-68 (quoting *United States v. Doe*, 27 655 F.2d
920, 922 n.1 (9th Cir. 1981)). “[A] district court must balance the need for anonymity against 28 1
|| the general presumption that parties’ identities are public information and the risk of unfairness
to tl 2 || opposing party.” Id. at 1068.

3 The Ninth Circuit has identified three situations in which parties have been allowed to □□□□ 4
|| under pseudonyms: “(1) when the identification creates a risk of retaliatory physical or mental
harm; (5 || when anonymity is necessary to preserve privacy in a matter of sensitive and highly
personal nature 6 || and (3) when the anonymous party is compelled to admit [his or her] intention
to engage in illeg 7 || conduct, thereby risking criminal prosecution...” Id. (citations and internal
quotations marks omitted 8 || A party requesting to proceed pseudonymously has the burden of
showing that their “need for anonymi 9 || outweighs prejudice to the opposing party and the
public’s interest in knowing the party’s identity.” / 10 || at 1068-69.

11 As Plaintiffs have not sought relief of Court for minor Plaintiff C.A. to proceed in this action 12
|| under pseudonym, the Court finds it appropriate to direct Plaintiffs to either file a motion for
Plaintiff 13 || C.A. to proceed pseudonymously in this action or a report indicating why a motion for
C.A. to □□□□□□ 14 || pseudonymously is unnecessary. 15 Conclusion and Order 16 Accordingly,
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, within 14 days of entry of this order: 17 1.

Plaintiffs shall file either (a) a motion for the appointment of a guardian ad litem for min 18
Plaintiff C.A. consistent with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 17 and Local Rule 202, or (b) 19
appropriate evidence of the appointment of a representative for minor Plaintiff C.A. consist 20

with state law; and 21 2. Plaintiffs shall file either (a) a motion for minor Plaintiff C.A. to proceed pseudonymously 22 this action, or (b) a report demonstrating that such motion is not necessary.

23 || IT IS SO ORDERED. 24 anrD Rr Dated: _ January 14, 2026 25 UNITED STATES
MAGISTRATE JUDGE 26 27 28