

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Estate of Matthew Lee Richards v. Kern County Sheriff's Office, et
al.

No. 1:24-cv-01294-CDB, United States District Court for the Eastern District of California (November 24,
2025)

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California granted, as modified, Plaintiffs’ stipulated request for leave to file a first amended complaint. Plaintiffs were ordered to file the proposed amended complaint as a stand-alone docket entry within seven days, and Defendants were given 45 days after service to respond. The amendment would add five individual Kern County Sheriff’s Office personnel as defendants in a civil rights action arising from Matthew Lee Richards’s death by suicide while incarcerated.

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	November 24, 2025
DOCKET	1:24-cv-01294-CDB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiffs and defendants jointly stipulated to plaintiffs' filing of a first amended complaint. The court granted leave to amend, with modifications to the filing deadline and response deadline.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- motion to amend
- pleadings
- civil procedure
- section 1983

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiffs should be granted leave to file the proposed first amended complaint under the parties' stipulation.
2. What deadlines should govern filing the amended complaint and defendants' response.

HOLDINGS

1. Leave to amend was granted based on the parties' stipulated representations, the applicable amendment factors, and good cause.
2. Plaintiffs were required to file the proposed first amended complaint as a stand-alone docket entry within seven days of entry of the order, and defendants were required to respond within 45 days after service.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Matthew Lee Richards died by suicide while incarcerated at the Kern County Sheriff's Office, Mojave Substation Jail. His estate, through successors in interest Derrienne Richards and Robert Williams Richards, sued County of Kern and Kern County Sheriff Donny Youngblood, seeking damages under 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988. The proposed first amended complaint sought to add Lieutenant Zachary Bittle, Sergeant Jose Perez, Deputy Rodolfo Ramirez, Deputy Connor Bray, and Senior Deputy Marcus Kochanski as defendants.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs initiated the action on October 23, 2024, asserting claims under 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988 arising from Matthew Lee Richards's death by suicide while incarcerated. After the court entered a scheduling order and later extended the deadline to amend pleadings, the parties submitted a stipulation seeking leave for plaintiffs to file a proposed first amended complaint adding five individual defendants. The court granted the request as modified.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Western Shoshone Nat'l Council v. Molini, 951 F.2d 200, 204 (9th Cir. 1991), cert. denied, 506 U.S. 822 (1992)