

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Michael Manjeet Singh v. Warden Pheiffer, et al.

Singh v. Pheiffer · No. 1:22-cv-01412-KES-EPG (PC) · Decided June 30, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California converts Defendants’ partial motion to dismiss Plaintiff’s state-law claims under the California Government Claims Act into a motion for summary judgment. The court gives the parties 30 days to submit additional argument or evidence, provides notice of the requirements for opposing summary judgment, and permits a request for discovery-related abeyance.

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	June 30, 2025
DOCKET	1:22-cv-01412-KES-EPG (PC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed a prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Defendants moved to partially dismiss Plaintiff’s state-law claims for failure to comply with the California Government Claims Act. The court converted the motion to dismiss into a motion for summary judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(d) because both parties submitted and relied on materials outside the pleadings.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A Rule 12(b)(6) motion generally tests the legal sufficiency of the complaint and ordinarily is limited to the pleadings, subject to incorporation by reference and judicial-notice exceptions. When matters outside the pleadings are presented and not excluded, the court may convert the motion to one for summary judgment under Rule 12(d), provided the parties receive notice and an adequate opportunity to respond. The notice requirements are strictly applied when the nonmoving party is proceeding pro se.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished, nonprecedential district-court order; precedential status unknown.

TOPICS

motions to dismiss

summary judgment

civil procedure

judicial notice

evidence

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

prisoner civil rights

summary judgment practice

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should consider documents outside the pleadings in resolving Defendants' Rule 12(b)(6) motion.
2. Whether the partial motion to dismiss should be converted into a motion for summary judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(d).
3. What notice and opportunity to respond must be provided to a pro se prisoner after conversion to summary judgment.

HOLDINGS

1. When both parties rely on documents outside the complaint to resolve a factual and legal issue, and the issue cannot be determined from the face of the complaint, the court may properly convert the Rule 12(b)(6) motion into a motion for summary judgment under Rule 12(d), rather than exclude the extrinsic materials.
2. Before summary judgment may be entered against a party, the party must receive notice that the motion is pending and an adequate opportunity to respond, including sufficient time for necessary discovery; these notice requirements must be strictly followed when the nonmoving party is appearing pro se.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Before summary judgment may be entered against a party, that party must be afforded both notice that the motion is pending and an adequate opportunity to respond.” (at 2)

“Given that the legal issue is briefed in the parties’ submissions, and that both parties ask the Court consider documents submitted, and considering that neither party has asked for an opportunity to take further discovery on this issue, the Court finds that conversion to a motion for summary judgment is proper.” (at 3)

“Generally, summary judgment must be granted when there is no genuine issue of material fact— that is, if there is no real dispute about any fact that would affect the result of your case, the party who asked for summary judgment is entitled to judgment as a matter of law, which will result in dismissal of certain claims in your case.” (at 4)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, a California state prisoner, asserted federal Eighth Amendment claims and state-law claims for negligent failure to protect and failure to summon medical care. Defendants argued that the state-law claims were barred because Plaintiff failed to comply with the California Government Claims Act, relying on a letter stating that his claim lacked the required \$25 filing fee or fee waiver. Plaintiff submitted a copy of a \$25 check

and evidence that the State deposited it, creating an issue that could not be resolved from the face of the complaint alone.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Defendants filed a partial motion to dismiss on September 27, 2024, supported by a request for judicial notice. Plaintiff opposed and filed his own request for judicial notice, including a copy of a \$25 check allegedly paid to the Government Claims Program. After further briefing, the court converted the motion to a motion for summary judgment and gave both parties 30 days to submit additional briefing or evidence, with an alternative opportunity to request discovery and abeyance.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Navarro v. Block, 250 F.3d 729, 732 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Jones v. Bock, 549 U.S. 199, 215, 127 S. Ct. 910, 921, 166 L. Ed. 2d 798 (2007)
- El-Shaddai v. Zamora, 833 F.3d 1036, 1044 (9th Cir. 2016)
- Thompson v. Drug Enf't Admin., 492 F.3d 428, 438 (D.C. Cir. 2007)
- Intri-Plex Techs., Inc. v. Crest Group, Inc., 499 F.3d 1048, 1052 (9th Cir. 2007)
- Khoja v. Orexigen Therapeutics, Inc., 899 F.3d 988, 998 (9th Cir. 2018)
- Jones v. L.A. Cent. Plaza LLC, 74 F.4th 1053, 1059 (9th Cir. 2023)
- Anderson v. Angelone, 86 F.3d 932, 934 (9th Cir. 1996)
- Portland Retail Druggists Ass'n v. Kaiser Found. Health Plan, 662 F.2d 641, 645 (9th Cir. 1981)
- Garaux v. Pulley, 739 F.2d 437, 439-40 (9th Cir. 1984)
- Rand v. Rowland, 154 F.3d 952 (9th Cir. 1998)

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 7 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA 8
9 MICHAEL MANJEET SINGH, Case No. 1:22-cv-01412-KES-EPG (PC) 10 Plaintiff, ORDER
CONVERTING MOTION TO DISMISS INTO A MOTION FOR 11 v. SUMMARY JUDGMENT
12 WARDEN PHEIFFER, et al., (ECF NO. 56) 13 Defendant. 14 Michael Manjeet Singh
("Plaintiff") is a state prisoner proceeding pro se in this civil 15 rights action filed pursuant to 42
U.S.C. § 1983.

(ECF No. 28). This case now proceeds on 16 "Plaintiff's claims against Defendants Veith and
Fowler for excessive force in violation of the 17 Eighth Amendment; Plaintiff's claims against
Defendants Veith, Fowler, and Diaz for 18 deliberate indifference to a serious medical in violation

of the Eighth Amendment; Plaintiff's 19 state law claims against Defendants Veith, Fowler, and Diaz for negligent failure to protect and 20 failure to summon medical care." (Id., at p. 17).

21 On September 27, 2024, Defendants filed a partial motion to dismiss Plaintiff's state 22 law claims based on non-compliance with the California Government Claims Act. (ECF No. 23 56). Defendants also filed a request for judicial notice. (ECF No. 57). Plaintiff has also filed a 24 request for judicial notice in response to Defendants' motion. (ECF No. 65).

25 Because both parties have asked that the Court take judicial notice of documents outside 26 of the complaint in order to resolve the motion, and because it is not clear from the face of the 27 complaint whether Defendants are entitled to dismissal on the basis for failure to comply with 28 1 the California Government Claims Act, the Court will convert the motion to dismiss to a 2 motion for summary judgment and provide the parties an opportunity to submit additional 3 argument or evidence if they choose to do so.

4 I. BACKGROUND 5 On September 27, 2024, Defendants filed a motion to partially dismiss Plaintiff's state 6 law claims on the ground that Plaintiff failed to comply with California's Government Claims 7 Act. (ECF No. 56). Also on September 27, 2024, Defendants filed a request for the Court to 8 take judicial notice of a letter dated March 30, 2022 from the Government Claims Program 9 explaining to Plaintiff that his claim received on October 19, 2021 did not include the \$25 10 filing fee or fee waiver.

(ECF No. 57). Defendants argued that, based in part on the document 11 submitted for judicial notice, Plaintiff's state law claims should be dismissed. 12 On December 10, 2024, Plaintiff filed a request for the Court to take judicial notice of 13 Check #1446 dated April 14, 2022 in the amount of \$25 paid to the order of the Government 14 Claims Program, as well as a copy of the back side of the check indicating that the State of 15 California had deposited the check on May 2, 2022.

(ECF No. 65). 16 On December 20, 2024, Defendants filed their reply. (ECF No. 68). 17 Thereafter, on January 31, 2025, Plaintiff filed a further response to Defendants' motion 18 to partially dismiss complaint, arguing that, pursuant to Cal. Gov't Code § 911.3(b), the 19 Defendants' defense as to the time limits for presenting a claim is waived because the 20 Government Claims Program failed to give notice to Plaintiff within 45 days after the claim 21 was presented that the claim was not timely filed.

(ECF No. 75). Plaintiff's response again 22 attached the \$25 check to the Government Claims Program, along with a stamped copy of the 23 check noting deposit by the State of California. (ECF No. 75, at p. 16-17). 24 Defendants have not filed a response to Plaintiff's latest submission.

25 II. LEGAL STANDARDS 26 Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12 permits a party to file a motion to dismiss a claim 27 for "failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted." Fed.

R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6). “A Rule 28 12(b)(6) motion tests the legal sufficiency of a claim.” *Navarro v. Block*, 250 F.3d 729, 732 1 (9th Cir. 2001). “[A] complaint may be subject to dismissal under Rule 12(b)(6) when an 2 affirmative defense...appears on its face.” *Jones v. Bock*, 549 U.S. 199, 215, 127 S. Ct. 910, 3 921, 166 L. Ed. 2d 798 (2007). “[E]ven when failure to exhaust is treated as an affirmative 4 defense, it may be invoked in a Rule 12(b)(6) motion if the complaint somehow reveals the 5 exhaustion defense on its face.” *El-Shaddai v. Zamora*, 833 F.3d 1036, 1044 (9th Cir. 2016) 6 (quoting *Thompson v. Drug Enf’t Admin.*, 492 F.3d 428, 438 (D.C. Cir. 2007)). 7 “Generally, a court may not consider material beyond the complaint in ruling on a 8 Fed.R.Civ.P. 12(b)(6) motion.” *Intri-Plex Techs., Inc. v. Crest Group., Inc.*, 499 F.3d 1048, 9 1052 (9th Cir. 2007) (footnote and citation omitted). “There are two exceptions to this rule: the 10 incorporation-by-reference doctrine, and judicial notice under Federal Rule of Evidence 201.” 11 *Khoja v. Orexigen Therapeutics, Inc.*, 899 F.3d 988, 998 (9th Cir.

2018). 12 “When presented with ‘matters outside the pleadings’ in connection with a motion to 13 dismiss for failure to state a claim under Rule 12(b)(6)..., the district court may choose to 14 exclude such extrinsic matters and address the motion under the applicable Rule 12 standards, 15 or it may convert the motion into “one for summary judgment under Rule 56.

See Fed. R. Civ. 16 P. 12(d).” *Jones v. L.A. Cent. Plaza LLC*, 74 F.4th 1053, 1059 (9th Cir. 2023). See *Anderson v. 17 Angelone*, 86 F.3d 932, 934 (9th Cir. 1996) (finding conversion of motion to dismiss into one 18 for summary judgment proper when the district court expressly relied upon Regulations 19 nowhere in the record except for Defendant’s affidavit).

20 “Before summary judgment may be entered against a party, that party must be afforded 21 both notice that the motion is pending and an adequate opportunity to respond.” *Portland Retail 22 Druggists Ass’n v. Kaiser Found. Health Plan*, 662 F.2d 641, 645 (9th Cir. 1981). “Implicit in 23 the ‘opportunity to respond’ is the requirement that sufficient time be afforded for discovery 24 necessary to develop ‘facts essential to justify (a party’s) opposition’ to the motion.

25 Fed.R.Civ.P. 56.” *Id.* “Where the non-moving party is appearing pro se, the notice 26 requirements of Rule 56(c) must be strictly adhered to when a motion to dismiss under Rule 27 12(b)(6) is converted into one for summary judgment.” *Garaux v. Pulley*, 739 F.2d 437, 439– 28 40 (9th Cir. 1984). 1 III. ANALYSIS 2 Here, both parties have submitted documents in connection with Defendants’ motion to 3 dismiss, and have both argued that the question of Plaintiff’s compliance, or excuse from 4 compliance, under the Government Claims Act requires the Court to evaluate documents 5 submitted for judicial notice.

Specifically, Defendants ask the Court to rely on the 6 government’s letter notifying Plaintiff that he had not submitted the required fee in connection 7 with his submission of the claim to the Government Claims Board, and Plaintiff has asked the 8 Court to rely on a copy of the check sent

to the Board, as well as a copy of the back of the 9 cashed check showing that the State of California deposited that check.

Thus, neither party 10 argues that the issue of Plaintiff's compliance, or excuse from compliance, can be determined 11 on the face of Plaintiff's complaint. 12 Accordingly, the Court considers whether it should proceed to determine the Motion to 13 Dismiss, and recommend denial of that motion to the extent that the issue is not clear on the 14 face of the complaint, or convert the motion to dismiss to a motion for summary judgment.

15 Given that the legal issue is briefed in the parties' submissions, and that both parties ask 16 the Court consider documents submitted, and considering that neither party has asked for an 17 opportunity to take further discovery on this issue, the Court finds that conversion to a motion 18 for summary judgment is proper. See *Anderson v. Angelone*, 86 F.3d at 934.

19 Accordingly, the Court will convert Defendants' partial motion to dismiss into a motion 20 for summary judgment. Both parties will be given 30 days to submit additional argument or 21 evidence if they choose to do so. Alternatively, either party may file a request to hold the 22 motion in abeyance to allow for further discovery on this issue. 23 IV. NOTICE AND WARNING OF REQUIREMENTS FOR OPPOSING 24 DEFENDANT'S MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT 25 Pursuant to *Rand v. Rowland*, 154 F.3d 952, the Court hereby notifies Plaintiff of the 26 following rights and requirements for opposing Defendants' motion for summary judgment.

27 \\\ 28 1 NOTICE AND WARNING: 2 The Court has converted Defendants' partial motion to dismiss into a 3 motion for summary judgment. The motion for summary judgment seeks to 4 have claims in your case dismissed. A motion for summary judgment under 5 Rule 56 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure will, if granted, result in 6 dismissal of certain claims from your case.

7 Rule 56 tells you what you must do in order to oppose a motion for 8 summary judgment. Generally, summary judgment must be granted when 9 there is no genuine issue of material fact—that is, if there is no real dispute 10 about any fact that would affect the result of your case, the party who asked 11 for summary judgment is entitled to judgment as a matter of law, which will 12 result in dismissal of certain claims in your case.

When a party you are suing 13 makes a motion for summary judgment that is properly supported by 14 declarations (or other sworn testimony), you cannot simply rely on what your 15 complaint says. Instead, you must set out specific facts in declarations, 16 depositions, answers to interrogatories, or authenticated documents, as 17 provided in Rule [56(c)],¹ that contradict the facts shown in Defendants' 18 declarations and documents and show that there is a genuine issue of 19 material fact for trial.

If you do not submit your own evidence in opposition, 20 summary judgment, if appropriate, may be entered against you. If summary 21 judgment is granted, claims subject to Defendants' motion

will be dismissed 22 without a trial. 23 \\\ 24 \\\ 25 \\\ 26 27 1 The substance of Rule 56(e) from the 1998 version, when Rand was decided, has been 28 reorganized and renumbered with the current version of Rule 56(c).

I EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA LOCAL RULE REQUIREMENTS You are responsible for filing all evidentiary documents cited in the 4 opposing papers. Local Rule 260(b). If additional discovery is needed to 5 oppose summary judgment, Local Rule 260(b) requires you to “provide a 6 specification of the particular facts on which discovery is to be had or the 5 issues on which discovery is necessary.” See also Fed.

R. Civ. P. 56(d). V. CONCLUSION AND ORDER 9 Accordingly, based on the foregoing, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT: 10 1. Defendants’ partial motion to dismiss (ECF 56) is converted into a motion for summary judgment; and D 2. No later than 30 days from the date of service of this order, each party may file B an additional brief and/or additional evidence they wish to be considered related 4 to Defendants’ argument that Plaintiffs state law claims should be dismissed for 5 failure to comply with the Government Claims Act.

If no additional evidence or 16 argument is received, the Court will resolve the motion on the papers already submitted in connection with Defendants’ motion to dismiss. 8 3. Each party has 21 days to file a response to the other party’s supplement, if any. 19 4. Alternatively, the parties may file a request that the Court hold this motion in abeyance in order to permit the parties to take discovery needed to resolve this legal issue.

Any such request should provide a specification of the particular facts on which discovery is to be had or the issues on which discovery is necessary. 23 || rr IS SO ORDERED. 24 || Dated: _ June 30, 2025 [spo ey UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE 27 28