

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Osny Sorto-Vasquez Kidd et al. v. Kristi Noem et al.

Case No. 2:20-cv-03512-ODW (JPRx) · No. 2:20-cv-03512-ODW (JPRx) · Decided May 5, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California grants preliminary approval of a proposed class-action settlement concerning alleged ICE ruses used during residential civil immigration enforcement operations. The settlement establishes identification requirements, prohibits specified misrepresentations, requires training and monitoring, provides for dispute resolution, and resolves the Ruse Class’s prospective equitable-relief and related fee claims subject to final approval.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Otis D. Wright II
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	May 5, 2025
DOCKET	2:20-cv-03512-ODW (JPRx)
DISPOSITION	approved
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Organizational class plaintiffs moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(e) for preliminary approval of a proposed settlement resolving claims of the certified Ruse Class. The defendants did not oppose the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	At the preliminary approval stage, the court evaluates whether the proposed class settlement is within a range of possible judicial approval and need only be potentially fair; the ultimate determination is whether the settlement is fair, reasonable, and adequate under Rule 23(e)(2). The decision to preliminarily approve or reject a settlement is committed to the sound discretion of the trial judge.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Osny Sorto-Vasquez Kidd, Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights Los Angeles v. Kristi Noem, United States Secretary of Homeland Security, in her official capacity,

other official-capacity Defendants, United States of America, O.M.,
C.C., J.H., J.N.

TOPICS

class actions civil procedure immigration injunctions civil rights

PRACTICE AREAS

class action settlements immigration enforcement civil rights constitutional law administrative law
equitable relief

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the proposed settlement of the certified Ruse Class claims was sufficiently fair, reasonable, and adequate to warrant preliminary approval under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(e).
2. Whether the proposed method and content of notice to Rule 23(b)(2) class members were reasonable and sufficient.
3. What modifications and procedural steps were required before notice and the final approval hearing.

HOLDINGS

1. The proposed settlement was within the range of possible judicial approval and was preliminarily approved because, at this stage, it was potentially fair and provided adequate relief after consideration of representation, arm's-length negotiation, adequacy of relief, and equitable treatment of class members.
2. The proposed notice was reasonable and sufficient for the Rule 23(b)(2) class, subject to modifications clarifying the scope of released claims, the release of fee and cost claims, and the updated case caption and docket number.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“At the preliminary approval stage, the court evaluates the terms of the settlement to determine whether they are within a range of possible judicial approval.”

“Therefore, the Court finds that the Proposed Settlement is within the range of possible judicial approval, and preliminary approves the Proposed Settlement.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Organizational plaintiffs alleged that ICE officers in the Los Angeles Area of Responsibility used ruses by impersonating police, probation, or other non-immigration officials to obtain entry into homes or induce residents to exit, facilitating warrantless civil immigration arrests. The proposed settlement addresses only the Ruse Class claims and requires restrictions on officer identifications and ruses, training and directives, documentation, monitoring, and a three-year enforcement period. The settlement provides prospective equitable relief and releases specified prospective equitable and fee-related claims upon final approval, but does not provide monetary damages to class members.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs filed the action in 2020 challenging alleged ICE practices involving misrepresentations of officers' identities or purposes during residential civil immigration enforcement operations. The court certified the Ruse Class and the Knock and Talk Class in February 2023, later granted partial summary judgment for the Knock and Talk Class, and dismissed plaintiff Kidd's remaining individual claims. After negotiations, the parties reached a settlement concerning the Ruse Class claims and moved for preliminary approval. The court granted preliminary approval, approved the proposed notice subject to specified modifications, and set procedures for notice, objections, final approval, and fee applications.

DISPOSITION

approved

CASES CITED

- In re Syncor ERISA Litigation, 516 F.3d 1095, 1100–01 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Spann v. J.C. Penny Corp., 314 F.R.D. 312, 319 (C.D. Cal. 2016)
- Grady v. RCM Technologies Inc., 671 F. Supp. 3d 1065, 1072 (C.D. Cal. 2023)
- Acosta v. Trans Union, LLC, 243 F.R.D. 377, 386 (C.D. Cal. 2007)
- Officers for Justice v. Civil Service Commission of San Francisco, 688 F.2d 615, 625 (9th Cir. 1982)
- In re Tableware Antitrust Litigation, 484 F. Supp. 2d 1078, 1079 (N.D. Cal. 2007)
- Lopez-Venegas v. Johnson, 2015 WL 13916876, at *9 (C.D. Cal. Feb. 25, 2015)
- Knisley v. Network Associates, Inc., 312 F.3d 1123, 1125 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Lalli v. First Team Real Estate—Orange County, 2022 WL 8207530, at *3–4 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 6, 2022)
- Briseño v. Henderson, 998 F.3d 1014, 1026–27 (9th Cir. 2021)

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