

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Laura Coles et al. v. Whaleco, Inc. et al.

No. 2:25-cv-04651-MRA-MAA, United States District Court for the Central District of California (July 3, 2025)

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California issued an order to show cause regarding consolidation of several related Whaleco, Inc. malware litigation cases. The court proposed consolidating the actions under Case No. 2:25-cv-04651-MRA-MAA, using that case as the master file, and adopting coordinated filing and case-management procedures. Parties objecting to consolidation were ordered to file responses within five days.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Mónica Ramírez Almadani
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	July 3, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-04651-MRA-MAA
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court issued an order to show cause why seven related cases should not be consolidated with the Laura Coles action under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 42(a), and proposed case-management procedures for the consolidated proceedings.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A district court has substantial discretion in deciding whether and to what extent to consolidate actions. In exercising that discretion, the court weighs judicial convenience against potential delay, confusion, and prejudice.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court order; limited persuasive value.
PARTIES	Laura Coles et al. v. Whaleco, Inc. et al.

TOPICS

- joinder
- civil procedure
- pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether actions involving common questions of law or fact should be joined or consolidated under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 42(a).
2. Whether the identified related actions should be consolidated for all purposes and managed through a master docket because their complaints and filings were identical.

HOLDINGS

1. When actions involve common questions of law or fact, the court may join matters for hearing or trial, consolidate the actions, or issue other orders to avoid unnecessary cost or delay. The court must weigh judicial convenience against the potential for delay, confusion, and prejudice.
2. The court proposed consolidating the identified actions for all purposes, including discovery, pretrial proceedings, and trial, because common questions predominated, the complaints were identical, and consolidation would promote judicial convenience without material risk of delay, confusion, or prejudice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“District courts enjoy substantial discretion in deciding whether and to what extent to consolidate cases.”

“To determine whether to consolidate, a court weighs the interest of judicial convenience against the potential for delay, confusion and prejudice caused by consolidation.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The complaints in the identified actions were identical, and each action involved more than 900 individually named plaintiffs. The cases had been designated as related, while the defendant had filed multiple identical motions across the separate dockets, creating duplicative work. The court found that judicial convenience strongly favored consolidation and that, at the early stage of litigation, there was little potential for delay, confusion, or prejudice.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The cases were filed as separate putative collective or representative actions involving identical complaints against Whaleco, Inc. The cases had been designated as related, and the defendant had filed identical motions in multiple dockets. The court ordered any objecting parties to respond within five days and proposed consolidation for all purposes, designation of a master file, and use of specified operative pleadings.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Hall v. Hall, 584 U.S. 59, 77 (2018)
- Knox v. Yingli Green Energy Holding Co., 136 F. Supp. 3d 1159, 1162 (C.D. Cal. 2015)

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