

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Thomas Joseph Goddard v. Sares-Regis Group, Inc., et al.

Goddard · No. 25-cv-05882-EMC (EMC) · Decided October 21, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California granted defendants’ motion to dismiss Thomas Joseph Goddard’s First Amended Complaint with prejudice. The court held that the motion was unopposed, that the complaint failed to satisfy Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8, and that the claims were substantively meritless based on the alleged failure to accommodate disability, retaliation, and religious discrimination. The court also found that further amendment would be futile and directed the Clerk to enter final judgment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Edward M. Chen
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	October 21, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-05882-EMC (EMC)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendants moved to dismiss Plaintiff’s First Amended Complaint. Plaintiff did not timely oppose the motion despite multiple warnings and extensions. The court granted the motion with prejudice and directed entry of final judgment.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a motion to dismiss, the court considered whether the complaint complied with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 and whether the asserted claims were legally viable. The court also considered whether leave to amend should be denied based on futility, bad faith, undue delay, prejudice, and prior amendment.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order

TOPICS

- motions to dismiss
- pleadings
- ada / disability
- landlord tenant
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

Fair Housing Act

Americans with Disabilities Act

landlord-tenant

civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court could grant Defendants' motion to dismiss because Plaintiff failed to file a timely opposition.
2. Whether the First Amended Complaint failed to satisfy Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2)'s requirement that a pleading contain a short and plain statement of the claim.
3. Whether Plaintiff's disability-accommodation, retaliation, and religious-discrimination theories were legally sufficient.
4. Whether dismissal should be with prejudice because further amendment would be futile and would prejudice Defendants.

HOLDINGS

1. A district court may grant an unopposed motion when a party fails to file an opposition, particularly after receiving warnings and an additional opportunity to respond.
2. A complaint that is excessively lengthy, includes extensive irrelevant material, and fails to present a short and plain statement of the claims violates Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2) and may be dismissed on that basis.
3. The allegations did not establish a viable claim based on denial of a disability accommodation, retaliation, or religious discrimination.
4. Dismissal with prejudice is proper when amendment would be futile and the circumstances demonstrate bad faith, prejudice, or repeated failure to cure pleading defects.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"A motion may be granted when a party fails to oppose it." (Discussion)

"The complaint does not comply with Rule 8's requirement that a claim must be "short and plain.""
(Discussion)

"Accordingly, for all the reasons stated above, Defendants' Motion to Dismiss is GRANTED WITH PREJUDICE." (Disposition)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff lived in an apartment owned by Apartments Capital LLC and managed by Sares Regis Group Residential, Inc. Defendants granted Plaintiff's disability-accommodation request for an extended rental-payment grace period through the seventh day of the month, but Plaintiff failed to pay within that period and continued not to pay rent. Defendants served a pay-or-quit notice, after which Plaintiff alleged disability and religious discrimination, retaliation, and related claims. The court found that the complaint relied extensively on irrelevant

events involving nonparties and omitted or contradicted material facts concerning Plaintiff's rent arrearage and the accommodation.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed suit seeking emergency injunctive relief against eviction. The court granted a limited temporary restraining order, then denied a preliminary injunction and denied reconsideration. Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint asserting claims under the Fair Housing Act, ADA Title II, the Rehabilitation Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1985(3), and state tort theories. After Plaintiff failed to oppose Defendants' motion to dismiss and the court denied leave to file a Second Amended Complaint, the court granted dismissal with prejudice.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Rider v. JPMorgan Chase Bank N.A., No. 20-CV-06888-LHK, 2021 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 12486, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 22, 2021)
- Gwaduri v. INS, 362 F.3d 1144, 1146-47 n.3 (9th Cir. 2004)
- McHenry v. Renne, 84 F.3d 1172, 1174 (9th Cir. 1996)
- Weinreich v. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 114 F.3d 976, 979 (9th Cir. 1997)
- Bonin v. Calderon, 59 F.3d 815, 845 (9th Cir. 1995)