

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Kirk D. Williams v. ByteDance Ltd., et al.

Williams v. ByteDance · No. 2:25-cv-03353-DJC-CSK · Decided January 8, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California denied Kirk D. Williams’s request to proceed in forma pauperis without prejudice. The court found that the application omitted information about cash and bank balances, monthly expenses, dependents, and debts or other financial obligations. The court allowed Williams 30 days to pay the filing fee or submit a complete and signed IFP application.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Gyi S. Kim
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	January 8, 2026
DOCKET	2:25-cv-03353-DJC-CSK
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff, proceeding pro se, sought leave to proceed in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court evaluated whether the application satisfied the factual-detail requirements for proceeding in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Kirk D. Williams v. ByteDance Ltd., et al.

TOPICS

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Federal civil procedure In forma pauperis proceedings Access to courts

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiff's incomplete in forma pauperis application established his inability to pay the required filing fee under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1).
2. Whether plaintiff should be allowed to renew the in forma pauperis request by filing a complete application.

HOLDINGS

1. An applicant seeking to proceed in forma pauperis must submit an affidavit identifying all assets and stating an inability to pay the filing fee or give security, with sufficient detail concerning income, assets, and expenditures. Williams's failure to provide required financial information meant that he had not established entitlement to proceed without paying the fee.
2. The denial of plaintiff's IFP request was without prejudice, and plaintiff was permitted thirty days to pay the filing fee or submit a complete and signed IFP application with sufficient financial detail.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The affidavit must provide “sufficient details concerning [the applicant’s] income, assets, and expenditures[.]”” (at 1)

“Therefore, Plaintiff’s IFP application lacks sufficient detail to establish that he is entitled to prosecute this case without paying the required fees.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Kirk D. Williams represented himself and requested permission to proceed without paying the civil filing fee. His application did not answer questions about his cash and checking or savings-account balances, monthly expenses, dependents and support contributions, or debts and other financial obligations. Because the omissions prevented the court from determining whether he was unable to pay the required fees, the court denied the request without prejudice.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Williams filed a civil action and submitted an application to proceed in forma pauperis. The district court found the application incomplete because it omitted information concerning cash and bank-account balances, monthly expenses, dependents and support contributions, and debts or other financial obligations. The court denied the application without prejudice and allowed plaintiff thirty days to pay the filing fee or submit a complete, signed application.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Andrews v. Cervantes, 493 F.3d 1047, 1051 (9th Cir. 2007)

- Rodriguez v. Cook, 169 F.3d 1176, 1177 (9th Cir. 1999)
- Williams v. County of Ventura, 443 F. App'x 232, 233 (9th Cir. 2011)
- United States v. McQuade, 647 F.2d 938, 940 (9th Cir. 1981)

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