

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Cooper Fields v. Monsanto Company

No. 2:25-cv-02042-DAD-CKD PS (E.D. Cal. Sept. 23, 2025) · No. No. 2:25-cv-02042-DAD-CKD PS · Decided
September 23, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California grants Cooper Fields’s application to proceed in forma pauperis in an action against Monsanto Company concerning alleged injuries from exposure to glyphosate-based herbicides. The court finds the complaint states cognizable state-law claims, authorizes service by the United States Marshal, and issues related service instructions.

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	September 23, 2025
DOCKET	No. 2:25-cv-02042-DAD-CKD PS
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se plaintiff filed an action asserting state-law personal-injury claims against Monsanto and sought leave to proceed in forma pauperis. The court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and determined that service was appropriate.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On IFP screening, the court may dismiss an action that is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2). A complaint must contain sufficient factual matter and a cognizable legal theory to survive Rule 12(b)(6) review, and pro se pleadings are liberally construed.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Cooper Fields v. Monsanto Company

TOPICS

- service of process
- pleadings
- subject matter jurisdiction
- products liability
- negligence

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

personal injury

products liability

negligence

fraud

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiff qualified to proceed in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915.
2. Whether the complaint stated cognizable claims and should survive screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6).
3. Whether service of process on Monsanto was appropriate.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff's financial affidavit made the required financial showing, so the application to proceed in forma pauperis was granted.
2. The complaint stated cognizable claims and was not dismissed at the screening stage.
3. Service on Monsanto was appropriate, and the United States Marshal was directed to effect service.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The federal in forma pauperis statute authorizes federal courts to dismiss a case if the action is legally “frivolous or malicious,” fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief.” (at 1)

“For purposes of screening, the court finds that plaintiff has stated cognizable claims.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Cooper Fields, a California resident, alleged that he was involuntarily exposed to glyphosate-based herbicides, including Ranger Pro, from 2007 through 2016 at Folsom High School and other public areas. He alleged that he later experienced fatigue, cognitive dysfunction, depression, anxiety, ADHD, and extended periods of being bedridden, and relied on a 2023 environmental toxin report identifying elevated glyphosate levels. He asserted negligence, strict products liability, and fraudulent misrepresentation claims and sought compensatory and punitive damages.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff commenced the action and applied to proceed in forma pauperis. After reviewing the financial affidavit and screening the complaint, the court granted IFP status, found cognizable claims, and directed the United States Marshal to serve Monsanto.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- United Investors Life Ins. Co. v. Waddell & Reed Inc., 360 F.3d 960, 967 (9th Cir. 2004)
- Hebbe v. Pliler, 627 F.3d 338, 342 & n.7 (9th Cir. 2010)
- Swierkiewicz v. Sorema N.A., 534 U.S. 506, 514 (2002)
- Mollett v. Netflix, Inc., 795 F.3d 1062, 1065 (9th Cir. 2015)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555-57 (2007)

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