

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Cooperative Entertainment, Inc. v. Alibaba Cloud US LLC

Cooperative Entertainment · No. 25-cv-01842-LJC · Decided April 16, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California denied William P. Ramey III’s application to appear pro hac vice for Plaintiff Cooperative Entertainment, Inc., with prejudice. The court found that Ramey falsely represented the number of prior pro hac vice admissions and cited his alleged unauthorized practice of law and related misconduct. The court ordered Ramey to show cause why monetary and other sanctions should not be imposed and ordered Plaintiff to submit a declaration concerning Ramey’s prior involvement in the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	April 16, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-01842-LJC
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed an application for attorney William P. Ramey III to appear pro hac vice as co-counsel. The court denied the application with prejudice and ordered Ramey to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court exercised discretion under Civil Local Rule 11-3(d) to accept or reject the pro hac vice application. For potential Rule 11 sanctions, the court applied Rule 11(b)'s evidentiary-support requirement and Rule 11(c)(4)'s limitation that sanctions be sufficient to deter repetition.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- sanctions
- civil procedure
- commercial litigation

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Ramey's application to appear pro hac vice should be denied based on a false declaration concerning prior pro hac vice admissions and his extensive unauthorized practice and related misconduct.
2. Whether Ramey should be ordered to show cause why monetary and nonmonetary sanctions should not be imposed under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11, the court's inherent authority, or other applicable authority.
3. Whether Plaintiff should be required to submit a declaration concerning whether Ramey authored filings before applying for pro hac vice admission.

HOLDINGS

1. The court denied Ramey's application to appear pro hac vice with prejudice because he falsely represented under penalty of perjury that he had not been granted pro hac vice admission in the preceding twelve months and because his extensive unauthorized practice, false representations, and related misconduct independently warranted denial.
2. The court ordered Ramey to show cause why monetary sanctions of \$1,000, referral to the court's Standing Committee on Professional Responsibility, and an order requiring distribution of the sanctions order should not be imposed.
3. Plaintiff was ordered to file a separate declaration by Jennifer Ishimoto stating whether Ramey authored any filings in the action before applying to appear pro hac vice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Ramey’s application to appear pro hac vice is DENIED, with prejudice, based on: (1) Ramey’s false representation under penalty of perjury that he had not been granted permission to appear pro hac vice in the preceding twelve months; and (2) Ramey’s extensive and pervasive unauthorized practice of law in this District, false representations regarding pro hac vice status, and related misconduct documented by Judge Kang in Koji IP.” (at 3)

“The district court has wide discretion in determining the appropriate sanction for a Rule 11 violation.” (at 3)

“Ramey is therefore personally ORDERED TO SHOW CAUSE why the following sanctions should not issue under Rule 11, the Court’s inherent authority, or any other applicable authority” (at 4)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Ramey applied to appear pro hac vice for Plaintiff and declared under penalty of perjury that he had received zero pro hac vice admissions in the preceding twelve months. The court identified at least five admissions for Ramey in the Northern District of California during that period. Ramey had also recently been sanctioned by another judge in the district for unauthorized practice of law and misconduct involving pro hac vice applications,

including a requirement to attach that sanctions order to future applications. His initial application did not include the order, and his later application repeated the allegedly false statement while attaching the order.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff commenced the action on February 20, 2025, apparently represented by California attorney Jennifer Ishimoto. On April 14, 2025, Ramey applied to appear pro hac vice and declared that he had received no pro hac vice admissions in the preceding twelve months. The court found that declaration false based on multiple recent admissions in the district, denied the application with prejudice, and issued an order to show cause concerning potential Rule 11 and other sanctions. The court separately ordered Plaintiff to submit a declaration addressing whether Ramey had authored earlier filings.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- WirelessWerx IP, LLC v. Zipline International, No. 24-cv-08462-PHK, ECF No. 27 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 4, 2025)
- Kephart Consulting, LLC v. AxxonSoft US, Inc., No. 24-cv-06770-KAW, ECF No. 30 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 24, 2025)
- CyboEnergy, Inc. v. Duracell Power Center, LLC, No. 24-cv-08891-LJC, ECF No. 10 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 12, 2024)
- WirelessWerx IP, LLC v. Life360, Inc., No. 23-cv-06725-AMO, ECF No. 38 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 8, 2024)
- WirelessWerx IP, LLC v. Lyft, Inc., No. 24-cv-01144-VKD, ECF No. 57 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 30, 2024)
- Koji IP, LLC v. Renesas Electronics America, Inc., No. 24-cv-03089-PHK, 2025 WL 917110 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 26, 2025)
- Hudson v. Moore Business Forms, Inc., 836 F.2d 1156, 1163 (9th Cir. 1987)
- CyboEnergy, Inc. v. N. Electric Power Tech., Inc., No. 23-cv-06121-JST, ECF Nos. 45, 47 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 14 & 16, 2025)
- Lime Green Lighting, LLC v. Brilliant NextGen Inc., No. 25-cv-00950-VKD, ECF Nos. 8, 9 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 14 & 16, 2025)

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