

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
WASHINGTON

Zeyu Wang v. Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Co.

Wang · No. C25-0825-KKE · Decided January 22, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Washington grants the parties’ stipulated motion concerning the standard of review in Zeyu Wang’s ERISA action for long-term disability benefits. The court agrees to employ de novo review if the matter proceeds to trial.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Washington
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Kymberly K. Evanson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Washington
DECIDED	January 22, 2026
DOCKET	C25-0825-KKE
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff brought an ERISA action seeking long-term disability benefits. The parties filed a stipulated motion requesting that the court apply de novo review if the matter proceeds to trial.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	De novo review if the matter proceeds to trial, pursuant to the parties' stipulation.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential trial-court order
PARTIES	Zeyu Wang v. Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Co.

TOPICS

erisa insurance civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

ERISA insurance civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should accept the parties' stipulation that de novo review would apply if the matter proceeds to trial.

HOLDINGS

1. The court granted the parties' stipulated motion and agreed to employ a de novo standard of review if the matter proceeds to trial.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The Court GRANTS the parties' stipulated motion."

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Zeyu Wang brought an action under ERISA to recover long-term disability benefits that Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Co. had denied. The parties disagreed about the appropriate standard for reviewing the record. They ultimately stipulated that the court would employ de novo review if the case proceeded to trial.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Wang filed an ERISA claim against Hartford for denied long-term disability benefits. The parties identified a dispute regarding the applicable standard of review, and the court set a briefing schedule. The parties then jointly stipulated to de novo review for any trial, which the court granted.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Rorabaugh v. Continental Casualty Co., 321 Fed. Appx. 708, 709 (9th Cir. 2009)

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 6 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE 7 ZEYU WANG, CASE NO. C25-0825-KKE 8 Plaintiff(s), ORDER GRANTING
PARTIES' 9 v. STIPULATED MOTION ON STANDARD OF REVIEW 10 HARTFORD LIFE
AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE CO, 11 Defendant(s). 12 13 Plaintiff Zeyu Wang brings this
action under the Employee Retirement Income Security 14 Act ("ERISA") to recover long-term
disability benefits denied by Defendant Hartford Life and 15 Accident Insurance Co. In the
parties' joint status report (Dkt.

No. 18), Wang raised an unresolved 16 issue: the appropriate standard of review of the record.
Dkt. No. 18 at 2. Thus, in issuing the case 17 schedule, the Court set a briefing schedule on the
standard of review. Dkt. No. 19.

On January 18 21, 2026, the parties filed a stipulated motion requesting “that for the purposes of this case ..., the 19 Court will employ a de novo standard of review if this matter proceeds to trial.” Dkt. No. 20 at 1. 20 // 21 // 22 // 23 // 24 1 The Court GRANTS the parties’ stipulated motion. See *Rorabaugh v. Cont’l Cas. Co.*, 2 321 Fed. Appx. 708, 709 (9th Cir.

2009) (a court may accept the parties’ stipulation to de novo 3 review). 4 Dated this 22nd day of January, 2026. 5 A 6 Kymberly K. Evanson 7 United States District Judge 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24