

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Fred Feleki Martinez v. Peterson

No. 2:21-cv-01779-DAD-JDP (PC) · No. No. 2:21-cv-01779-DAD-JDP (PC) · Decided October 2, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California denied plaintiff Fred Feleki Martinez’s motion under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e) to alter or amend the judgment granting summary judgment to defendant Peterson. The court held that the motion merely rehashed previously rejected arguments, identified no new evidence or intervening change in law, and did not establish clear error; the plaintiff’s request for a ruling was also denied as moot.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Dale A. Drozd
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	October 2, 2025
DOCKET	No. 2:21-cv-01779-DAD-JDP (PC)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e) to alter or amend the judgment entered after the court adopted a magistrate judge's findings and recommendations and granted defendant's motion for summary judgment.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A Rule 59(e) motion may be granted based on newly discovered evidence, clear error or manifest injustice, or an intervening change in controlling law. Reconsideration is an extraordinary remedy used sparingly, and a motion may not be used to rehash arguments previously presented or to raise arguments or evidence that could have been presented before judgment.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; precedential status unknown
PARTIES	Fred Feleki Martinez v. Peterson

TOPICS

motion for reconsideration

summary judgment

section 1983

prisoners rights

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

prisoner civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiff was entitled to relief under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e) based on newly discovered evidence, clear error, manifest injustice, or an intervening change in controlling law.
2. Whether plaintiff's motion improperly rehashed arguments and evidence that had already been considered before entry of judgment.
3. Whether plaintiff's request for a ruling remained justiciable after adjudication of the Rule 59(e) motion.

HOLDINGS

1. A Rule 59(e) motion is not a vehicle for rehashing arguments previously presented or for raising arguments or evidence that could have been raised before judgment.
2. Plaintiff was not entitled to alter or amend the judgment because the motion identified no new evidence, presented no new argument, and did not show clear error, manifest injustice, or an intervening change in controlling law.
3. Plaintiff's request for a ruling was denied as moot because the court resolved the pending Rule 59(e) motion.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"A Rule 59(e) motion may be granted if '(1) the district court is presented with newly discovered evidence, (2) the district court committed clear error or made an initial decision that was manifestly unjust, or (3) there is an intervening change in controlling law.'" (at 1)

"Plaintiff's pending motion does not identify new evidence, present new argument, or support a finding that the court committed clear error in reaching this conclusion." (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, a state prisoner proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis, brought a civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 based on an alleged serious mental-health episode and self-inflicted physical injury on April 8, 2021. In granting summary judgment, the court relied on institutional and medical records that allegedly rendered plaintiff's account implausible and directly refuted it. Plaintiff's Rule 59(e) motion relied on explanations and materials previously presented concerning the absence of a work order for a broken light bulb and the absence of medical records documenting the alleged injury.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The magistrate judge recommended granting defendant's motion for summary judgment. After considering plaintiff's objections, the district court adopted the findings and recommendations, granted summary judgment,

entered judgment, and closed the case on March 28, 2025. Plaintiff then moved to alter or amend the judgment under Rule 59(e); the court denied that motion and denied as moot plaintiff's request for a ruling.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- California Architectural Bldg. Prods., Inc. v. Franciscan Ceramics, Inc., 818 F.2d 1466, 1468 (9th Cir. 1987)
- Matsushita Elec. Indus. Co. v. Zenith Radio Corp., 475 U.S. 574, 587 (1986)
- Blue Ridge Ins. Co. v. Stanewich, 142 F.3d 1145, 1147 (9th Cir. 1998)
- Harper v. Wallingford, 877 F.2d 728, 731 (9th Cir. 1989)
- United States v. Navarro, 972 F. Supp. 1296, 1299 (E.D. Cal. 1997), rev'd on other grounds, 160 F.3d 1254 (9th Cir. 1998)
- Goodlow v. Camacho, No. 3:18-cv-0709-CAB-MDD, 2020 WL 6799381, at *1 (S.D. Cal. Nov. 19, 2020)
- United States v. Westlands Water Dist., 134 F. Supp. 2d 1111, 1131 (E.D. Cal. 2001)
- Costello v. U.S. Gov't, 765 F. Supp. 1003, 1009 (C.D. Cal. 1991)
- Ybarra v. McDaniel, 656 F.3d 984, 998 (9th Cir. 2011)
- Zimmerman v. City of Oakland, 255 F.3d 734, 737 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Tripati v. Henman, 845 F.2d 205, 206 n.1 (9th Cir. 1988)
- McDowell v. Calderon, 197 F.3d 1253, 1254 n.1 (9th Cir. 1999)
- Fed. Hous. Fin. Agency v. Saticoy Bay, LLC, No. 2:16-cv-02242-JAD-BNW, 2025 WL 2624273, at *1 (D. Nev. Sept. 11, 2025)
- Witkin v. Wagner, No. 2:20-cv-00267-WBS-CKD (PC), 2022 WL 3371697, at *1 (E.D. Cal. Aug. 16, 2022)

OPINION

Peterson

PER CURIAM.

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8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10

11 FRED FELEKI MARTINEZ, No. 2:21-cv-01779-DAD-JDP (PC)

12 Plaintiff,

13 v. ORDER DENYING PLAINTIFF’S MOTION

TO ALTER OR AMEND THE JUDGMENT

14 PETERSON,

(Doc. Nos. 104, 107) 15 Defendant. 16 17 Plaintiff, a state prisoner proceeding pro se and in
forma pauperis, has filed this civil 18 rights action seeking relief under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The

matter was referred to a United States 19 Magistrate Judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(B) and Local Rule 302. 20 On March 11, 2025, the assigned magistrate judge issued findings and recommendations 21 recommending that defendant's motion for summary judgment be granted. (Doc. No. 100.) 22 Specifically, the magistrate judge noted that the Ninth Circuit has held that on summary 23 judgment, "[i]f the factual context makes the non-moving party's claim implausible, that party 24 must come forward with more persuasive evidence than would otherwise be necessary to show 25 that there is a genuine issue for trial. No longer can it be argued that any disagreement about a 26 material issue of fact precludes the use of summary judgment." *California Architectural Bldg. Prods., Inc. v. Franciscan Ceramics, Inc.*, 818 F.2d 1466, 1468 (9th Cir. 1987) (citing *Matsushita Elec. Indus. Co. v. Zenith Radio Corp.*, 475 U.S. 574, 587 (1986)); see also *Blue Ridge Ins. Co. v. Stanewich*, 142 F.3d 1145, 1147 (9th Cir. 1998); *Harper v. Wallingford*, 877 F.2d 728, 731 (9th

2 Cir. 1989). The magistrate judge noted that on summary judgment, defendant had come forward 3 with evidence indicating that, absent any assessment of credibility, the allegations of plaintiff's 4 verified complaint are implausible. (Doc. No. 100 at 4.) The magistrate judge concluded that 5 "plaintiff's claim that he underwent a serious mental health episode and suffered a serious, self- 6 inflicted physical injury are belied by institutional records that render his account impossible," 7 and his opposition to the pending motion for summary judgment fails to offer "evidence that 8 shows a genuine issue for trial." (Id. at 5.) On March 20, 2025, plaintiff filed objections to the 9 findings and recommendations. (Doc. No. 101.) On March 28, 2025, having considered and 10 addressed plaintiff's objections, the court adopted the findings and recommendations, granted 11 summary judgment in favor of defendant, entered judgment, and closed the case. (Doc. Nos. 102, 12 103.) 13 On April 10, 2025, plaintiff filed the pending motion to alter or amend judgment pursuant 14 to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e). (Doc. No. 104.) On May 1, 2025, defendant filed an 15 opposition to that motion (Doc. No. 105), and on May 12, 2025, plaintiff filed a reply thereto 16 (Doc. No. 106). On August 28, 2025, plaintiff filed a request for ruling. (Doc. No. 107.) 17 Rule 59(e) "motions to reconsider are not vehicles permitting the unsuccessful party to 18 'rehash' arguments previously presented." *United States v. Navarro*, 972 F. Supp. 1296, 1299 19 (E.D. Cal. 1997), rev'd on other grounds, 160 F.3d 1254 (9th Cir. 1998), (rejecting "after 20 thoughts" and "shifting of ground" as appropriate grounds for reconsideration under Rule 59(e)); 21 see also *Goodlow v. Camacho*, No. 3:18-cv-0709-CAB-MDD, 2020 WL 6799381, at *1 (S.D. 22 Cal. Nov. 19, 2020) (noting that parties may not use Rule 59(e) to "relitigate old matters, or to 23 raise arguments or present evidence that could have been raised prior to the entry of judgment") 24 (citation omitted); *United States v. Westlands Water Dist.*, 134 F. Supp. 2d 1111, 1131 (E.D. Cal. 25 2001) (the moving party must show "more than a disagreement with the Court's decision, and 26 [that] recapitulation of the cases and arguments considered by the court before rendering its 27 original decision fails to carry the moving party's burden"); *Costello v. U.S. Gov't*, 765 F. Supp. 28 1003, 1009 (C.D. Cal. 1991) ("[C]ourts avoid considering Rule 59(e) motions where the

grounds 1 for amendment are restricted to either repetitive contentions of matters which were before the 2 court on its prior consideration or contentions which might have been raised prior to the 3 challenged judgment.”). 4 “A Rule 59(e) motion may be granted if ‘(1) the district court is presented with newly 5 discovered evidence, (2) the district court committed clear error or made an initial decision that 6 was manifestly unjust, or (3) there is an intervening change in controlling law.’” *Ybarra v. 7 McDaniel*, 656 F.3d 984, 998 (9th Cir. 2011) (quoting *Zimmerman v. City of Oakland*, 255 F.3d 873, 734, 737 (9th Cir. 2001)). A Rule 59(e) motion seeks “a substantive change of mind by the 9 court,” *Tripathi v. Henman*, 845 F.2d 205, 206 n.1 (9th Cir. 1988), and “is an extraordinary remedy 10 which should be used sparingly.” *McDowell v. Calderon*, 197 F.3d 1253, 1254 n.1 (9th Cir. 11 1999). 12 Here, plaintiff’s motion to alter or amend the judgment is simply a rehash of his previous 13 arguments. Plaintiff attempts to refute the court’s conclusion that there was no evidence 14 presented on summary judgment to support his version of events by referring the court to his 15 previously provided explanations for the lack of any work order for a broken light bulb in his cell 16 and the lack of any medical record of his injury. (Doc. No. 104 at 2–8.)1 However, the court 17 already considered these materials in its order adopting the findings and recommendations, 18 including plaintiff’s proffered explanations for the lack of evidence to support his account. See 19 Doc. No. 102 at 2 (“He points to an excerpt of his own deposition testimony, in which he testified 20 that the light bulb in his cell was a ‘screw-in light bulb,’ purportedly to explain why there was no 21 work order regarding a broken light during the relevant time period.”); *id.* at 4 (“In those 22 objections, plaintiff argues that the magistrate judge’s finding that his ‘allegations are implausible 23 due to no records’ ‘is not sound’ because ‘not all reports of suicidal ideations or attempts to 24 1 In fact, plaintiff points the court directly to his previous arguments in his opposition and his 25 objections that he wishes the court to reconsider. See Doc. No. 104 at 2 (“Furthermore, on page 2 of 8 regarding plaintiffs objections to Judge Petersons findings and recommendations, lines 10 to 26 15”); *id.* at 4 (“Please refer to pages 12 of 21 and 13 of 21 of plaintiff’s opposition to the 27 summary judgment.”); *id.* at 6 (directing the court to page 20 of his opposition and page 7 of his objections); *id.* at 7 (noting that plaintiff already explained why the event underlying this action 28 was not reported to healthcare staff in both his opposition brief and his objections). 1 | commit suicide are always reported’”). The court concluded that, despite those arguments, 2 | there was no basis upon which to reject the magistrate judge’s findings and recommendations, 3 | because plaintiff had not “identif[ied] evidence supporting his account or provide[d] any specific 4 | explanation as to why his description of the events that he claims took place on April 8, 2021, 5 || appear in none of the health records submitted to the court on summary judgment and are directly 6 | refuted by all of those who would seemingly be aware of the events if they took place as plaintiff 7 | claims.” *Jd.* at 4 (emphasis added). Plaintiff’s pending motion does not identify new evidence, 8 || present new argument, or support a finding that the court committed clear error in reaching this 9 | conclusion. Thus, petitioner’s motion to alter or amend the judgment will be denied. See Fed. 10 | Hous. Fin.

Agency v. Saticoy Bay, LLC, No. 2:16-cv-02242-JAD-BNW, 2025 WL 2624273, at *1 11 | (D. Nev. Sept. 11, 2025) (denying the defendant’s motion to alter or amend judgment, noting that 12 | its arguments are “merely a repackaging of issues that this court thoroughly considered—and 13 || rejected—when granting summary judgment the last time”); Witkin v. Wagner, No. 2:20-cv- 14 | 00267-WBS-CKD (PC), 2022 WL 3371697, at *1 (E.D. Cal. Aug. 16, 2022) (denying the 15 | plaintiff’s motion to alter or amend judgment, observing that the plaintiffs “motion rehashes the 16 | arguments that he raised in his Objections to the Magistrate Judge’s Findings and 17 || Recommendations” and “[t]hese arguments were considered by this court prior to entering 18 | judgment”). 19 Accordingly, 20 1. Plaintiff’s motion to alter or amend the judgment (Doc. No. 104) is DENIED; 21 2. Plaintiff’s request for ruling (Doc. No. 107) is DENIED as having been rendered moot 22 by this order; and 23 3. This case shall remain closed. 24 IT IS SO ORDERED. |

Dated: _ October 1, 2025 Da A. 2, axel

26 DALE A. DROZD

37 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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