

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Guardian Alliance Technologies, Inc. v. Miller Mendel, Inc. and Tyler
Miller

No. 2:22-cv-01390 WBS AC (E.D. Cal. Nov. 25, 2025) · No. No. 2:22-cv-01390 WBS AC · Decided November
25, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California granted Miller Mendel, Inc. and Tyler Miller leave to amend their answer, finding no substantial prejudice, undue delay, or apparent futility. The court denied Guardian Alliance Technologies, Inc.’s motion for judgment on the pleadings without prejudice as moot because the amended pleading would supersede the prior answer.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	William B. Shubb
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	November 25, 2025
DOCKET	No. 2:22-cv-01390 WBS AC
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendants moved to modify the scheduling order and obtain leave to amend their answer. Plaintiff moved for judgment on the pleadings.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15(a)(2), leave to amend should generally be freely granted when justice so requires, subject to considerations including substantial prejudice, bad faith, undue delay, or futility. Futility is generally not resolved at the amendment stage unless the proposed amendment is clearly futile, and courts ordinarily defer merits challenges until after amendment.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential district court memorandum and order
PARTIES	Miller Mendel, Inc., Tyler Miller v. Guardian Alliance Technologies, Inc.

TOPICS

motion to amend

motion for judgment on the pleadings

pleadings

patent eligibility

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

patent law

intellectual property

commercial litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether defendants should be granted leave under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15 to amend their answer when the scheduling order supplied no deadline for amending pleadings.
2. Whether the proposed amendments were futile because they included legal conclusions concerning patent eligibility.
3. Whether plaintiff's motion for judgment on the pleadings remained viable after leave to amend was granted.

HOLDINGS

1. Because the scheduling order did not establish a deadline for amending pleadings, defendants' request for leave to amend was governed by Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15.
2. Leave to amend should be granted because the proposed amendments would not cause substantial prejudice, undue delay, or additional discovery, and the record did not establish futility.
3. Plaintiff's motion for judgment on the pleadings was moot and was denied without prejudice because defendants' amended answer would supersede the prior answer.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Under Rule 15(a), there exists a presumption in favor of granting leave to amend.” (at 1)

“Denial on based on futility “is rare and courts generally defer consideration of challenges to the merits of a proposed amended pleading until after leave to amend is granted and the amended pleading is filed.”” (at 2)

“Whether the claim elements or the claimed combination are well-understood, routine, and conventional is a question of fact . . . [that] cannot be answered adversely to the patentee” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Defendants sought to amend their answer to assert allegations concerning the patent eligibility of the asserted claims, including allegations that the claims contained elements that were not well-understood, routine, or conventional. Discovery was in its infancy, and the proposed amendments asserted that the patent claims recited specific technological methods for managing pre-employment background investigations and reflected an inventive concept. Plaintiff argued that the amendments would be prejudicial and futile.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The scheduling order did not provide a deadline for amending pleadings. The court therefore evaluated defendants' request under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15, granted leave to amend, and denied plaintiff's

motion for judgment on the pleadings as moot and without prejudice because the amended answer would supersede the existing answer.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Dhillon v. Princess Cruise Lines, Ltd., No. 22-55125, 2023 WL 5696529 (9th Cir. Sept. 5, 2023)
- VIA Techs., Inc. v. ASUS Computer Int'l, No. 14-cv-03585-BLF, 2017 WL 491172, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Feb. 7, 2017)
- Knudsen v. City & Cnty. of San Francisco, No. 12-cv-01944-JST, 2013 WL 6235507, at *1 n.1 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 2, 2013)
- Singh v. Lowe's Home Centers, LLC, No. CV 2:18-445 WBS AC, 2018 WL 2155936 (E.D. Cal. May 10, 2018)
- Owens v. Walgreen Co., No. CIV. 2:12-419 WBS, 2012 WL 2359996, at *1 (E.D. Cal. June 20, 2012)
- Eminence Capital, LLC v. Aspeon, Inc., 316 F.3d 1048, 1052 (9th Cir. 2003)
- Addaday, Inc. v. Artist International Co., No. 221CV05525ABPLAX, 2022 WL 16859889, at *4 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 25, 2022)
- Restoration Industry Ass'n Inc. v. TheramaPure Inc., No. CV 13-8523 JVS, 2014 WL 12603210 (C.D. Cal. Apr. 7, 2014)
- Owens v. Kaiser Found. Health Plan, Inc., 244 F.3d 708, 712 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Aatrix Software, Inc. v. Green Shades Software, Inc., 882 F.3d 1121, 1125, 1128 (Fed. Cir. 2018)
- Duhn Oil Tool, Inc. v. Cooper Cameron Corp., No. CV-F-05-1311 OWW GSA, 2010 WL 596312, at *14 (E.D. Cal. Feb. 16, 2010)