

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Sepulveda v. Mann Bros Truck Stop Inc.

No. 2:24-cv-01863-DC-AC (E.D. Cal. Aug. 15, 2025) · No. 2:24-cv-01863-DC-AC · Decided August 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California orders Plaintiff Richard Sepulveda to show cause why the court should not decline supplemental jurisdiction over his California Unruh Act claim. The order indicates that the court may adopt the magistrate judge’s recommendations concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act claim, attorneys’ fees, and injunctive relief while declining jurisdiction over the state-law claim.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Dena Coggins
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	August 18, 2025
DOCKET	2:24-cv-01863-DC-AC
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Order to show cause concerning whether the court should adopt in part the magistrate judge's findings and recommendations granting default judgment and whether the court should decline supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's California Unruh Act claim.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown; district court order to show cause
PARTIES	Richard Sepulveda v. Mann Bros Truck Stop Inc.

TOPICS

- default judgment
- subject matter jurisdiction
- civil procedure
- public accommodations discrimination
- ada / disability

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- disability rights
- default judgment
- supplemental jurisdiction

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's California Unruh Act claim in light of California's procedural requirements and the exceptional circumstances identified by the Ninth Circuit.
2. Whether the court should adopt in part the magistrate judge's findings and recommendations concerning Plaintiff's ADA claim, attorney fees, and injunctive relief while declining supplemental jurisdiction over the Unruh Act claim.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“it would not be ‘fair’ to defendants and ‘an affront to the comity between federal and state courts’ to allow plaintiffs to evade California’s procedural requirements by bringing their claims in federal court.” (at 1)

“why the court should not adopt in part the findings and recommendations as to Plaintiff’s ADA claim, attorneys’ fees, and injunctive relief, but decline to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff’s Unruh Act claim.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Richard Sepulveda asserted claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act and California's Unruh Act against Mann Bros Truck Stop Inc. Plaintiff sought default judgment. The magistrate judge recommended granting default judgment, awarding Unruh Act damages and attorney fees and costs, and requiring accessibility changes, but did not address supplemental jurisdiction over the Unruh Act claim.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff moved for default judgment on claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act and California's Unruh Act. The assigned magistrate judge recommended granting the motion, awarding \$8,000 in Unruh Act statutory damages, awarding \$3,506.50 in attorney fees and costs, and ordering accessibility changes. The district court issued an order to show cause because the findings and recommendations did not address whether the court should exercise supplemental jurisdiction over the Unruh Act claim.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Vo v. Choi, 49 F.4th 1167, 1171 (9th Cir. 2022)
- Sepulveda v. Perez, No. 23-cv-03897-EMC, 2024 WL 3748006, at *3 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 8, 2024)
- Sepulveda v. Valtola Inc., No. 2:24-cv-01497-DC-CSK, 2025 WL 1742739, at *3 (E.D. Cal. June 24, 2025), report and recommendation adopted, 2025 WL 2299827 (E.D. Cal. Aug. 8, 2025)

OPINION

Sepulveda v. Mann Bros Truck Stop Inc.

PER CURIAM.

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8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10

11 RICHARD SEPULVEDA, No. 2:24-cv-01863-DC-AC

12 Plaintiff,

13 v. ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE

14 MANN BROS TRUCK STOP INC.,

15 Defendant. 16

17 This matter is before the court on the pending findings and recommendations issued by 18 the assigned magistrate judge on May 23, 2025, recommending that Plaintiff's motion for default 19 judgment (Doc. No. 15) be granted. (Doc. No. 17.) Specifically, the magistrate judge found that 20 Plaintiff is entitled to default judgment on his claim under the Americans with Disabilities Act 21 ("ADA") and California's Unruh Act, and recommended the court grant Plaintiff's motion, award 22 \$8,000 in statutory damages under the Unruh Act, award \$3,506.50 in attorneys' fees and costs, 23 and order Defendant to make changes and accommodations at the subject property in compliance 24 with Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. (Id. at 9.) The pending findings 25 and recommendations, however, do not address the issue of supplemental jurisdiction over the 26 Unruh Act claim—specifically, whether this court should exercise supplemental jurisdiction. 27 Indeed, as Plaintiff and Plaintiff's counsel are aware from their litigation in this court and 28 the Northern District of California, courts find exceptional circumstances exist to decline 1 | supplemental jurisdiction over an Unruh Act claim because "it would not be 'fair' to defendants 2 | and 'an affront to the comity between federal and state courts' to allow plaintiffs to evade 3 | California's procedural requirements by bringing their claims in federal court." *Vo v. Choi*, 49 4 | F4th 1167, 1171 (9th Cir. 2022) (citation omitted); see also *Sepulveda v. Perez*, No. 23-cv- 5 || 03897-EMC, 2024 WL 3748006, at *3 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 8, 2024) (requiring plaintiff to show 6 || cause "why the Court should not decline to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over the Unruh Act 7 | claim—especially as he concedes he is a high-frequency litigant, which thereby implicates 8 || specific procedural requirements imposed by the California legislature if the Unruh Act claim 9 | were litigated in state court"); *Sepulveda v. Valtoha Inc.*, No. 2:24-cv-01497-DC-CSK, 2025 WL 10 1742739, at *3 (E.D. Cal. June 24, 2025), report and recommendation adopted, 2025 WL 11 | 2299827 (E.D. Cal. Aug. 8, 2025) (explaining that retaining jurisdiction is not warranted 12 | "[e]specially in light of California's requirements for Unruh Act claims, such that it would not be 13 | fair, nor would comity be served, if Plaintiff would be able to proceed on his state law claims in 14 | this Court and 'wholly thwart' California's policy objectives in this area") (citation omitted). 15 Accordingly, Plaintiff is hereby ORDERED

TO SHOW CAUSE, within ten (10) days 16 | from the date of entry of this order, why the court should not adopt in part the findings and 17 | recommendations as to Plaintiff's ADA claim, attorneys' fees, and injunctive relief, but decline to 18 | exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's Unruh Act claim. 19

20 IT IS SO ORDERED. □

| Dated: _August 15, 2025 DUC Dena Coggins 22 United States District Judge 23 24 25 26 27 28
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28