

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF  
CALIFORNIA

Sylvia Sanchez, on behalf of minor R.L.Y. v. Commissioner of Social  
Security

Sanchez v. Commissioner of Social Security · No. 1:25-cv-00861-HBK · Decided August 22, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California grants Sylvia Sanchez’s petition to be appointed guardian ad litem for minor plaintiff R.L.Y. in an action seeking judicial review of the Commissioner of Social Security’s denial of disability benefits. The court finds that Sanchez is the minor’s grandmother and guardian, is familiar with the minor’s medical conditions, and presents no apparent conflict of interest.

CASE DETAILS

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COURT                 | United States District Court for the Eastern District of California                                                                                                                                                     |
| WRITING FOR THE COURT | Helena M. Barch-Kuchta                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| JURISDICTION          | United States District Court for the Eastern District of California                                                                                                                                                     |
| DECIDED               | August 22, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| DOCKET                | 1:25-cv-00861-HBK                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| DISPOSITION           | other                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| PROCEDURAL POSTURE    | Plaintiff initiated an action seeking judicial review of a final decision of the Commissioner of Social Security and simultaneously petitioned for appointment of a guardian ad litem to represent the minor plaintiff. |
| PRECEDENTIAL VALUE    | Unknown; interlocutory procedural order appointing a guardian ad litem.                                                                                                                                                 |

TOPICS

- guardian ad litem
- guardianship procedure
- civil procedure
- administrative law

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- Social Security benefits
- guardianship procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Sylvia Sanchez should be appointed guardian ad litem to represent minor plaintiff R.L.Y. in the Social Security action.
2. Whether the proposed guardian ad litem adequately satisfies the requirement to protect the minor's interests in the litigation.

## HOLDINGS

1. The court granted the petition and appointed Sylvia Sanchez as guardian ad litem for R.L.Y., authorizing her to prosecute the action on the minor's behalf.

## KEY QUOTATIONS

*“Appointment of a guardian ad litem is not a mere formality because the guardian “is authorized to act on behalf of his ward and may make all appropriate decisions in the course of specific litigation.””*

*“A “guardian ad litem need not possess any special qualifications,” but must “be truly dedicated to the best interests of the person on whose behalf he seeks to litigate.””*

## FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The action seeks judicial review of a final decision denying R.L.Y.'s application for disability insurance benefits and Supplemental Security Income benefits under the Social Security Act. Sylvia Sanchez, the minor's grandmother and guardian, sought appointment as guardian ad litem. The court found that Sanchez was familiar with the minor's medical conditions and identified no apparent conflict of interest or other factor showing that appointment would not be in the minor's best interests.

## PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Sylvia Sanchez filed the Social Security action on July 15, 2025, on behalf of minor R.L.Y. On the same day, she filed a petition seeking her appointment as guardian ad litem. The district court granted the petition and authorized Sanchez to prosecute the action on the minor's behalf.

## DISPOSITION

other

## CASES CITED

- United States v. 30.64 Acres of Land, More or Less, Situated in Klickitat Cty., State of Wash., 795 F.2d 796, 805 (9th Cir. 1986)
- AT&T Mobility, LLC v. Yeager, 143 F. Supp. 3d 1042, 1053-54 (E.D. Cal. 2015)