

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Scott Byler v. Mastec Services Company et al.

Byler v. Mastec Services Co. · No. 5:25-cv-00181-SB-DTB · Decided December 29, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California granted Scott Byler’s motion to remand the case to Riverside Superior Court. The court held that, because Defendants disclaimed reliance on CAFA and conceded that the amount in controversy for Byler’s individual claims did not exceed \$75,000 at the time of removal, federal diversity jurisdiction was lacking.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Stanley Blumenfeld, Jr.
JURISDICTION	United States District Court, Central District of California
DECIDED	December 29, 2025
DOCKET	5:25-cv-00181-SB-DTB
DISPOSITION	remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to remand after the arbitrator declared the parties' arbitration agreement unenforceable. Defendants opposed remand and asserted that federal jurisdiction existed under the individual diversity statute, 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court assessed federal subject-matter jurisdiction based on the amount in controversy at the time of removal.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown

TOPICS

- subject matter jurisdiction
- class actions
- arbitration
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- employment law
- wage and hour
- arbitration

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether federal jurisdiction existed under 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a) when the amount in controversy for Plaintiff's individual claims did not exceed \$75,000.
2. Whether the court should address jurisdiction under the Class Action Fairness Act after Defendants disclaimed reliance on CAFA.

HOLDINGS

1. The amount in controversy for Plaintiff's individual claims did not satisfy the \$75,000 jurisdictional threshold, so federal diversity jurisdiction under § 1332(a) was lacking.
2. The court did not decide whether jurisdiction existed under CAFA because Defendants expressly disclaimed reliance on 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d).

KEY QUOTATIONS

“This concession is dispositive because the amount in controversy is determined at the time of removal.”

“The motion to remand the case to the Riverside Superior Court is therefore GRANTED.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff brought individual wage-and-hour claims along with putative class claims against Mastec Services Company and other defendants. The Court compelled arbitration of the individual claims and dismissed the class claims pursuant to a class-action waiver. The arbitrator later declared the arbitration agreement unenforceable. At the time of removal, Defendants alleged approximately \$6,500 in actual damages and \$1,625 in attorney's fees per plaintiff based on a putative class of 1,256 individuals, and later contended that Plaintiff's individual damages were \$19,358.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Defendants removed the action from the Riverside Superior Court. The Court later compelled arbitration of Plaintiff's individual wage-and-hour claims and dismissed the class claims under the agreement's class-action waiver. After the arbitrator declared the agreement unenforceable, Plaintiff moved to remand. The district court granted the motion because Defendants conceded that the amount in controversy for Plaintiff's individual claims did not exceed \$75,000.

DISPOSITION

remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The case is remanded to the Riverside Superior Court.

CASES CITED

- United States v. Sineneng-Smith, 590 U.S. 371, 375 (2020)

- *Rosenwald v. Kimberly-Clark Corp.*, 152 F.4th 1167, 1177, 1179 (9th Cir. 2025)
- *Chavez v. JPMorgan Chase & Co.*, 888 F.3d 413, 417 (9th Cir. 2018)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA SCOTT BYLER, Case No. 5:25-cv-00181-SB-DTB Plaintiff, v. ORDER GRANTING MOTION TO REMAND [DKT. NO. 53] MASTEC SERVICES COMPANY et al., Defendants. In April 2025, the Court granted Defendants' motion to compel arbitration of Plaintiff Scott Byler's individual wage-and-hour claims and dismissed the class claims pursuant to the class-action waiver in their agreement.¹ After the arbitrator later declared the agreement unenforceable, Plaintiff moved to remand, arguing that—following the dismissal of the class claims—there is no jurisdiction under the Class Action Fairness Act (CAFA), 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d).

In opposition, Defendants argue that jurisdiction exists solely under § 1332(a), the individual diversity provision. At oral argument, Defendants affirmed that they are relying exclusively on § 1332(a) for jurisdiction.

As Defendants have disclaimed reliance on CAFA, the Court does not address whether jurisdiction lies under § 1332(d) despite dismissal of the class claims. See *United States v. Sineneng-Smith*, 590 U.S. 371, 375 (2020) (“In our adversarial system of adjudication, we follow the principle of party 1 Although Plaintiff opposed the motion to compel arbitration and challenged the delegation clause, he did not dispute that the enforceability of the class-action waiver was reserved for judicial determination, nor did he challenge the severability clause. presentation.”).

Instead, the Court decides only whether the amount in controversy for Plaintiffs individual claims exceeds \$75,000. Citing *Rosenwald*, Defendants conceded at oral argument that they could not have plausibly alleged at the time of removal that the amount in controversy for Plaintiff's individual claims exceeded \$75,000. See *Rosenwald v. Kimberly-Clark Corp.*, 152 F.4th 1167, 1177, 1179 (9th Cir.

2025) (explaining that, without CAFA, a court may not aggregate putative class members' damages to satisfy the amount- in-controversy requirement). This concession is dispositive because the amount in controversy is determined at the time of removal. *Chavez v. JPMorgan Chase & Co.*, 888 F.3d 413, 417 (9th Cir. 2018) (“When we say that the amount in controversy is assessed at the time of removal, we mean that we consider damages that are claimed at the time the case is removed by the defendant.”).

At the time of removal, Defendants alleged approximately \$6,500 in actual damages and \$1,625 in attorney's fees per plaintiff based on a putative class size of 1,256 individuals'>— an amount that falls short of the jurisdictional threshold. See Dkt. No. 1 4] 65. Attorney's fees actually incurred after removal, and unanticipated at the time of removal, are irrelevant to the jurisdictional inquiry.

See Chavez, 888 F.3d at 417. The motion to remand the case to the Riverside Superior Court is therefore GRANTED. Date: December 29, 2025 OFS Stanley Blumenfeld, Jr. United States District Judge? Defendants now contend that Plaintiff's individual damages are \$19,358. Dkt. No. 54 at 9. Even crediting this calculation, they fail to show that the amount in controversy is satisfied.