

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Henry Koltys v. Frank Bisignano

Koltys v. Bisignano, Case No. 25-cv-04028-SI (N.D. Cal. Jan. 7, 2026) · No. 25-cv-04028-SI · Decided January 7, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California denied the defendant’s motion to dismiss for improper venue but granted the alternative motion to transfer the action to the Central District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1404(a). The court found that venue was proper in the Northern District because relevant reasonable-accommodation and alleged retaliation decisions occurred there, but concluded that the Central District was more convenient because the plaintiff resides and works there and relevant workplace evidence and witnesses are located there. The court did not rule on the defendant’s motions to dismiss under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(6).

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Susan Illston
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	January 7, 2026
DOCKET	25-cv-04028-SI
DISPOSITION	transferred
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant moved to dismiss for improper venue under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(3), dismiss under Rules 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(6), or alternatively transfer the action to the Central District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1404(a).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For a Rule 12(b)(3) venue challenge, the plaintiff bears the burden of showing that venue is proper, and the court may consider facts outside the pleadings. A § 1404(a) transfer decision is discretionary and requires an individualized, case-by-case consideration of convenience and fairness; the moving party bears the burden of showing that the transferee district is more appropriate.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; unpublished district court order

TOPICS

venue civil procedure employment discrimination ada / disability

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure employment law civil rights federal employment law disability discrimination

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether venue was proper in the Northern District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e)(1).
2. Whether the action should be transferred to the Central District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1404(a).

HOLDINGS

1. Venue was proper because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to plaintiff's claims occurred in the Northern District, including the San Francisco-based management officials' handling of the initial phases of plaintiff's reasonable-accommodation request and an alleged retaliatory reprimand.
2. Transfer to the Central District of California was appropriate because that district was the more convenient and appropriate forum for the parties, witnesses, and evidence and better served the interests of justice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“For the convenience of parties and witnesses, in the interest of justice, a district court may transfer any civil matter to any other district or division where it might have been brought.” (at 2)

“does not condition transfer on the initial forum being ‘wrong.’” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Henry Koltys is a Social Security Administration administrative law judge who lives and works in the Central District of California. He alleges disability, sex, and age discrimination, as well as retaliation, based on the SSA's denial of his requests to conduct hearings virtually and to receive courtroom-related accommodations. SSA personnel in San Francisco participated in the accommodation process and recommended denial, while the final accommodation decision was made by an official located outside California. The challenged workplace, plaintiff's supervisors, and other relevant witnesses were principally located in Santa Barbara, and the physical characteristics of plaintiff's courtroom were placed at issue.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed an employment-discrimination action against the Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration in the Northern District of California. The court denied dismissal for improper venue, granted transfer under § 1404(a), and transferred the action to the Central District of California without ruling on the Rule 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(6) arguments.

DISPOSITION

transferred

CASES CITED

- Autodesk, Inc. v. Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd., 191 F. Supp. 3d 1007, 1020 (N.D. Cal. 2016)
- Piedmont Label Co. v. Sun Garden Packing Co., 598 F.2d 491, 496 (9th Cir. 1979)
- Murphy v. Schneider National, Inc., 362 F.3d 1133, 1137 (9th Cir. 2004)
- In re Hall, Bayoutree Associates, Ltd., 939 F.2d 802, 804 (9th Cir. 1991)
- Baeta v. Sonchik, 273 F.3d 1261, 1264-65 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Van Dusen v. Barrack, 376 U.S. 612, 616 (1964)
- Foster v. Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co., No. C 07-04928 SI, 2007 WL 4410408, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 14, 2007)
- Atlantic Marine Construction Co. v. United States District Court, 571 U.S. 49, 59 (2013)
- Jones v. GNC Franchising, Inc., 211 F.3d 495, 498-99 (9th Cir. 2000)
- Stewart Organization, Inc. v. Ricoh Corp., 487 U.S. 22, 29 (1988)
- Lax v. Toyota Motor Corp., 65 F. Supp. 3d 772, 776 (N.D. Cal. 2014)
- Knuttel v. Omaze, Inc., 572 F. Supp. 3d 866, 869 (N.D. Cal. 2021)
- Ward v. Certain Underwriters at Lloyd's of London, 2019 WL 2076991, at *5 (N.D. Cal. May 10, 2019)
- Ibrahim v. Chertoff, 2007 WL 1558521, at *5 (S.D. Cal. May 25, 2007)
- Adab v. United States Citizenship & Immigration Services, 2015 WL 6249563, at *5 (C.D. Cal. Feb. 9, 2015)
- West Coast Regional Center, Inc. v. Jaddou, 2024 WL 3498242, at *3 (N.D. Cal. July 19, 2024)
- Pars Equality Center v. Blinken, 2024 WL 4700636, at *8-9 (N.D. Cal. Nov. 5, 2024)
- Basey v. United States, 2022 WL 4485817, at *5 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 27, 2022)
- Headstart Nursery, Inc. v. Palmeri, 2018 WL 4961664, at *7 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 12, 2018)
- Fabus Corp. v. Asiana Express Corp., No. C-00-3172 PJH, 2001 WL 253185, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 5, 2001)
- Alltrade, Inc. v. Uniweld Products, Inc., 946 F.2d 622, 628 (9th Cir. 1991)
- Koltys v. Berryhill, 2019 WL 13254073, at *1, *4-6 (C.D. Cal. Jan. 9, 2019)
- Koltys v. Kijakazi, No. 20-cv-08700-SK, 2022 WL 432441 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 28, 2022)