

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Elvin Hamilton v. County of Kern, et al.

Case No. 1:25-cv-00979-CDB (E.D. Cal. Nov. 19, 2025) · No. 1:25-cv-00979-CDB · Decided November 19, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California grants Defendants’ unopposed motion to stay Elvin Hamilton’s § 1983 and state-law action pending resolution of a related criminal case. The court also vacates the scheduling conference and requires periodic joint status reports every 120 days and within 14 days after the criminal case concludes.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	November 19, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-00979-CDB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff brought a civil-rights and state-law action arising from a traffic stop. Defendants moved to stay the proceedings pending resolution of a related state criminal case, and Plaintiff filed a statement of non-opposition.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court applied the discretionary stay standard requiring consideration of the possible damage from a stay, the hardship or inequity of proceeding, and the orderly course of justice, including whether a stay would simplify or complicate the issues, proof, and questions of law.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential district-court order; precedential status is not identified in the source.
PARTIES	Elvin Hamilton v. County of Kern, et al.

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- civil rights
- constitutional law
- section 1983

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should stay the civil proceedings pending resolution of the related state criminal case.
2. Whether the stay would promote orderly litigation by simplifying issues concerning Plaintiff's Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

HOLDINGS

1. A court may stay civil proceedings pending independent judicial proceedings when the applicable balancing factors support a stay, including the potential damage from the stay, hardship or inequity from proceeding, and the orderly course of justice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The power to stay proceedings is "incidental to the power inherent in every court to control the disposition of the causes on its docket with economy of time and effort for itself, for counsel, and litigants."" (Order at 1)

"The party seeking such a stay must "make out a clear case of hardship or inequity in being required to go forward if there is even a fair possibility that the stay for which he prays will work damage to [someone] else."" (Order at 1)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The action arises from a traffic stop involving Plaintiff on February 27, 2025. Plaintiff asserted claims against Kern County and others under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and state law. A related criminal prosecution, *People v. Hamilton*, was pending in the Superior Court of California for Kern County, and the civil defendants sought a stay pending resolution of that prosecution.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff initiated the action on August 7, 2025, asserting claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and state law based on a February 27, 2025 traffic stop. Defendants moved to stay the case pending resolution of *People v. Hamilton* in the Kern County Superior Court. Plaintiff did not oppose the motion. The district court granted the stay, vacated the scheduling conference, and ordered periodic joint status reports.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Landis v. N. Am. Co.*, 299 U.S. 248, 254-55 (1936)
- *CMAx v. Hall*, 300 F.2d 265, 268 (9th Cir. 1962)
- *Mediterranean Enters., Inc. v. Ssangyong Corp.*, 708 F.2d 1458, 1465 (9th Cir. 1983)

- Yong v. I.N.S., 208 F.3d 1116, 1119 (9th Cir. 2000)
- People v. Hamilton, Superior Court of California, County of Kern, Case No. MM106261A

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA 10 11 ELVIN HAMILTON, Case No. 1:25-cv-00979-CDB 12 Plaintiff, ORDER
GRANTING DEFENDANTS’ UNOPPOSED MOTION TO STAY 13 v. PROCEEDINGS 14
COUNTY OF KERN, et al., (Docs. 19, 21) 15 Defendants. ORDER VACATING SCHEDULING
16 CONFERENCE 17 (Doc. 20) 18 120-DAY DEADLINE 19 20 Background 21 On August 7,
2025, Plaintiff Elvin Hamilton initiated this action with the filing of a 22 complaint in which he
asserts causes of action against Defendant County of Kern and others under 23 42 U.S.C. § 1983
and state law, arising out of a traffic stop that occurred on February 27, 2025.

24 (Doc. 1 at 4-6). 25 Pending before the Court is Defendants’ motion to stay the proceedings until
the conclusion 26 of a criminal case arising out of the same incident: People v. Hamilton, Superior
Court of California, 27 County of Kern, Case No. MM106261A. (Doc. 19). Plaintiff filed a
statement of non-opposition on November 18, 2025, wherein he represents that the parties “met
and conferred and agreed that 1 rather than filing a Stipulation to Stay, this notice of Non-
Opposition would accomplish the same 2 goal.” (Doc.

21). 3 Legal Standard 4 The power to stay proceedings is “incidental to the power inherent in
every court to control 5 the disposition of the causes on its docket with economy of time and effort
for itself, for counsel, 6 and litigants.” Landis v. N. Am. Co., 299 U.S. 248, 254-55 (1936); accord
CMAX v. Hall, 300 F.2d 7 265, 268 (9th Cir. 1962). A court may enter a stay “pending resolution
of independent proceedings 8 which bear upon the case...whether the separate proceedings are
judicial, administrative, or arbitral 9 in character,” and granting the stay “does not require that the
issues in such proceedings are 10 necessarily controlling of the action before the court.”
Mediterranean Enters., Inc. v. Ssangyong 11 Corp., 708 F.2d 1458, 1465 (9th Cir.

1983) (quotation and citation omitted). In granting a stay, a 12 court must weigh “the length of the
stay against the strength of the justification given for it.” Yong 13 v. I.N.S., 208 F.3d 1116, 1119
(9th Cir. 2000). “If a stay is especially long or its term is indefinite, 14 [courts] require a greater
showing to justify it.” Id. 15 The party seeking such a stay must “make out a clear case of hardship
or inequity in being 16 required to go forward if there is even a fair possibility that the stay for
which he prays will work 17 damage to [someone] else.” Landis, 299 U.S. at 255.

Three factors guide the Court’s determination 18 of whether a stay is appropriate: “(1) the possible
damage which may result from the granting of a 19 stay, (2) the hardship or inequity which a party
may suffer in being required to go forward, and (3) 20 the orderly course of justice measured in

terms of the simplifying or complicating of issues, proof, 21 and questions of which could be expected to result from a stay.” CMAX, 300 F.2d at 268 (citing 22 Landis, 299 U.S. at 254-55).

23 Discussion 24 As Plaintiff does not oppose the motion to stay the proceedings and represents that his non- 25 opposition is intended to accomplish the same goal as a stipulation, the Court finds that factors (1) 26 and (2) above weigh in favor of granting the stay. See (Docs. 19, 21). 27 As to factor (3), the Court considers how a stay may simplify or complicate the issues in 1 | simplifying or complicating issues, proof, and questions of law which could be expected to result 2 | from a stay.” CMAX, 300 F.2d at 268.

Here, the Court finds that staying the case will likely help 3 | simplify the issues, specifically, those related to the Plaintiff's Fifth Amendment right against self 4 | incrimination. 5 Having considered the Defendants’ unopposed motion and weighed the competing interests, 6 | the Court concludes a stay is appropriate. 7 Conclusion and Order 8 Based on the foregoing, the CMAX factors set forth by the Ninth Circuit weigh in favor of 9 | granting a stay of this action.

10 Accordingly, it is HEREBY ORDERED that: 11 1. Defendants’ motion to stay proceedings (Doc. 19) is GRANTED pending the resolution of 12 the criminal matter arising out of the same incident: People v. Hamilton, Superior Court of 13 California, County of Kern, Case No. MM106261A. 14 2.

The parties SHALL file a joint report addressing the status of the criminal case 120 days 15 from the date of entry of this order, and thereafter, every 120 days, and within 14 days of 16 the aforementioned case being concluded.

The parties’ final joint report upon the resolution 17 of the case must set forth the parties’ positions as to the criminal case’s impact on this instant 18 litigation and the parties’ respective positions concerning further scheduling of the case. 19 3.

The scheduling conference (Doc. 20) set for January 9, 2025, is VACATED, to be reset as 20 necessary upon lifting of the stay. 21 | ITIS SO ORDERED. | Dated: _November 19, 2025 | Word bo 23 UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE 24 25 26 27 28