

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

Azadpour v. Sun Microsystems, Inc.

285 F. App'x 454 (9th Cir. 2008) · No. Nos. 06-16960 and 07-16556 · Decided July 11, 2008

SUMMARY

The Ninth Circuit affirmed judgments against Mostafa Aram Azadpour in consolidated appeals concerning the denial of long-term disability benefits. The court upheld summary judgment, dismissal on res judicata grounds, dismissal of a fraud claim for failure to plead with particularity, and denial of remand because ERISA preempted the claims.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per curiam; Hawkins; Thomas; Wallace
JURISDICTION	Federal
DECIDED	July 11, 2008
DOCKET	Nos. 06-16960 and 07-16556
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Consolidated appeals from the district court's summary judgment for defendants and final judgments dismissing Azadpour's actions concerning the denial of long-term disability benefits.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	De novo review of summary judgment, dismissals based on res judicata, dismissals for failure to state a claim, and denial of remand.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Mostafa Aram Azadpour v. Sun Microsystems, Inc., Defendants-Appellees

TOPICS

- summary judgment
- res judicata
- motions to dismiss
- appellate procedure
- erisa

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- employment law
- employee benefits
- ERISA

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the district court properly granted summary judgment for defendants in the action concerning long-term disability benefits.
2. Whether the second action was barred by res judicata.
3. Whether the remaining fraud claim was adequately pleaded under the applicable pleading requirements.
4. Whether the district court properly denied remand because ERISA preempted Azadpour's claims.
5. Whether Azadpour could raise new facts or arguments for the first time on appeal.

HOLDINGS

1. The district court's summary judgment for defendants was affirmed because Azadpour did not challenge the district court's conclusions of law on appeal, and any such arguments were deemed abandoned.
2. Azadpour could not present purportedly new facts in opposition to summary judgment for the first time on appeal.
3. The district court properly dismissed the second action based on res judicata.
4. The district court properly dismissed the fraud claim for failure to state a claim.
5. The district court properly denied Azadpour's motions to remand because ERISA preempted his claims.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"We have consistently held that a party may not raise new issues of fact on appeal after declining to present those facts before the trial court." (454)

"The established rule in federal courts is that a final judgment retains all of its res judicata consequences pending decision of the appeal." (454-455)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Azadpour brought actions alleging that defendants wrongfully denied him long-term disability benefits. The district court entered summary judgment for defendants in one action and dismissed the other based on res judicata, while also dismissing a fraud claim for failure to state a claim. Azadpour also sought remand, but the court determined that ERISA preempted his claims.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

In appeal No. 06-16960, the district court entered summary judgment for defendants on September 26, 2006. In appeal No. 07-16556, the district court dismissed the second action in part under res judicata and dismissed the remaining fraud claim for failure to state a claim. The district court denied motions to remand in both actions, and Azadpour appealed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Universal Health Servs. v. Thompson, 363 F.3d 1013, 1019 (9th Cir. 2004)
- Stewart v. U.S. Bancorp, 297 F.3d 953, 956 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Knieval v. ESPN, 393 F.3d 1068, 1072 (9th Cir. 2005)
- Sparta Surgical Corp. v. Nat'l Ass'n of Sec. Dealers, Inc., 159 F.3d 1209, 1211 (9th Cir. 1998)
- Indep. Towers of Wash. v. Washington, 350 F.3d 925, 929 (9th Cir. 2003)
- Ramirez v. Galaza, 334 F.3d 850, 859 n.6 (9th Cir. 2003)
- Tripati v. G.L. Henman, 857 F.2d 1366, 1367 (9th Cir. 1988) (per curiam)
- DeVoll v. Burdick Painting, Inc., 35 F.3d 408, 412 (9th Cir. 1994)

OPINION

Azadpour v. Sun Microsystems, Inc. 285 F. App'x 454

PER CURIAM.

MEMORANDUM **

In these consolidated appeals, Mostafa Aram Azadpour appeals pro se from the district court's summary judgment in favor of defendants and final judgment dismissing Azadpour's actions alleging that he was wrongfully denied long-term disability benefits. We have jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1291. After de novo review, *Universal Health Servs. v. Thompson*, 363 F.3d 1013, 1019 (9th Cir.2004) (grant of summary judgment); *Stewart v. U.S. Bancorp*, 297 F.3d 953, 956 (9th Cir.2002) (dismissal based on res judicata); *Knieval v. ESPN*, 393 F.3d 1068, 1072 (9th Cir.2005) (dismissal for failure to state a claim); *Sparta Surgical Corp. v. Nat'l Ass'n of Sec. Dealers, Inc.*, 159 F.3d 1209, 1211 (9th Cir.1998) (denial of remand), we affirm. In appeal No. 06-16960, we affirm for the reasons stated in the district court's order granting summary judgment in favor of defendants, entered on September 26, 2006. Azadpour advances no argument challenging the district court's conclusions of law, and we therefore deem any such arguments abandoned. See *Indep. Towers of Wash. v. Washington*, 350 F.3d 925, 929 (9th Cir.2003) (explaining that issues not argued on appeal are deemed abandoned). Contrary to his contention, Azadpour may not present for the first time on appeal purportedly new facts in opposition to summary judgment. See *Ramirez v. Galaza*, 334 F.3d 850, 859 n. 6 (9th Cir.2003) ("We have consistently held that a party may not raise new issues of fact on appeal after declining to present those facts before the trial court."). In appeal No. 07-16556, we affirm the district court's dismissal based on the doctrine of res judicata. See *Tripati v. G.L. Henman*, 857 F.2d 1366, 1367 (9th Cir.1988) (per curiam) ("The established rule in federal courts is that a final judgment retains all of its res judicata consequences pending decision of the appeal.") (citation, and internal quotation marks omitted). The district court also properly dismissed Azadpour's fraud claim, the only claim in the second action not subject to res judicata, for failure to state a claim. See Fed. R.Civ.P. 9(b) (requiring fraud to be pled with particularity); see also Cal. Civ.Code § 1578 (establishing elements of constructive fraud under California law). In both actions, the district court properly denied Azadpour's motions to remand because the Employee Retirement Income Security Act ("ERISA") preempts his claims.

See 29 U.S.C. § 1144(a) (ERISA “shall supersede any and all State laws insofar as they may now or hereafter relate to any employee benefit plan”); DeVoll v. Burdick Painting, Inc., 35 F.3d 408, 412 (9th Cir.1994) (“The Ninth Circuit has- held that ERISA preempts common law theories of breach of contract implied in fact, promissory estoppel, estoppel by conduct, fraud and deceit, and breach of contract.”). - Azadpour’s remaining contentions are unpersuasive. Azadpour’s motion for leave to file a motion under Rule 60 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure in the district court is denied. Azadpour’s motion to file an oversized reply brief in appeal No. 07-16556 is granted. **AFFIRMED.** This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by 9th Cir. R. 36-3.