

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

FILED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

SEP 18 2017

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

MOLLY C. DWYER, CLERK
U.S. COURT OF APPEALS

GUY JONES,

Plaintiff-Appellant,

v.

BRADSHAW BAR GROUP, INC., D.B.A.
The Rink; BRUCE D. FITE; CHARLES
FITE,

Defendants-Appellees.

No. 15-17512

D.C. No.

2:14-cv-01841-JAM-AC

MEMORANDUM*

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Eastern District of California
John A. Mendez, District Judge, Presiding

Submitted September 11, 2017**
San Francisco, California

Before: GOULD and WATFORD, Circuit Judges, and SANDS, *** District Judge.

Guy Jones filed suit against the Bradshaw Bar Group, Inc., Bruce D. Fite,

* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by Ninth Circuit Rule 36-3.

** The panel unanimously concludes this case is suitable for decision without oral argument. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2).

*** The Honorable W. Louis Sands, Senior United States District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia, sitting by designation.

and Charles Fite (collectively, “Bradshaw”), bringing claims for violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.*, the Unruh Civil Rights Act, Cal. Civ. Code § 51 *et seq.*, and other California statutes.

The parties submitted a consent decree and proposed order to the district court. The consent decree resolved all issues between the parties except for the matter of Jones’s attorneys’ fees. The district court entered the consent decree on March 10, 2015.

On September 23, 2015, Jones filed a motion for attorneys’ fees. The district court denied the motion as untimely, citing Local Rule 293(a), which requires attorneys’ fees motions pursuant to statute to be filed no later than twenty-eight days after the entry of a final judgment. *See* E.D. Cal. R. 293(a).

Jones argues that the consent decree did not constitute a final judgment as to the issue of attorneys’ fees because it did not resolve that issue. But our law is contrary: “A consent decree is considered a final judgment despite the fact that the district court retains jurisdiction over the case.” *Stone v. City & Cty. of San Francisco*, 968 F.2d 850, 854 (9th Cir. 1992). A motion for attorneys’ fees “does not imply a change in the judgment, but merely seeks what is due because of the judgment.” *White v. N.H. Dep’t of Emp’t Sec.*, 455 U.S. 445, 452 (1982) (quoting *Knighton v. Watkins*, 616 F.2d 795, 797 (5th Cir. 1980)). Here, the consent decree entirely resolved the merits of the case—leaving only the “collateral” matter of

attorneys' fees. *See id.* at 451. We conclude that the consent decree was a final judgment and triggered the twenty-eight-day deadline for an attorneys' fee request as is set by Local Rule 293(a). *See id.* at 451–52.

Jones next argues that applying a local rule to bar a request for fees here undermines the public policy underlying the ADA and the relevant California statutes. We disagree. While Congress provided for an award of attorneys' fees under the ADA, it did not prohibit deadlines for filing such requests. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 12205. The same is true of the California statutes at issue. *See* Cal. Civ. Code §§ 52(b)(3), 54.3(a), 55; Cal. Civ. Proc. Code § 1021.5; Cal. Health & Safety Code § 19953. And “district courts remain free to adopt local rules establishing timeliness standards for the filing of claims for attorney’s fees.” *White*, 455 U.S. at 454. A local rule may bar as untimely a request for attorneys' fees under the ADA and the relevant California statutes.

Jones further argues that the district court’s ruling was contrary to the parties’ understanding and intent, contending that the parties continued to negotiate attorneys’ fees after the deadline set by Local Rule 293(a) had passed. But the Eastern District’s Local Rules provide that, outside of a few exceptions that are not applicable here, extensions of time must be approved by the district court. *See* E.D. Cal. R. 144(a). The parties’ conduct alone could not modify the deadline for filing motions for attorneys’ fees.

Jones also contends that the parties' conduct showed that they understood the consent decree to extend the time to answer. However, "the scope of a consent decree must be discerned within its four corners, and not by reference to what might satisfy the purposes of one of the parties to it." *United States v. Armour & Co.*, 402 U.S. 673, 682 (1971). Nowhere does the consent decree by its terms extend the deadline for filing a motion for attorneys' fees. In reply, Jones contends that Defendants would not be prejudiced by the award of attorneys' fees. But even if this were assumed to be true, it does not constitute sufficient grounds for disregarding the Eastern District's Local Rules.

For the reasons above stated, the district court did not abuse its discretion in denying the motion for attorneys' fees as untimely. *See Guam Sasaki Corp. v. Diana's Inc.*, 881 F.2d 713, 716 (9th Cir. 1989) ("[I]n reviewing rulings of the district court regarding local practice and local rules, the appropriate standard of review is abuse of discretion.").

AFFIRMED.

United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Office of the Clerk
95 Seventh Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

Information Regarding Judgment and Post-Judgment Proceedings

Judgment

- This Court has filed and entered the attached judgment in your case. Fed. R. App. P. 36. Please note the filed date on the attached decision because all of the dates described below run from that date, not from the date you receive this notice.

Mandate (Fed. R. App. P. 41; 9th Cir. R. 41-1 & -2)

- The mandate will issue 7 days after the expiration of the time for filing a petition for rehearing or 7 days from the denial of a petition for rehearing, unless the Court directs otherwise. To file a motion to stay the mandate, file it electronically via the appellate ECF system or, if you are a pro se litigant or an attorney with an exemption from using appellate ECF, file one original motion on paper.

Petition for Panel Rehearing (Fed. R. App. P. 40; 9th Cir. R. 40-1)

Petition for Rehearing En Banc (Fed. R. App. P. 35; 9th Cir. R. 35-1 to -3)

(1) A. Purpose (Panel Rehearing):

- A party should seek panel rehearing only if one or more of the following grounds exist:
 - ▶ A material point of fact or law was overlooked in the decision;
 - ▶ A change in the law occurred after the case was submitted which appears to have been overlooked by the panel; or
 - ▶ An apparent conflict with another decision of the Court was not addressed in the opinion.
- Do not file a petition for panel rehearing merely to reargue the case.

B. Purpose (Rehearing En Banc)

- A party should seek en banc rehearing only if one or more of the following grounds exist:

- ▶ Consideration by the full Court is necessary to secure or maintain uniformity of the Court's decisions; or
- ▶ The proceeding involves a question of exceptional importance; or
- ▶ The opinion directly conflicts with an existing opinion by another court of appeals or the Supreme Court and substantially affects a rule of national application in which there is an overriding need for national uniformity.

(2) Deadlines for Filing:

- A petition for rehearing may be filed within 14 days after entry of judgment. Fed. R. App. P. 40(a)(1).
- If the United States or an agency or officer thereof is a party in a civil case, the time for filing a petition for rehearing is 45 days after entry of judgment. Fed. R. App. P. 40(a)(1).
- If the mandate has issued, the petition for rehearing should be accompanied by a motion to recall the mandate.
- *See* Advisory Note to 9th Cir. R. 40-1 (petitions must be received on the due date).
- An order to publish a previously unpublished memorandum disposition extends the time to file a petition for rehearing to 14 days after the date of the order of publication or, in all civil cases in which the United States or an agency or officer thereof is a party, 45 days after the date of the order of publication. 9th Cir. R. 40-2.

(3) Statement of Counsel

- A petition should contain an introduction stating that, in counsel's judgment, one or more of the situations described in the "purpose" section above exist. The points to be raised must be stated clearly.

(4) Form & Number of Copies (9th Cir. R. 40-1; Fed. R. App. P. 32(c)(2))

- The petition shall not exceed 15 pages unless it complies with the alternative length limitations of 4,200 words or 390 lines of text.
- The petition must be accompanied by a copy of the panel's decision being challenged.
- An answer, when ordered by the Court, shall comply with the same length limitations as the petition.
- If a pro se litigant elects to file a form brief pursuant to Circuit Rule 28-1, a petition for panel rehearing or for rehearing en banc need not comply with Fed. R. App. P. 32.

- The petition or answer must be accompanied by a Certificate of Compliance found at Form 11, available on our website at www.ca9.uscourts.gov under *Forms*.
- You may file a petition electronically via the appellate ECF system. No paper copies are required unless the Court orders otherwise. If you are a pro se litigant or an attorney exempted from using the appellate ECF system, file one original petition on paper. No additional paper copies are required unless the Court orders otherwise.

Bill of Costs (Fed. R. App. P. 39, 9th Cir. R. 39-1)

- The Bill of Costs must be filed within 14 days after entry of judgment.
- See Form 10 for additional information, available on our website at www.ca9.uscourts.gov under *Forms*.

Attorneys Fees

- Ninth Circuit Rule 39-1 describes the content and due dates for attorneys fees applications.
- All relevant forms are available on our website at www.ca9.uscourts.gov under *Forms* or by telephoning (415) 355-7806.

Petition for a Writ of Certiorari

- Please refer to the Rules of the United States Supreme Court at www.supremecourt.gov

Counsel Listing in Published Opinions

- Please check counsel listing on the attached decision.
- If there are any errors in a published opinion, please send a letter **in writing within 10 days** to:
 - ▶ Thomson Reuters; 610 Opperman Drive; PO Box 64526; Eagan, MN 55123 (Attn: Jean Green, Senior Publications Coordinator);
 - ▶ and electronically file a copy of the letter via the appellate ECF system by using “File Correspondence to Court,” or if you are an attorney exempted from using the appellate ECF system, mail the Court one copy of the letter.

United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

BILL OF COSTS

This form is available as a fillable version at:

<http://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/uploads/forms/Form%2010%20-%20Bill%20of%20Costs.pdf>.

Note: If you wish to file a bill of costs, it **MUST** be submitted on this form and filed, with the clerk, with proof of service, within 14 days of the date of entry of judgment, and in accordance with 9th Circuit Rule 39-1. A late bill of costs must be accompanied by a motion showing good cause. Please refer to FRAP 39, 28 U.S.C. § 1920, and 9th Circuit Rule 39-1 when preparing your bill of costs.

v. 9th Cir. No.

The Clerk is requested to tax the following costs against:

Cost Taxable under FRAP 39, 28 U.S.C. § 1920, 9th Cir. R. 39-1	REQUESTED <i>(Each Column Must Be Completed)</i>				ALLOWED <i>(To Be Completed by the Clerk)</i>			
	No. of Docs.	Pages per Doc.	Cost per Page*	TOTAL COST	No. of Docs.	Pages per Doc.	Cost per Page*	TOTAL COST
Excerpt of Record	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Opening Brief	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Answering Brief	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Reply Brief	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Other**	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
TOTAL:				\$ <input type="text"/>	TOTAL: \$ <input type="text"/>			

* *Costs per page:* May not exceed .10 or actual cost, whichever is less. 9th Circuit Rule 39-1.

** *Other:* Any other requests must be accompanied by a statement explaining why the item(s) should be taxed pursuant to 9th Circuit Rule 39-1. Additional items without such supporting statements will not be considered.

Attorneys' fees **cannot** be requested on this form.

Continue to next page

Form 10. Bill of Costs - Continued

I, , swear under penalty of perjury that the services for which costs are taxed were actually and necessarily performed, and that the requested costs were actually expended as listed.

Signature

("s/" plus attorney's name if submitted electronically)

Date

Name of Counsel:

Attorney for:

(To Be Completed by the Clerk)

Date

Costs are taxed in the amount of \$

Clerk of Court

By: , Deputy Clerk