

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

RAM NEHARA, an individual,

1:10-CV-00491-OWW-SMS

Plaintiff,

v.

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, *et al.*,

MEMORANDUM DECISION RE:
DEFENDANT STATE OF
CALIFORNIA'S MOTION TO DISMISS
(Doc. 20.)

Defendants.

I. INTRODUCTION.

Defendant State of California moves to dismiss Plaintiff Ram Nehara's complaint on grounds, among others, that the State is immune from liability under the Eleventh Amendment. Defendant also moves to strike the punitive damages claim based on the punitive damages bar contained in § 818 of the California Government Code. Plaintiff Ram Nehara has filed opposition, to which Defendant has replied.

II. FACTUAL AND PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND.

This case involves allegations of retaliation, disability discrimination, defamation, and intentional infliction of emotional distress at North Kern State Prison ("NKSP"). Plaintiff, a former registered nurse at NKSP, alleges that his former employer retaliated against him on December 22, 2006 by leaving him alone with a mentally unstable and violent inmate, who assaulted him and left him with serious injuries. According to Plaintiff, he was retaliated against for complaining about discriminatory overtime and shift assignments. Plaintiff further alleges that his former employer forced him to manipulate the incident report and subjected him to baseless administrative proceedings, including an internal affairs investigation and disciplinary hearing.¹

¹ Defendant's motion provides a summary of Plaintiff's allegations:

Plaintiff alleges that he is a national of India and began working for CDCR as a Registered Nurse at NKSP in March 2006. Prior to December 2006 Plaintiff complained to NKSP administrators about discriminatory overtime and shift assignments. In retaliation for these complaints, co-workers and managers at NKSP conspired to leave a mentally unstable inmate in his work area unguarded and unrestrained because there was a substantial likelihood that the inmate would attack him - which he asserts occurred in December 2006. Plaintiff also alleges that the correctional officer who left the inmate unattended in his work area was motivated to do so by Plaintiff's nationality. Following the attack Plaintiff drafted an incident report, but was forced to change the contents of the report by managers and employees at NKSP.

Plaintiff further alleges that he was subjected to a meritless internal affairs investigation and that disciplinary proceedings were initiated by the California Board of Registered Nurses. According to Plaintiff, many of the individually named defendants made defamatory

1 Plaintiff was terminated from NKSP on April 30, 2009. On June
2 5, 2009, Plaintiff was issued an "Accusation" from the California
3 Department of Consumer Affairs, charging him with gross negligence
4 and unprofessional conduct. (Doc. 1, Exh. G.) On October 28, 2009
5 and January 25, 2010, Plaintiff filed complaints with the Equal
6 Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") alleging discrimination
7 and retaliation. (Doc. 1, Exhs. A & C.)

8 On March 17, 2010, Plaintiff commenced this action against the
9 State of California, the California Department of Corrections, and
10 several correctional officers/employees.² Plaintiff pled five
11 causes of action: (1) retaliation against all state entity
12 Defendants; (2) intentional infliction of emotional distress
13 against all Defendants; (3) disability discrimination against all
14 state entity Defendants; (4) defamation against all Defendants; and
15 (5) injunction against all state entity Defendants.

16 On March 18, 2010, Plaintiff filed a motion for a temporary
17 restraining order and preliminary injunction, arguing that

19 statements during the course of investigations initiated
20 by internal affairs and Department of Consumer Affairs.
21 On April 30 2009, Plaintiff was terminated from NKSP. On
22 June 5, 2009, the Department of Consumer Affairs, through
23 the Board of Registered Nursing, issued an Accusation
24 against Plaintiff charging him with gross negligence and
25 unprofessional conduct. On or about October 28, 2009 and
January 25, 2010, Plaintiff filed complaints with the Equal
Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") alleging
discrimination and retaliation.

26 (Doc. 20-1 at 2:18- 3:11.) (citations omitted)

27 ² As of July 9, 2010, it is unclear what parties are active
28 participants in this litigation.

1 California Board of Nursing should be enjoined from adjudicating or
2 enforcing any action concerning Plaintiff's nursing license. At
3 the time, Plaintiff was the subject of disciplinary proceedings
4 conducted by the Board of Nursing/Department of Consumer Affairs.
5 Oral argument was held on April 15, 2010 and the motion was denied
6 on May 11, 2010:

7 Plaintiff's motion is denied because he has not
8 exhausted his administrative remedies in state court,
9 nor has plaintiff shown an excuse applies to him or
that these remedies are not effective. An
10 administrative tribunal has been convened and an
11 administrative law judge (ALJ) heard testimony from the
12 parties during a hearing, and took his decision under
13 submission. After the ALJ submits his proposed
14 decision in writing to the Board, the Board has 100
15 days in which to adopt or reject the proposed decision.
16 If the plaintiff does not agree with the decision which
17 is adopted by the Board, there are procedures for
18 review of that decision by the Superior Court under
19 California Code of Civil Procedure section 1094.5 et
20 seq., and the Superior Court's order is subject to
21 review via a petition to the Court of Appeal of the
22 State. Ultimately, the decision is reviewable by the
23 United States Supreme Court, if a petition is granted
24 by that court [...]

25 Plaintiff's motion is also denied based upon the
26 Younger v. Harris, 401 U.S. 37, 91 S. Ct. 746, 27
27 L.Ed.2d 669 (1971), and Rooker-Feldman (District of
Columbia Court of Appeals v. Feldman, 460 U.S. 462, 486
(1983); Rooker v. Fidelity Trust Co., 263 U.S. 413,
415-416 (1923)) abstention doctrines. Pursuant to
Yellow Freight System, Inc. v. Donnelly, 494 U.S. 820,
110 S. Ct. 1566, 108 L. Ed. 2d 834 (1990), the federal
and state courts have concurrent jurisdiction over
employment discrimination claims under Title 7 of the
Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C.S. 2000e et seq.).
The State of California has an important local interest
in regulating the practice of California nurses to
assure their continued competence and to protect the
public's safety, health and welfare. The Board has the
power to investigate and determine whether their
nursing licenses should be suspended, revoked or
otherwise disciplined, based upon justified
circumstances and good cause. Under the Younger
abstention doctrine, the federal court should abstain
from issuing injunctive relief which would interfere
with the ongoing, quasi-judicial state administrative
case, and the administrative tribunal has concurrent

1 authority to decide issues concerning plaintiff's
2 competency as a nurse and his registered nursing
3 license. Rooker-Feldman is also invoked here, where
4 plaintiff is requesting that the federal court
interfere with the ongoing state administrative case,
in which ALJ Humberto Flores has already heard
testimony and taken his ruling under submission, for a
decision within 30 days of the administrative hearing.
5

6 (Doc. 22 at 1:28-2:26.)

7 The motion was also denied on grounds that Plaintiff failed to
8 satisfy the four-part test for injunctive relief of *Winter v. NRDC, Inc.*, 129 S. Ct. 365 (2008). (Id. at 2:27-3:17.)

9 On April 30, 2010, Defendant State of California moved to
10 dismiss Plaintiff's complaint on three grounds: (1) the State has
11 not waived its sovereign immunity under the Eleventh Amendment;
12 (2) Plaintiff did not exhaust his administrative remedies under
13 Title VII; and (3) Plaintiff's complaint lacks sufficient factual
14 content to survive a Rule 12(b) challenge.³

15 Plaintiff opposed the motion on June 28, 2010. (Doc. 23.)
16

17
18 III. LEGAL STANDARD.

19 Under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), a motion to
20

21 ³ In connection with its motion to dismiss, Defendant State of
22 California submitted a request for judicial notice pursuant to Fed.
23 R. Evid. § 201. Federal Rule of Evidence 201(b) provides the
24 criteria for judicially noticed facts: "A judicially noticed fact
must be one not subject to reasonable dispute in that it is either
25 (1) generally known within the territorial jurisdiction of the
trial court or (2) capable of accurate and ready determination by
resort to sources whose accuracy cannot reasonably be questioned."
26 The documents are properly considered as they comprise a complete
27 set of administrative documents from the EEOC and DFEH, which form
28 the basis for Plaintiff's allegations and their filing and
existence are not subject to dispute, although their contents are
disputed. The request is GRANTED.

1 dismiss can be made and granted when the complaint fails "to state
2 a claim upon which relief can be granted." Dismissal under Rule
3 12(b) (6) is appropriate where the complaint lacks a cognizable
4 legal theory or sufficient facts to support a cognizable legal
5 theory. *Balistreri v. Pacifica Police Dep't*, 901 F.2d 696, 699
6 (9th Cir. 1990).

7 To sufficiently state a claim to relief and survive a 12(b) (6)
8 motion, a complaint "does not need detailed factual allegations"
9 but the "[f]actual allegations must be enough to raise a right to
10 relief above the speculative level." *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*,
11 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007). Mere "labels and conclusions" or a
12 "formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not
13 do." *Id.* Rather, there must be "enough facts to state a claim to
14 relief that is plausible on its face." *Id.* at 570. "To survive
15 a motion to dismiss, a complaint must contain sufficient factual
16 matter, accepted as true, to state a claim to relief that is
17 plausible on its face." *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, --- U.S. ----, 129
18 S.Ct. 1937, 1949 (2009) (internal quotation marks omitted). "The
19 plausibility standard is not akin to a probability requirement, but
20 it asks for more than a sheer possibility that a defendant has
21 acted unlawfully. Where a complaint pleads facts that are merely
22 consistent with a defendant's liability, it stops short of the line
23 between possibility and plausibility of entitlement to relief."
24 *Id.* (internal citation and quotation marks omitted).

25 In deciding whether to grant a motion to dismiss, the court
26 must accept as true all "well-pleaded factual allegations." *Iqbal*,
27 129 S.Ct. at 1950. A court is not, however, "required to accept as
28 true allegations that are merely conclusory, unwarranted deductions

1 of fact, or unreasonable inferences." *Sprewell v. Golden State*
2 *Warriors*, 266 F.3d 979, 988 (9th Cir. 2001); see, e.g., *Doe I v.*
3 *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, --- F.3d ----, 2009 WL 1978730, at *3 (9th
4 Cir. July 10, 2009) ("Plaintiffs' general statement that Wal-Mart
5 exercised control over their day-to-day employment is a conclusion,
6 not a factual allegation stated with any specificity. We need not
7 accept Plaintiffs' unwarranted conclusion in reviewing a motion to
8 dismiss.").

9 The Ninth Circuit has summarized the governing standard, in
10 light of *Twombly* and *Iqbal*, as follows: "In sum, for a complaint to
11 survive a motion to dismiss, the non-conclusory factual content,
12 and reasonable inferences from that content, must be plausibly
13 suggestive of a claim entitling the plaintiff to relief." *Moss v.*
14 *U.S. Secret Service*, 572 F.3d 962 (9th Cir. 2009) (internal
15 quotation marks omitted).

16

17 IV. DISCUSSION

18

19 A. Preliminary Matters

20 As a preliminary matter, Defendant correctly notes that
21 Plaintiff does not provide a constitutional, statutory, or legal
22 basis for his claims. Although the "common allegations" portion of
23 the complaint refers to the "EEOC" and "FEHA" generally, there is
24 no further development or delineation of the foundation for each
25 claim, i.e., the legal basis for each cause of action.⁴ As a

26

27 ⁴ The lack of clarity applies with equal force to Plaintiff's
28 state law claims, i.e., whether they are "common law" or
"statutory" causes of action.

1 further example, Plaintiff's first claim for retaliation is five
2 paragraphs of "retaliation" facts. Absent from the heading and/or
3 body of the retaliation claim is any indication as to whether the
4 claim is advanced pursuant to Title VII, the FEHA, or some other
5 statutory/common law theory. Here, the complaint is severely
6 underdeveloped and does not enumerate a legal basis for each cause
7 of action.

8

9 B. Defendant's Rule 12(b) Motion

10 Defendant State of California now moves, pursuant to Rule
11 12(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, to dismiss the
12 following claims: (1) retaliation; (2) disability discrimination;
13 (3) intentional infliction of emotional distress; (4) defamation;
14 and (5) injunction.

15

16 1. Retaliation Claim

17 Plaintiff's first cause of action alleges retaliation against
18 the State of California, the California Department of Corrections,
19 and the NKSP. Defendant State of California moves to dismiss Mr.
20 Nehara's retaliation claim on grounds that it is barred under the
21 Eleventh Amendment.

22 The Eleventh Amendment bars suit against a state unless
23 Congress has abrogated state sovereign immunity or the state has
24 waived it. *Holley v. California Dep't of Corrections*, 599 F.3d
25 1108, 1111 (9th Cir. 2010). In *Seminole Tribe of Florida v.*
26 *Florida*, 517 U.S. 44 (1996), the Supreme Court stated: "[E]ach
27 State is a sovereign entity in our federal system; and [...] it is
28 inherent in the nature of sovereignty not to be amenable to the

1 suit of an individual without its consent." *Id.* at 54.

2 There are, however, two "well-established" exceptions to the
3 Eleventh Amendment bar: legislative abrogation of immunity by
4 express congressional intent under its Fourteenth Amendment powers,
5 and waiver of immunity by a state itself. *Atascadero State Hosp.*
6 *v. Scanlon*, 473 U.S. 234, 238 (1985). Here, with respect to his
7 retaliation claim, Defendant invokes the first *Atascadero*
8 exception: "Given that Plaintiff's suit is based on 42 U.S.C.
9 2000e-3 of Title VII, Plaintiff properly sued Defendant State of
10 California in this Court." Plaintiff is correct. By enacting
11 Title VII under its Fourteenth Amendment powers, Congress abrogated
12 the sovereign immunity of states to suits under Title VII. See,
13 e.g., *Fitzpatrick v. Bitzer*, 427 U.S. 445, 456 (1976). The
14 Eleventh Amendment does not bar Nehara's claim under Title VII.

15 Defendant nonetheless argues that Nehara's Title VII claim is
16 foreclosed because he failed to exhaust his administrative
17 remedies. Defendant explains:

18 Before bringing suit under Title VI[,] [Nehara] is
19 required to exhaust his administrative remedies by
20 filing a charge of discrimination with the EEOC or
21 appropriate state agency, receiving a "right to sue"
22 letter, and initiating a timely civil suit. Failure to
23 observe these requirements renders a suit subject to
24 dismissal. Here, plaintiff pled that he filed a charge
25 with the EEOC and received a right-to-sue, but did not
26 attach a copy of his right to sue letter from the EEOC
27 demonstrating the requisite exhaustion.

28 (Doc. 24 at 3:7-3:15.)

29 In his opposition brief, Nehara submits that he incorrectly
30 attached the DFEH "right-to-sue" letter to the complaint, i.e., he
31 attached the DFEH sue letter in place of the EEOC sue letter. He
32 requests that if the motion is granted, it be granted with leave to

1 amend so that he can attach the correct "right-to-sue" letter to
2 his pleading.

3 Here, as discussed in § IV(A), *supra*, Plaintiff does not
4 identify the basis for his retaliation claim, but his opposition
5 makes clear that his retaliation claim is based on the Title VII
6 framework, not the California FEHA. Accordingly, his Title VII
7 retaliation claim survives an Eleventh Amendment challenge. To the
8 extent Plaintiff advances a FEHA-based retaliation claim, it is
9 barred by the doctrine of sovereign immunity. See *Freeman v.*
10 *Oakland Unified School Dist.*, 179 F.3d 846, 847 (9th Cir. 1999)
11 ("California has not waived its immunity to FEHA actions in federal
12 court.") (citation omitted).

13 Plaintiff, however, fails to attach his EEOC "right-to-sue"
14 letter, which is a prerequisite to filing a suit under Title VII.
15 As such, his retaliation claim is DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE. Any
16 amended complaint shall be filed by August 15, 2010 and conform
17 with Rules 8 and 11 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

18

19 2. Disability Discrimination Claim

20 Plaintiff's disability discrimination claim is flawed for the
21 same reasons as his retaliation claim. Plaintiff does not identify
22 the legal basis for his disability discrimination cause of action.
23 It is entirely unclear if his disability discrimination claim
24 originates from the FEHA, the ADA, or some other statute/common law
25 authority.

26 Defendant argues that whether Plaintiff's disability claim is
27 advanced under the FEHA or the ADA, the result is the same: the
28 claim is barred under the Eleventh Amendment. Plaintiff's four-

1 page opposition does not respond to Defendant's sovereign immunity
2 arguments.

3 The analysis begins with the general rule that a State is
4 shielded from suit in federal court unless it waives its sovereign
5 immunity or Congress has validly abrogated state sovereign immunity
6 in the applicable statute. See *Kentucky v. Graham*, 473 U.S. 159,
7 167 n. 14 (1985). Here, Plaintiff's complaint and opposition are
8 silent as to whether either exception applies. Assuming, *arguendo*,
9 that Plaintiff advances his claims under the FEHA or ADA, his claim
10 is inconsistent with well-established Supreme Court and Ninth
11 Circuit precedent. First, in *Freeman v. Oakland Unified Sch.*
12 *Dist.*, 179 F.3d at 847, the Ninth Circuit held that the Eleventh
13 Amendment bars suits against the State of California for FEHA
14 claims made in federal court. See also *Grosz v. Lassen Community*
15 *College Dist.*, 360 F. App'x 795, 799 (9th Cir. 2009) (applying
16 *Freeman* to affirm district court's dismissal of FEHA claims). To
17 the extent Plaintiff advances a FEHA-based disability
18 discrimination claim, it is barred under *Freeman*.

19 The same analysis applies to a claim advanced under the ADA.
20 In *Board of Trustees of the Univ. of Ala. v. Garrett*, 531 U.S. 356
21 (2001), the Supreme Court held that Congress did not have the power
22 to abrogate the States' Eleventh Amendment immunity under Title I
23 of the ADA. To the extent Plaintiff advances a disability
24 discrimination claim under Title I of the ADA, it is foreclosed
25 under *Garrett*. Further, as Plaintiff advances employment-based
26 discrimination claims, any claim under Title II of the ADA is
27 barred pursuant to *Zimmerman v. Oregon Dep't of Justice*, 170 F.3d
28 1169 (9th Cir. 1999). See *id.* at 1173 (holding that Title II of

1 the ADA does not apply to claims of employment discrimination).

2 The motion is GRANTED and the Plaintiff's disability
3 discrimination claim is DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE.

4

5 **3. State Law Claims - IIED/Defamation**

6 Defendant advances three arguments to support dismissal of
7 Plaintiff's state law claims for IIED and defamation: (1) they are
8 barred by the doctrine of sovereign immunity; (2) Plaintiff failed
9 to exhaust his administrative remedies; and (3) the IIED claim is
10 barred by the exclusive remedy provision of state workers'
11 compensation law.

12 Plaintiff provides a limited response: Government Code §
13 815.2(a) provides liability since that statute makes a government
14 entity liable for the torts committed by employees who act within
15 the scope of employment. Plaintiff's argument is headed:
16 "Plaintiff Stated A Claim For Relief for His Common Law Claims."

17 At the outset, it is important to note that Plaintiff has not
18 identified an abrogation or an express waiver of immunity to suit
19 in federal court, as required by *Atascadero State Hosp. v. Scanlon*,
20 473 U.S. 234, 238 (1985). Rather, Plaintiff responds that §
21 815.2(a), a subsection of the California Tort Claims Act,
22 constitutes a waiver of sovereign immunity as to *common law claims*.
23 Plaintiff's argument is misplaced. There is no common law tort
24 liability for public entities in California; instead, such
25 liability must be based on statute.⁵ Cal. Gov. Code § 815(a);

27 ⁵ See also *Miklosy v. Regents of Univ. of Cal.*, 44 Cal.4th
28 876, 899 (2008) ("section 815 abolishes common law tort liability
for public entities").

1 *Michael J. v. Los Angeles County Dept. of Adoptions*, 201 Cal. App.
2 3d 859, 866 (1988) ("Under the Act, governmental tort liability
3 must be based on statute; all common law or judicially declared
4 forms of tort liability, except as may be required by state or
5 federal Constitution, were abolished."). It is unclear how a
6 statute allowing vicarious tort liability - in defined
7 circumstances - amounts to a waiver of sovereign immunity for
8 common law claims. Plaintiff does not provide a single case
9 citation where § 815.2(a) was analyzed and applied to waive the
10 State's immunity from suit in federal court.⁶

11 Even assuming that Plaintiff's claims have the proper
12 statutory support, he fails to plead and show proof of compliance
13 with the California Tort Claims Act, which requires that a tort
14 claim against a public entity or its employees be presented to the
15 California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board no more
16 than six months after the cause of action accrues. See Cal. Gov't
17 Code §§ 905.2, 910, 911.2, 945.4, 950-950.2. Presentation of a
18 written claim, and action on or rejection of the claim are
19 conditions precedent to suit. *State v. Superior Court of Kings*
20 *County (Bodde)*, 32 Cal.4th 1234, 1245 (2004); *Mangold v.*
21 *California Pub. Utils. Comm'n*, 67 F.3d 1470, 1477 (9th Cir. 1995).
22 Where compliance with the Claims Act is required, the plaintiff has
23 the burden of pleading and proving compliance with the California
24 Government Claims Act. *Id.* In sum, the filing of a timely claim
25 is an essential element of a cause of action against a public

27 ⁶ Waiver of sovereign immunity is strictly construed in favor
28 of the sovereign and not enlarged beyond what the language
requires.

1 entity or employee and must be properly alleged in the complaint.

2 Here, Plaintiff's complaint contains no allegation of
3 compliance with the California Tort Claims Act.

4 Plaintiff's state law claims for IIED and defamation are
5 DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE. There is no common law tort liability
6 for public entities in California and Plaintiff has failed to
7 exhausted his administrative remedies as he did not plead or prove
8 his compliance with the Government Claims Act. The motion is
9 GRANTED without leave to amend.

10

11 4. "Injunction" Claim

12 Plaintiff's fifth cause of action seeks injunctive relief
13 against Defendant, purportedly to stop the Department of Consumer
14 Affairs from conducting disciplinary hearings. (Compl. ¶¶ 64-69.)
15 However, on March 18, 2010, Plaintiff filed an identical motion for
16 temporary injunctive relief. On May 11, 2010, the motion was
17 denied on grounds that he did not exhausted his administrative
18 remedies in state court. The motion was also denied based on
19 Younger abstention and Plaintiff's failure to satisfy the four-part
20 test of *Winter v. NRDC, Inc.*, 129 S. Ct. 365 (2008). The
21 complaint's "injunctive" claim is MOOT.

22 A request for injunctive relief by itself does not state a
23 cause of action. *Shamsian v. Atl. Richfield Co.*, 107 Cal. App. 4th
24 967, 984-85 (2003). Even if this request is construed as
25 derivative of all other alleged causes of action, Plaintiff still
26 bears the burden of showing that he is likely to succeed on the
27 merits, that he is likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence
28 of preliminary relief, that the balance of equities tip in his

1 favor, and that an injunction is in the public interest. *Winter v.*
2 *Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.*, --- U.S. ----, ----, 129
3 S.Ct. 365, 374 (2008).

4 Because a request for injunctive relief by itself does not
5 state a cause of action, the claim is dismissed for failure to
6 state a claim upon which relief may be granted as no underlying
7 basis for injunctive relief exists. Plaintiff also has not pled
8 facts that satisfy the *Winters* factors.⁷ Plaintiff's cause of
9 action for injunctive relief is DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE.

10

11 C. Motion to Strike Punitive Damages

12 The complaint, in its concluding prayer for relief, seeks "at
13 least \$5,000,000 in punitive damages." Defendant moves to strike
14 the punitive damages claims on grounds that punitive damages are
15 not available against the State.

16 Rule 12(f) empowers a court to strike from a pleading "any
17 redundant, immaterial, impertinent, or scandalous matter." Motions
18 to strike may be granted if "it is clear that the matter to be
19 stricken could have no possible bearing on the subject matter of
20 the litigation." *LeDuc v. Kentucky Central Life Ins. Co.*, 814
21 F.Supp. 820, 830 (N.D. Cal. 1992); *Colaprico v. Sun Microsystems,*
22 *Inc.*, 758 F. Supp. 1335, 1339 (N.D. Cal. 1991). "[T]he function of

23

24 ⁷ As explained in the May 11, 2010 Memorandum Decision,
25 Plaintiff's claim for injunctive relief does not satisfy the first
26 *Winters* factor - likelihood of success on the merits. This ends
27 the inquiry under *Winters*. See *Doe v. Reed*, 586 F.3d 671, 681 n.14
28 (9th Cir. 2009) ("Because we conclude that Plaintiffs have failed
to satisfy the first *Winter* factor - likelihood of success on the
merits - we need not examine the three remaining *Winter* factors.").

a [F.R.Civ.P.] 12(f) motion to strike is to avoid the expenditure of time and money that must arise from litigating spurious issues by dispensing with those issues prior to trial." *Sidney-Vinstein v. A.H. Robins Co.*, 697 F.2d 880, 885 (9th Cir. 1983). "[A] motion to strike maybe used to strike any part of the prayer for relief when the damages sought are not recoverable as a matter of law." *Bureerong v. Uvawas*, 922 F. Supp. 1450, 1479, n. 34 (C.D.Cal. 1996).

Defendant's motion to strike is GRANTED. As all parties agree, § 818 bars any award of punitive damages against a public entity.⁸ See Cal. Govt. Code § 818 (public entity not liable for punitive damages); *Westlands Water Dist. v. Amoco Chem. Co.*, 953 F.2d 1109, 1113 (9th Cir. 1991).

Plaintiff concedes he cannot recover punitive damages against an entity, but states that his concession extends "only as [...] to the State of California." (Doc. 23 at 3:23-3:24.) To the extent Plaintiff seeks punitive damages against individual defendants, such parties must be served and brought into the lawsuit. As of July 9, 2010, it is unclear what state agencies and employees are "active members" to this litigation, i.e., have been served with a summons and complaint.

V. CONCLUSION.

For the reasons stated:

⁸ California Government Code § 818 provides: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a public entity is not liable for damages awarded under Section 3294 of the Civil Code or other damages imposed primarily for the sake of example and by way of punishing the defendant."

(1) Plaintiff's retaliation claim is DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE;

(2) Plaintiff's disability discrimination claim is DISMISSED
WITH PREJUDICE;

(3) Plaintiff's state law claims for IIED and defamation are DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE;

(4) Plaintiff's fifth cause of action for injunctive relief is DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE; and

(5) As to Defendant State of California, Defendant's motion to strike the punitive damages request is GRANTED.

Defendant State of California shall submit a form of order consistent with, and within five (5) days following electronic service of, this memorandum decision.

Any amended complaint shall be filed within fifteen ("15") days following date of electric service of this decision.

IT IS SO ORDERED.