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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
**EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

MELISSA NEYLON, et al.,	)	1: 16-CV-00712-AWI - JLT
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	SCHEDULING ORDER <sup>1</sup> (Fed. R. Civ. P. 16)
	)	
v.	)	Pleading Amendment Deadline: 3/13/2017
	)	
COUNTY OF INYO, et al.,	)	Discovery Deadlines:
	)	Non-Expert: 12/29/2017
Defendants.	)	Expert: 3/9/2018
	)	Mid-Discovery Status Conference:
	)	6/26/2017 at 9:00 a.m.
	)	
	)	Non-Dispositive Motion Deadlines:
	)	Filing: 3/19/2018
	)	Hearing: 4/16/2018
	)	
	)	Dispositive Motion Deadlines:
	)	Filing: 4/30/2018
	)	Hearing: 6/11/2018
	)	
	)	Settlement Conference:
	)	3/19/2018, 9:00 a.m.
	)	510 19th Street, Bakersfield, CA
	)	
	)	Pre-Trial Conference:
	)	8/1/2018 at 10:00 a.m.
	)	Courtroom 2
	)	
	)	Trial: 10/2/2018 at 8:30 a.m.
	)	Courtroom 2
	)	Jury trial: 5 days

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<sup>1</sup> The Court finds the matter suitable for decision without a hearing. Thus, the scheduling conference is **VACATED**.

1 **I. Information Concerning the Court's Schedule**

2 Out of fairness, the Court believes it is necessary to forewarn litigants that the Fresno Division  
3 of the Eastern District of California now has the heaviest District Court Judge caseload in the entire  
4 nation. While the Court will use its best efforts to resolve this case and all other civil cases in a timely  
5 manner, the parties are admonished that not all of the parties' needs and expectations may be met as  
6 expeditiously as desired. As multiple trials are now being set to begin upon the same date, parties may  
7 find their case trailing with little notice before the trial begins. The law requires that the Court give any  
8 criminal trial priority over civil trials or any other matter. The Court must proceed with a criminal trial  
9 even if a civil trial was filed earlier and set for trial first. Continuances of any civil trial under these  
10 circumstances will no longer be entertained, absent a specific and stated finding of good cause. All  
11 parties should be informed that any civil trial set to begin during the time a criminal trial is proceeding  
12 will trail the completion of the criminal trial.

13 The parties are reminded of the availability of a United States Magistrate Judge to conduct all  
14 proceedings in this action. A United States Magistrate Judge is available to conduct trials, including  
15 entry of final judgment, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 73, and Local  
16 Rule 305. The same jury pool is used by both United States Magistrate Judges and United States  
17 District Court Judges. Any appeal from a judgment entered by a Magistrate Judge is taken directly to  
18 the United States Court of Appeal for the Ninth Circuit. However, the parties are hereby informed that  
19 no substantive rulings or decisions will be affected by whether a party chooses to consent.

20 Finally, the Fresno Division of the Eastern District of California, whenever possible, is utilizing  
21 United States Article III District Court Judges from throughout the nation as Visiting Judges. Pursuant  
22 to the Local Rules, Appendix A, reassignments will be random, and the parties will receive no advance  
23 notice before their case is reassigned to an Article III District Court Judge from outside of the Eastern  
24 District of California.

25 Therefore, the parties are directed to consider consenting to Magistrate Judge jurisdiction to  
26 conduct all further proceedings, including trial. **Within 10 days** of the date of this order, counsel  
27 **SHALL** file a consent/decline form (provided by the Court at the inception of this case) indicating  
28 whether they will consent to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Judge.

1 **II. Pleading Amendment Deadline**

2 Any requested pleading amendments are ordered to be filed, either through a stipulation or  
3 motion to amend, no later than **March 13, 2017**.

4 **III. Discovery Plan and Cut-Off Date**

5 The parties have exchange the initial disclosures required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1).

6 The parties are ordered to complete all discovery pertaining to non-experts on or before  
7 **December 29, 2017**, and all discovery pertaining to experts on or before **March 9, 2018**.

8 The parties are directed to disclose all expert witnesses<sup>2</sup>, in writing, on or before **January 12,**  
9 **2018**, and to disclose all rebuttal experts on or before **February 9, 2018**. The written designation of  
10 retained and non-retained experts shall **be made pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. Rule 26(a)(2), (A), (B),**  
11 **and (C) and shall include all information required thereunder**. Failure to designate experts in  
12 compliance with this order may result in the Court excluding the testimony or other evidence offered  
13 through such experts that are not disclosed pursuant to this order.

14 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(4) and (5) shall apply to all discovery relating to experts  
15 and their opinions. Experts must be fully prepared to be examined on all subjects and opinions  
16 included in the designation. Failure to comply will result in the imposition of sanctions, which may  
17 include striking the expert designation and preclusion of expert testimony.

18 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(e) regarding a party's duty to timely supplement  
19 disclosures and responses to discovery requests will be strictly enforced.

20 A mid-discovery status conference is scheduled for **June 26, 2017** at 9:00 a.m. before the  
21 Honorable Jennifer L. Thurston, U.S. Magistrate Judge, located at 510 19th Street, Bakersfield,  
22 California. Counsel SHALL file a joint mid-discovery status conference report one week before the  
23 conference. Counsel also SHALL lodge the status report via e-mail to JLTorders@caed.uscourts.gov.  
24 The joint statement SHALL outline the discovery counsel have completed and that which needs to be  
25 completed as well as any impediments to completing the discovery within the deadlines set forth in this  
26 order. Counsel may appear via CourtCall, providing a written notice of the intent to appear

27 \_\_\_\_\_  
28 <sup>2</sup> In the event an expert will offer opinions related to an independent medical or mental health evaluation, the  
examination SHALL occur sufficiently in advance of the disclosure deadline so the expert's report fully details the expert's  
opinions in this regard.

1 telephonically is provided to the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom Deputy Clerk no later than five court  
2 days before the noticed hearing date.

3 **IV. Pre-Trial Motion Schedule**

4 All non-dispositive pre-trial motions, including any discovery motions, shall be filed no later  
5 than **March 19, 2018**, and heard on or before **April 16, 2018**. Non-dispositive motions are heard at  
6 9:00 a.m., before the Honorable Jennifer L. Thurston, United States Magistrate Judge, at the United  
7 States District Courthouse located at 510 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Bakersfield, California.

8 No written discovery motions shall be filed without the prior approval of the assigned  
9 Magistrate Judge. A party with a discovery dispute must first confer with the opposing party in a good  
10 faith effort to resolve by agreement the issues in dispute. If that good faith effort is unsuccessful, the  
11 moving party promptly shall seek a telephonic hearing with all involved parties and the Magistrate  
12 Judge. It shall be the obligation of the moving party to arrange and originate the conference call to the  
13 court. To schedule this telephonic hearing, the parties are ordered to contact Courtroom Deputy Clerk,  
14 Susan Hall at (661) 326-6620 or via email at SHall@caed.uscourts.gov. **Counsel must comply with**  
15 **Local Rule 251 with respect to discovery disputes or the motion will be denied without prejudice**  
16 **and dropped from calendar.**

17 In scheduling such motions, the Magistrate Judge may grant applications for an order shortening  
18 time pursuant to Local Rule 144(e). However, if counsel does not obtain an order shortening time, the  
19 notice of motion *must* comply with Local Rule 251.

20 Counsel may appear and argue non-dispositive motions via CourtCall, providing a written  
21 request to so appear is made to the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom Clerk no later than five court days  
22 before the noticed hearing date.

23 All dispositive pre-trial motions shall be filed no later than **April 30, 2018**, and heard no later  
24 than **June 11, 2018**, in Courtroom 2 at 8:30 a.m. before the Honorable Anthony W. Ishii, United States  
25 District Court Judge. In scheduling such motions, **counsel shall comply with Fed. R. Civ. P. 56 and**  
26 **Local Rules 230 and 260.**

27 **V. Motions for Summary Judgment or Summary Adjudication**

28 **At least 21 days before** filing a motion for summary judgment or motion for summary

1 adjudication, the parties are **ORDERED** to meet, in person or by telephone, to confer about the issues to  
2 be raised in the motion.

3 The purpose of the meeting shall be to: 1) avoid filing motions for summary judgment where a  
4 question of fact exists; 2) determine whether the respondent agrees that the motion has merit in whole or  
5 in part; 3) discuss whether issues can be resolved without the necessity of briefing; 4) narrow the issues  
6 for review by the court; 5) explore the possibility of settlement before the parties incur the expense of  
7 briefing a motion; and 6) to develop a joint statement of undisputed facts.

8 The moving party **SHALL** initiate the meeting and **SHALL** provide a complete, proposed  
9 statement of undisputed facts **at least five days before** the conference. The finalized joint statement of  
10 undisputed facts **SHALL** include all facts that the parties agree, for purposes of the motion, may be  
11 deemed true. In addition to the requirements of Local Rule 260, the moving party shall file the joint  
12 statement of undisputed facts.

13 In the notice of motion the moving party **SHALL** certify that the parties have met and conferred  
14 as ordered above, or set forth a statement of good cause for the failure to meet and confer. **Failure to**  
15 **comply may result in the motion being stricken.**

16 **VI. Pre-Trial Conference Date**

17 **August 1, 2018**, at 10:00 a.m. in Courtroom 2 before Judge Ishii.

18 The parties are ordered to file a **Joint Pretrial Statement pursuant to Local Rule 281(a)(2).**  
19 The parties are further directed to submit a digital copy of their pretrial statement in Word format,  
20 directly to Judge Ishii's chambers, by email at AWIOrders@caed.uscourts.gov.

21 Counsels' attention is directed to **Rules 281 and 282 of the Local Rules** of Practice for the  
22 Eastern District of California, as to the obligations of counsel in preparing for the pre-trial conference.  
23 The Court will insist upon strict compliance with those rules. In addition to the matters set forth in the  
24 Local Rules the Joint Pretrial Statement shall include a Joint Statement of the case to be used by the  
25 Court to explain the nature of the case to the jury during voir dire.

26 **VII. Trial Date**

27 **October 2, 2018**, at 8:30 a.m. in Courtroom 2 before the Honorable Anthony W. Ishii, United  
28 States District Court Judge.

- 1           A.     This is a jury trial.
- 2           B.     Counsels' Estimate of Trial Time: 5 days.
- 3           C.     Counsels' attention is directed to Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of
- 4 California, Rule 285.

5 **VIII. Settlement Conference**

6           A Settlement Conference is scheduled for **March 19, 2018** at 1:30 p.m. located at 510 19<sup>th</sup>

7 Street, Bakersfield, California. Notwithstanding the requirements of Local Rule 270(b), the settlement

8 conference will be conducted by Magistrate Judge Thurston. **If any party prefers that the settlement**

9 **conference be conducted by a different judicial officer, that party is directed to notify the Court**

10 **no later than 60 days in advance of the scheduled settlement conference** to allow sufficient time for

11 another judicial officer to be assigned to handle the conference. The Court deems the deviation from

12 the Local Rule to be appropriate and in the interests of justice and sound case management.

13           Unless otherwise permitted in advance by the Court, **the attorneys who will try the case shall**

14 **appear** at the Settlement Conference **with the parties** and the person or persons having **full authority**

15 to negotiate and settle the case **on any terms**<sup>3</sup> at the conference. Consideration of settlement is a

16 serious matter that requires preparation prior to the settlement conference. Set forth below are the

17 procedures the Court will employ, absent good cause, in conducting the conference.

18           **At least twenty-one days before** the settlement conference, Plaintiff **SHALL** submit to

19 Defendant via fax or e-mail, a written itemization of damages and a meaningful<sup>4</sup> settlement demand

20 which includes a brief explanation of why such a settlement is appropriate. Thereafter, **no later than**

21 **fourteen days before** the settlement conference, Defendant **SHALL** respond, via fax or e-mail, with an

22 acceptance of the offer or with a meaningful counteroffer, which includes a brief explanation of why

23 such a settlement is appropriate.

24 \_\_\_\_\_

25 <sup>3</sup> Insurance carriers, business organizations, and governmental bodies or agencies whose settlement agreements are

26 subject to approval by legislative bodies, executive committees, boards of directors or the like shall be represented by a

27 person or persons who occupy high executive positions in the party organization and who will be directly involved in the

28 process of approval of any settlement offers or agreements. To the extent possible the representative shall have the

authority, if he or she deems it appropriate, to settle the action on terms consistent with the opposing party's most recent

demand.

<sup>4</sup> "Meaningful" means that the offer is reasonably calculated to settle the case on terms acceptable to the offering

party. "Meaningful" does not include an offer which the offering party knows will not be acceptable to the other party. If,

however, the offering party is only willing to offer a settlement which it knows the other party will not accept, this should

trigger a recognition the case is not in a settlement posture and the parties should confer about continuing or vacating the

settlement conference via stipulation.

1 If settlement is not achieved, each party SHALL attach copies of their settlement offers to their  
2 Confidential Settlement Conference Statement, as described below. Copies of these documents shall  
3 not be filed on the court docket.

4 **CONFIDENTIAL SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE STATEMENT**

5 **At least five court days before** the settlement conference, the parties shall submit, directly to  
6 Judge Thurston's chambers by e-mail to JLTOrders@caed.uscourts.gov, a Confidential Settlement  
7 Conference Statement. The statement **should not be filed** with the Clerk of the Court **nor served on**  
8 **any other party**, although the parties may file a Notice of Lodging of Settlement Conference  
9 Statement. Each statement shall be clearly marked "confidential" with the date and time of the  
10 Settlement Conference indicated prominently thereon.

11 The Confidential Settlement Conference Statement shall include the following:

- 12 A. A brief statement of the facts of the case.
- 13 B. A brief statement of the claims and defenses, i.e., statutory or other grounds upon which  
14 the claims are founded; a forthright evaluation of the parties' likelihood of prevailing on  
15 the claims and defenses; and a description of the major issues in dispute.
- 16 C. A summary of the proceedings to date.
- 17 D. An estimate of the cost and time to be expended for further discovery, pretrial and trial.
- 18 E. The relief sought.
- 19 F. The party's position on settlement, including present demands and offers and a history of  
20 past settlement discussions, offers and demands.

21 **IX. Requests for Bifurcation, Appointment of Special Master, or other**  
22 **Techniques to Shorten Trial**

23 Not applicable at this time.

24 **X. Related Matters Pending**

25 There are no pending related matters.

26 **XI. Compliance with Federal Procedure**

27 All counsel are expected to familiarize themselves with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure  
28 and the Local Rules of Practice of the Eastern District of California, and to keep abreast of any

1 amendments thereto. The Court must insist upon compliance with these Rules if it is to efficiently  
2 handle its increasing case load, and sanctions will be imposed for failure to follow the Rules as  
3 provided in both the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern  
4 District of California.

5 **XII. Effect of this Order**

6 The foregoing order represents the best estimate of the court and counsel as to the agenda most  
7 suitable to dispose of this case. The trial date reserved is specifically reserved for this case. If the  
8 parties determine at any time that the schedule outlined in this order cannot be met, counsel are ordered  
9 to notify the court immediately of that fact so that adjustments may be made, either by stipulation or by  
10 subsequent status conference.

11 **The dates set in this Order are considered to be firm and will not be modified absent a**  
12 **showing of good cause even if the request to modify is made by stipulation. Stipulations**  
13 **extending the deadlines contained herein will not be considered unless they are accompanied by**  
14 **affidavits or declarations, and where appropriate attached exhibits, which establish good cause**  
15 **for granting the relief requested.**

16 Failure to comply with this order may result in the imposition of sanctions.

17  
18 IT IS SO ORDERED.

19 Dated: December 16, 2016

/s/ Jennifer L. Thurston  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE