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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

JASON SCOTT HOUNIHAN,
Plaintiff,
v.
JOSE C. VILLASENOR,
Defendant(s).

Case No. 1:23-cv-00163-EPG (PC)
ORDER REGARDING EARLY
SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE

Jason Hounihan (“Plaintiff”) is a prisoner proceeding *pro se* and *in forma pauperis* in this civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The Court has screened Plaintiff’s complaint and allowed at least one claim to proceed past screening. At least one defendant has appeared.

The Court now directs the parties to participate in a settlement conference before a Magistrate Judge to see if the case can reach an early settlement. Neither side is waiving any claims, defenses, or objections by participating in this settlement conference.

Defense counsel is directed to consider Plaintiff’s claim(s) and to speak with Plaintiff

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1 following this order.¹ If, after investigating Plaintiff's claim(s) and speaking with Plaintiff,
2 defense counsel in good faith finds that a settlement conference would not be productive at this
3 time, defense counsel may opt out of this settlement conference by filing a notice with the
4 Court, in which case the matter will proceed without an early settlement conference.

5 If defense counsel opts out of the settlement conference, or if the case does not settle at
6 the conference, the case will proceed to litigation.²

7 If defense counsel does not opt out, the Court will issue separate order(s) setting the
8 settlement conference and detailing the pre-settlement conference procedures in due course.

9 Within fourteen days after the issuance of the order setting the settlement conference, in
10 order to better inform all parties and have a meaningful conference, the Court is requiring that
11 both parties disclose certain documents to each other about the case, as listed below. These
12 documents are relevant to the case and will most likely be disclosed in discovery shortly if this
13 case proceeds to litigation.³

14 Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

- 15 1. Within forty-five days from the date of service of this order, defense counsel
16 shall either: (1) file a notice stating that Defendant(s) opt out of the settlement
17 conference; or (2) contact ADR Coordinator Sujean Park
18 (spark@caed.uscourts.gov) to schedule the settlement conference. If defense
19 counsel does not opt out of the settlement conference, the Court will issue an
20 order setting a settlement conference. That order will include the date of the
21 conference and the Magistrate Judge who will oversee the conference, and may
22 also include procedures required by that Judge.⁴
- 23 2. If a settlement conference is set, no later than fourteen days after the date of
24 service of the order setting the settlement conference, each party shall send the

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26 ¹ The parties may confer by letter.

27 ² If the case proceeds to a settlement conference, the Court will not schedule the case until after the
settlement conference is held.

28 ³ If any party has a legal objection to providing a particular document, that party shall file and serve a
notice describing its objection.

⁴ The undersigned will not be the Magistrate Judge overseeing the settlement conference.

1 other parties, or their attorneys (if represented), the documents listed below.
2 The parties only need to provide documents related to the claim(s) that the Court
3 allowed to proceed past the screening stage. Additionally, defense counsel does
4 not need to include any documents that defense counsel believes are confidential
5 or subject to the official information privilege. Plaintiff does not need to request
6 any documents from the institution at this time. Plaintiff only needs to provide
7 these documents if Plaintiff already has them in his or her possession.

- 8 a. Documents regarding exhaustion of Plaintiff's claims, including
9 grievances and responses from the Institution;
- 10 b. All non-confidential documents regarding Rules Violation Reports, if
11 any exist, associated with the incident(s) alleged in the complaint,
12 including disciplinary charges and findings;
- 13 c. All of Plaintiff's medical records related to the incident and/or condition
14 at issue in the case, if any exist;
- 15 d. Chronos for transfer or Administrative Segregation placement related to
16 the incident(s) alleged in the complaint, if any exist; and
- 17 e. Non-confidential incident reports regarding the use of force incident(s)
18 alleged in the complaint, if any exist;

19 Additionally, the parties may send any other documents related to the case that
20 the parties believe will assist in the settlement conference. However, the parties
21 may not request any other documents until discovery has been opened.

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3. The parties are reminded to keep the Court informed of their current address.
Any change of address must be reported promptly to the Court in a separate
document captioned for this case and entitled "Notice of Change of Address."
See L.R. 182(f).

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 19, 2023

/s/ Eric P. Groj
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE