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TO ALL PARTIES AND TO THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT on May 29, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard, in Department O of the above-entitled court located at 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, California 90401, Defendant Michael Pierattini will and hereby does move for an order to vacate/strike Plaintiff's Request for Dismissal Without Prejudice.

This Motion to vacate/strike is made on the grounds that Plaintiff willfully disobeyed multiple orders of the Court, and further misused and abused the discovery process. On the eve of Defendant's Motion for Terminating Sanctions, Plaintiff filed a Request for Dismissal Without Prejudice in violation of California law. The law is without dispute that a Plaintiff loses the right to dismiss a case without prejudice in the face of a Motion for Terminating Sanctions or on the eve of a Motion for Summary Judgment. Plaintiff has threatened to continue filing meritless lawsuits against Mr. Pierattini and this conduct has to stop. Therefore, Mr. Pierattini respectfully requests that the Court vacate/strike Plaintiff's dismissal without prejudice and enter a dismissal of Plaintiff's case with prejudice to end this relentless frivolous litigation by Plaintiff against Mr. Pierattini.

This Motion will be based upon this Notice, the accompanying Memorandum of Points and Authorities, the Separate Statement, the attached Declaration of R. Paul Katrinak in support thereof, the Court's file in this action, and such other matters as may be presented prior to or at the hearing of the motion.

DATED: May 1, 2025

THE LAW OFFICES OF R. PAUL KATRINAK

Attorneys for Defendant

Michael Pierattini

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

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The law regarding a plaintiff's right to dismiss an action "without" prejudice has changed substantially in the last twenty plus years. While former law held that plaintiffs had the "absolute right" to dismiss "without prejudice" at any time before "commencement of trial," this is no longer the case. A line of recent appellate cases provides that the Court will not allow plaintiff to dismiss "without prejudice" where to do so would thwart the Court's prior orders, where such dismissal would allow plaintiff to not only engage in but escape any consequence of deliberate discovery abuse, and where such dismissal would produce an inequity – namely plaintiff's ability to refile an action which plaintiff could not support, which would permit plaintiff to engage in forum shopping and recreational litigation such as in the case at hand. Plaintiff willfully violated the Court's prior Orders compelling the production of additional discovery, and further engaged in deliberate obstruction of discovery.

On April 15, 2025, Plaintiff filed multiple documents that are improper. Plaintiff seeks to dismiss moving party without prejudice. Plaintiff also seeks to go pro per.

On April 17, 2025, the clerk purportedly entered the dismissal. We seek to correct the dismissal to make it a dismissal WITH prejudice. By way of this Motion, Defendant Michael Pierattini ("Mr. Pierattini") respectfully requests that the dismissal filed by Plaintiff be vacated/stricken, or that it be vacated/stricken as to Mr. Pierattini who has two dispositive motions pending.

The attempt at a voluntary dismissal here without prejudice has to be some type of record in terms of gamesmanship. After over a year in refusing to respond to discovery, Plaintiff seeks to dismiss the one remaining cause of action without prejudice one week before the hearing on the continued hearing on the Motion for Terminating Sanctions. The hearing was continued to give Plaintiff the opportunity to file and serve the declaration referenced in his opposition to the Motion for Terminating Sanctions. (See Katrinak Declaration). Instead of filing and serving the declaration, Plaintiff decided to yet again employ gamesmanship to avoid the consequences of his contempt of the Court's Orders. The law below holds that this type of

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tactical ploy is not permitted. As noted in the procedural history section, Plaintiff fragrantly violated court orders requiring him to respond to discovery.

Ultimately, Plaintiff produced no evidence in opposition to the Motion for Summary Judgment or adjudication, and summary adjudication was granted on all but one cause of action. That remaining cause of action for violation of California Civic Code Section 3344 and California common law Right of Publicity is facing its own Motion for Summary Judgment to be heard on May 29, 2025. Plaintiff knows he has no evidence to avoid this Motion and instead is attempting to dismiss his case without prejudice in the face of the Motion for Summary Judgment and this Motion for Terminating Sanctions.

It is not our position, but Plaintiff's own admission that this is a tactical ploy. If the Court reviews Plaintiff's Opposition to this Motion for Terminating Sanctions, Plaintiff explained that he would just file another lawsuit to endlessly harass Mr. Pierattini. In the Response to the Requests for Admission attached to his Opposition to the Motion for Terminating Sanctions, Plaintiff states:

"The truth will come out. I will not stop suing Michael Pertini, or going after him through legal process until the truth comes out. I may not be given due process right now, I may not have been given the proper consideration, however, I will eventually one day. I'm going to file another lawsuit against him after this one. I will never stop."

(Opposition to the Motion for Terminating Sanctions p. 35 of the document, Exhibit 3, Plaintiff's Supplemental Response to Request for Admission No. 26).

Only a dismissal <u>with</u> prejudice will stop this miscarriage of justice. If he files another frivolous lawsuit the only way to stop it is a dismissal of this matter WITH prejudice.

II. <u>FACTUAL HISTORY</u>

Plaintiff filed this lawsuit against Mr. Pierattini and several other defendants alleging eight causes of action. The FAC, which meanders and is difficult to follow, contains vague allegations against Mr. Pierattini that are few and far between. Although nearly none of the allegations in the FAC are directed at Mr. Pierattini, Plaintiff asserts all eight of his causes of action against him. Mr. Pierattini lives in the State of Washington and is far removed from the fanciful allegations in Plaintiff's FAC. Almost none of what Plaintiff alleges in his FAC has

any connection to Mr. Pierattini whatsoever. The only mentions of Mr. Pierattini in the FAC are as follows:

- 12. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on that basis alleges, that **Defendant Michael Pierattini ("Pierattini")** is an individual residing in the State of Washington, County of Pierce. Pierattini is an agent of Peter. Pierattini has hidden behind a false identity for many years, running a troll channel on YouTube named "Blue Bacon", where he harasses people, including Plaintiff, behind a false identity pretending to be a private investigator and military police officer.
- 20. The title of the article constitutes libel per se and statements in the video made by Peter and **Pierattini** constitute slander per se in that they use inaccurate documents acquired from BeenVerified (in violation of their Terms of Service, partly because of known accuracy issues), a consumer information service, presented as judicial record, to assert as factual that Plaintiff was convicted of a crime that he in fact did <u>not</u> commit. Such statements damaged Plaintiff as a natural consequence of the words, and amount to libel per se and slander per se.

56. **Pierattini** has been sending me harassing emails, forged to look like they're from a court, two to three times a day since at least November 2022.

(FAC, ¶¶ 12, 20, 56 [emphasis added].) These are the only alleged "facts" in Plaintiff's FAC as to claims against Mr. Pierattini. All of Plaintiff's speculation and conclusions arise from these "facts" which are non-actionable. None of these alleged "facts" meet the elements of the eight frivolous causes of action asserted in Plaintiff's FAC. Additionally, there is no evidence that Plaintiff suffered any damages concerning anything Mr. Pierattini allegedly did.

As the Court knows, Plaintiff has treated the discovery process with complete disdain, refusing to provide any evidence to support his frivolous claims against Mr. Pierattini. In an attempt to understand what exactly Plaintiff's claims against him actually are, Mr. Pierattini propounded standard discovery requests to Plaintiff. Rather than properly responding to Mr. Pierattini's discovery requests, Plaintiff chose to engage in gamesmanship and refused to provide any information or documents. Plaintiff has already been sanctioned for his conduct during discovery.

Aside from his outright refusal to engage in discovery, Plaintiff has made plain the true intentions behind this litigation, which is to make this case as expensive as possible for Mr. Pierattini by running up Mr. Pierattini's attorney's fees for entertainment purposes in connection with his YouTube channel, and to ruin Mr. Pierattini professionally. Plaintiff has bombarded Mr. Pierattini's counsel with emails regarding meritless motions and absurd stipulation requests, has

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filed frivolous motions with the Court, and has screamed at Mr. Pierattini's counsel and Judge Ford in court hearings. Plaintiff even refused to provide his address until ordered to do so by the Court.

Plaintiff's harassment of Mr. Pierattini, as well as his mockery of the Court and its proceedings, must come to an end. Plainly, Plaintiff has provided no evidence to support his outlandish claims against Mr. Pierattini and continues to refuse to engage in discovery. The fact is that there is no evidence for Plaintiff's claims, and Mr. Pierattini therefore respectfully requests that the Court vacate/strike Plaintiff's 11th hour attempt to dismiss Mr. Pierattini without prejudice and enter an order that Mr. Pierattini is dismissed WITH prejudice from this frivolous action to put an end to this waste of time, money, and court resources.

III. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

By the time of this hearing on this Motion, this discovery will be well over a year old and nothing, not one thing, has gotten done because it is one game after another by Plaintiff.

- 1. The complaint was filed by Plaintiff on February 6, 2023. Mr. Pierattini filed a demurrer on April 21, 2023; and then answered on July 31, 2023.
- 2. On January 25, 2024, Mr. Pierattini filed a motion to compel further responses to request for admission.
- 3. On January 25, 2024, Mr. Pierattini filed a motion to compel further responses to special interrogatories because there were essentially no answers.
- 4. On January 25, 2024, Mr. Pierattini filed a motion to compel further responses to form interrogatories because there were essentially no answers.
- 5. On January 25, 2024, Mr. Pierattini filed a motion to compel further responses to document requests because there was no real response and no document production.
- 6. On March 7, 2024, the Court granted Mr. Pierattini's Motion to Compel Form Interrogatory responses, issued sanctions in the amount of \$1,635.00, ordered Plaintiff to respond within 30 days and continued the other Motions to Compel until May 2, 2024.
- 7. On March 15, 2024, instead of responding to the discovery, Plaintiff filed a frivolous Motion to Compel the Production of Documents against Mr. Pierattini.
- 8. On March 27, 2024, instead of responding to all the discovery, Plaintiff filed an ex parte motion for reconsideration of the motion sanctioning him for not complying with discovery, which was denied by the Court.
- 9. On April 8, 2024, instead of responding to discovery, Plaintiff filed a Motion for Reconsideration of the sanctions order on the Motion to Compel Form Interrogatories.

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- 10. On May 2, 2024, the Court granted Mr. Pierattini's Motions to Compel Requests for Admission, Special Interrogatories, Requests for Production and Plaintiff's deposition. The written responses and production of documents was ordered to occur within 30 days. Court deferred ruling on the location of the deposition pending Plaintiff providing his address to the Court and continued the hearing on the Motion to Compel the Deposition concerning locations and sanctions.
- 11. On June 18, 2024, this Court denied Plaintiff's frivolous motion to compel and awarded sanctions in the amount of \$4,500. In other words, instead of responding to the written discovery that was served on him in December, Plaintiff filed a frivolous motion to compel for which he was sanctioned yet again. Plaintiff did not care because he consistently ignores the Court Orders and does not pay the Court Ordered sanctions.
- 12. On July 30, 2024, the Court denied Plaintiff's frivolous Motion for Reconsideration, granted Mr. Pierattini's Motion to Compel the deposition of Plaintiff and issued sanctions in the amount of \$4,560.00.
- 13. On September 5, 2024, the Court granted Mr. Pierattini's Motion for Summary Judgment on all causes of action except the Eighth Cause of action for Violation of the Right of Publicity. The Court denied Mr. Pierattini's Motion for Summary Judgment on the right of publicity claim because Mr. Pierattini did not have the discovery needed to attack the one claim for which summary judgment was denied. In fact, Plaintiff's argument was, in opposition to summary judgment, that Defendant did not have the discovery responses to show that Plaintiff had no evidence to support his case.

Everything is a delay tactic. This discovery is from December of 2023. To date, Plaintiff has not complied with one Court Order. Plaintiff is simply flouting the Court's Orders.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE LAW PERTAINING TO THIS OBJECTION AND REQUEST TO VACATE/STRIKE THE 11TH HOUR REQUEST FOR DISMISSAL WITHOUT PREJUDICE

California Law holds that in circumstances found in this case, where Plaintiff's voluntary dismissal would effectively thwart prior Court orders, Plaintiff forfeits the right to dismiss without prejudice. To be certain, Plaintiff retains the right to dismiss, but the dismissal is "with" prejudice rather than "without" prejudice. As such, the Court is empowered to vacate Plaintiff's dismissal "without" prejudice, and to enter the appropriate dismissal "with" prejudice."

Traditionally, it has been the parties right to dismiss an action without prejudice at any time before "the actual commencement of trial ..." CCP 581(b)(1). However, recent cases like *Hartbrodt v. Burke* (1996) 42 CA4th 1168, 175, place limits on a plaintiff's ability to do so. In

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Hartbrodt, a trial court discovery order required plaintiff to produce a tape to defendant within thirty days. Plaintiff disobeyed the order and refused to turn over the tape. Defendants moved for terminating sanctions, asking the court to dismiss the case with prejudice as a sanction under the discovery statutes. Before the hearing on the motion, plaintiff requested a dismissal without prejudice. The trial court rejected the request and granted the defense motion for a dismissal with prejudice as a terminating sanction. The appellate court affirmed. The bulk of the appellate court's opinion addressed discovery issues. As to the matter of voluntary dismissal, the appellate court concluded that allowing plaintiff to dismiss without prejudice would defeat the trial court's power to enforce its discovery orders. The appellate court held:

Rejection of Voluntary Dismissal

In one last effort to salvage his case, appellant attempted to voluntarily dismiss his case without prejudice and thereby deny to respondents the finality obtained by imposition of the terminating sanction. This tactic would simply defeat the trial court's power to enforce its discovery orders.

In *M & R Properties v. Thomson* (1992) 11 Cal.App.4th 899, 14 Cal.Rptr.2d 579, the plaintiffs failed to bring the action to trial within five years and the defendants filed a motion to dismiss pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 583.310 which, if granted, would be a determination on the merits. The day prior to the hearing on the motion, the plaintiffs filed a request for a dismissal without prejudice. On the defendant's motion, the trial court vacated the plaintiffs' voluntary dismissal and granted the defense motion to dismiss for failure to bring the action to trial in five years. The plaintiffs appealed but the appellate court affirmed, holding that a plaintiff cannot defeat a defendant's right to obtain a determination on the merits by simply filing a voluntary dismissal when statutory authority entitles the defense to a final judgment. It follows that appellant cannot defeat respondents' motion for a terminating discovery sanction by filing a voluntary dismissal. The trial court properly rejected appellant's voluntary dismissal without prejudice."

Id at 175-176. The court held that, under the circumstances, plaintiff could not dismiss without prejudice, and rejected the plaintiff's attempt to voluntarily dismiss, despite the fact that the dismissal was entered prior to any ruling on the motion. The court reasoned that such dismissal would amount to a "tactic" that "would simply defeat the trial court's power to enforce its discovery orders." *Id* at 175.

It is important to note that in *Hartbrodt*, plaintiff had not been previously sanctioned – i.e., terminating sanctions were not the necessary result of defendant's motion, given the clear

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preference in law for escalating sanctions (monetary sanctions, evidence preclusion, issue sanctions), and against "ultimate" sanctions. Thus, it could not be said that dismissal of the action was a "forgone conclusion" as a result of defendant's motion. Yet, despite the fact that it was far from certain that defendant's motion would result in dismissal, the court held that to allow a voluntary dismissal, without prejudice, which would allow plaintiff to refile a baseless action, would defeat the trial court's power to enforce its discovery orders.

The court cited *M & R Properties v. Thompson* (1992) 11 CA 4th 899, with approval that, "[O]n the defendant's motion, the trial court *vacated the plaintiffs' voluntary dismissal* and granted the defense motion to dismiss ... *Id* at 176. (Emphasis added).

Similarly, in *Mary Morgan, Inc. v. Melzark* (1996) 49 Cal.App.4th 765, the appellate court rejected plaintiff's attempt to dismiss without prejudice prior to a final ruling on defendant's summary judgment motion. The court noted that "[t]he right of a plaintiff to voluntarily dismiss an action before commencement of trial is not absolute." [citations omitted]. *Id* at 769.

The rule is premised on equity and fairness, as pointed out by the court:

Logic and fairness dictate that the right of a plaintiff to voluntarily dismiss an action before commencement of trial is restricted not only by statutory limitations and judicial constructions of the phrase "commencement of trial"; it is also limited by dismissal procedure's conjunction with other judicial procedures. The interrelationship between various provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure must be considered when interpreting any one provision so that statutory harmony is achieved, [citations omitted].

Id. at 771; *See also, Cravens v. State Board of Equalization* (1997) 52 Cal.App.4th 253, 257.

Additionally, as explained in the leading treatise on California Procedure, this type of tactical ploy is not permitted. It states:

"[11:25.10] Compare—dismissal as tactic to avoid imminent adverse ruling on dispositive motion: Several cases hold plaintiff's right to dismiss the action without prejudice may be cut off where a dispositive motion is pending, before any ruling thereon, if the dismissal appears to be a tactical ploy. [Hartbrodt v. Burke (1996) 42 CA4th 168, 175, 49 CR2d 562, 567 (request for dismissal without prejudice filed day before hearing on motion for terminating sanction in discovery dispute); Cravens v. State Bd. of Equalization (1997) 52 CA4th 253, 257, 60 CR2d 436, 438 (same, after expiration of time to file opposition to motion for summary judgment); see also Mary Morgan, Inc. v. Melzark (1996) 49 CA4th 765, 770, 57 CR2d 4, 7—voluntary dismissal

not permitted after summary judgment hearing commenced and was continued to permit discovery]".

Brown & Weil, *California Practice Guide: Civil Procedure Before Trial*, The Rutter Group, "Voluntary Dismissal", Section 11:25.10 (2025 update). Here, each of these cases apply.

Concurrent with the hearing on this Motion is a hearing on a Motion for Terminating Sanctions, so the *Hartbrodt* case is directly on point. Moreover, there is a Motion for Summary Judgment pending and Plaintiff knows that he has no evidence to support an opposition, so the

Mary Morgan case also applies to block this attempt. See, for example, Cravens v. State Bd. of

V. ANAYLSIS OF THE LAW APPLIED HERE SHOWS THIS REQUEST FOR DISMISSAL SHOULD BE REJECTED OR STRIKEN

judgment is inevitable the plaintiff should not be permitted to dismiss without prejudice).

Equalization (1997) 52 CA4th 253, 257, 60 CR2d 436, 438 (where, as here, summary

After over a year of ignoring discovery orders, Plaintiff sought a tactical ploy to avoid the adverse ruling on the Motion for Terminating Sanctions.

Here, as in *Hartbrodt*, defendant disobeyed the Court orders and refused to provide further discovery responses. Thereafter, Mr. Pierattini moved for terminating sanctions, asking the Court to dismiss the case with prejudice as a sanction under the discovery statutes. Before the hearing on the motion, Plaintiff requested a dismissal without prejudice which was entered on April 17, 2025.

Plaintiff is admittedly requesting a dismissal without prejudice as a tactic because he has no evidence to avoid this summary judgment. Plaintiff has stated that he plans on filing subsequent actions against Mr. Pierattini. As such, Plaintiff is solely requesting this dismissal without prejudice to avoid the Court's orders and summary judgment to continue his harassing recreational litigation.

Allowing Plaintiff to dismiss without prejudice would defeat the trial court's power to enforce its discovery orders. Accordingly, the Court should vacate/strike Plaintiff's dismissal without prejudice, and enter the appropriate dismissal with prejudice of Mr. Pierattini.

/ / /

LAW OFFICES OF R. PAUL KATRINAK 9663 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 458 Beverly Hills, California 90210 (319) 990-4348

VI. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

For the foregoing reasons, Mr. Pierattini respectfully requests that the Court vacate/strike Plaintiff's Request for Dismissal without prejudice of Mr. Pierattini and the Court enter an order dismissing the Complaint against Mr. Pierattini with prejudice.

DATED: May 1, 2025

THE LAW OFFICES OF R. PAUL KATRINAK

R. Paul Karrinak Attorneys for Defendant Michael Pierattini

PROOF OF SERVICE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA	
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELE	S

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I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California; I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action; my business address is 9663 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 458, Beverly Hills, California 90210.

On May 1, 2025, I served the foregoing document(s) described as:

NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION TO VACATE/STRIKE PLAINTIFF'S REQUEST FOR DISMISSAL WITHOUT PREJUDICE

on the interested parties to this action addressed as follows:

Jose DeCastro 1258 Franklin Street Santa Monica, CA 90404 chille@situationcreator.com

(BY MAIL) I deposited such envelope in the mail at Los Angeles, California. The envelope was mailed with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to the person above.

(BY PERSONAL SERVICE) by causing a true and correct copy of the above documents to be hand delivered in sealed envelope(s) with all fees fully paid to the person(s) at the address(es) set forth above.

 $\underline{\mathbf{X}}$ (BY EMAIL) I caused such documents to be delivered via electronic mail to the email address for counsel indicated above.

Executed May 1, 2025, at Los Angeles, California.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the above is true and correct.

R. Paul Karrinak



Make a Reservation

JOSE DECASTRO vs KATHERINE PETER

Case Number: 23SMCV00538 Case Type: Civil Unlimited Category: Defamation (slander/libel)

Date Filed: 2023-02-06 Location: Santa Monica Courthouse - Department O

Reservation Case Name: Case Number: JOSE DECASTRO vs KATHERINE PETER 23SMCV00538 Type: Motion to Vacate (or Strike Request for Dismissal Status: Without Prejudice) **RESERVED** Filing Party: Location: Michael Pierattini (Defendant) Santa Monica Courthouse - Department O Date/Time: Number of Motions: 05/29/2025 8:30 AM Reservation ID: Confirmation Code: 214453703668 CR-7RFBYJPXIJJMFT9WA

Fees			
Description	Fee	Qty	Amount
Motion to Vacate (name extension)	0.00	1	0.00
TOTAL			\$0.00

Payment	
Amount: \$0.00	Type: NOFEE
Account Number: n/a	Authorization: n/a
Payment Date: n/a	

Print Receipt

+ Reserve Another Hearing

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