

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Fuentes v. Cavco Industries, Inc. and Sentry Casualty Company

Docket No. 48419

This is an appeal from a decision of the Idaho Industrial Commission (Commission) dismissing a worker's compensation complaint filed by Taleetha Fuentes (Fuentes) against her employer Cavco Industries and Cavco's surety, Sentry Casualty Company (collectively the Defendants). Fuentes filed her complaint in July 2019. The Defendants denied the claim. During discovery, the Defendants filed a motion to compel in October 2019, which was granted. Following no response from Fuentes, the Defendants filed a motion for sanctions, and Fuentes again did not respond. On December 19, 2019, the full Commission removed the complaint from the Referee assigned to the case and issued an Order Dismissing Complaint, citing Industrial Commission Judicial Rule of Procedure (JRP) 12(B) as authority for the dismissal. Five months later, in May 2020, Fuentes responded to the initial discovery requests and moved to retain the case on the active calendar, but her filing and motion were returned "unfiled" as explained in an email from the assigned Referee. Fuentes also moved for reconsideration of the dismissal and filed a petition to vacate the order of dismissal under JRP 15. The Commission denied both motions, citing JRP 16. Fuentes timely appealed.

The Idaho Supreme Court reversed the Commission's decision to dismiss Fuentes' case and vacated the order. The Court held that the Commission acted in excess of its powers when it misapplied JRP 12(B) in the initial dismissal order. The Court further held that the Commission acted in excess of its authority when it applied JRP 16 to Fuentes' case on a motion for reconsideration. The case was remanded to the Commission for further proceedings.

******This summary constitutes no part of the Court's opinion. It has been prepared by court staff for the convenience of the public.******