

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA

Shadavian Yard-Daniel v. Pretorious, Warden

Yard-Daniel · No. 2:24-cv-00413-JPH-MG · Decided May 6, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana denied Shadavian Yard-Daniel's habeas petition challenging an Indiana prison disciplinary conviction for possessing intoxicants. The court held that alleged IDOC policy violations, denial of a witness or chemical testing, alleged hearing-officer bias, and insufficient-evidence claims did not establish a due-process violation, and it dismissed the action with prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana
WRITING FOR THE COURT	James Patrick Hanlon
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana
DECIDED	May 6, 2026
DOCKET	2:24-cv-00413-JPH-MG
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Federal habeas petition challenging an Indiana prison disciplinary conviction and sanctions, including a credit-class demotion and loss of earned credit time.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the prison disciplinary conviction under the federal due process standard requiring some evidence in the record logically supporting the decision. The court did not reweigh the evidence or assess whether contrary evidence supported a different result.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court order; persuasive but not binding outside the case.
PARTIES	Shadavian Yard-Daniel v. Pretorious, Warden

TOPICS

- federal habeas corpus
- prisoners rights
- procedural due process
- evidence

PRACTICE AREAS

Federal habeas corpus

Prison disciplinary proceedings

Prisoners' rights

Constitutional due process

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether alleged violations of Indiana Department of Correction policies concerning the timing and content of the disciplinary proceeding stated a cognizable federal habeas claim.
2. Whether Yard-Daniel was denied due process when he was allegedly denied a material witness and testing of the confiscated paper.
3. Whether the disciplinary hearing officer was impermissibly biased.
4. Whether the disciplinary conviction was supported by some evidence despite the absence of chemical testing.

HOLDINGS

1. Alleged violations of state prison policies do not provide a basis for federal habeas relief.
2. Due process was not violated because Yard-Daniel was given an opportunity to obtain the requested witness information, and he was not entitled to additional chemical testing where other evidence was available.
3. The hearing officer was not shown to be impermissibly biased.
4. The disciplinary conviction satisfied the constitutional some-evidence standard.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The due process requirement is satisfied with: 1) the issuance of at least 24 hours advance written notice of the charge; 2) a limited opportunity to call witnesses and present evidence to an impartial decision-maker; 3) a written statement articulating the reasons for the disciplinary action and the evidence justifying it; and 4) "some evidence in the record" to support the finding of guilt." (Section I)

"In a prison disciplinary proceeding, the "hearing officer's decision need only rest on 'some evidence' logically supporting it and demonstrating that the result is not arbitrary." (Section III.D)

"There was no arbitrary action in any aspect of the charge, disciplinary proceedings, or sanctions involved in the events identified in this action, and there was no constitutional infirmity in the proceeding which entitles Mr. Yard-Daniel to the relief he seeks." (Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A correctional officer reported finding folded paper containing chemically soaked paper pieces in Yard-Daniel's sock during a March 5, 2024 pat search. An evidence technician concluded, based on training and experience, that the paper was consistent with paper or an organic substance treated to create a smokable or ingestible intoxicant. After a disciplinary hearing, the hearing officer relied on the conduct report, confiscation documentation, evidence report, witness statement, video review, and Yard-Daniel's comments to find him guilty and imposed a credit-class demotion and a 90-day loss of earned credit time.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Yard-Daniel was found guilty in Indiana Department of Correction disciplinary case ISF-24-03-0561 after a hearing concerning chemically treated paper found during a pat search. His administrative appeals were denied. He then filed this federal habeas action, which the district court denied on the merits and dismissed with prejudice.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Ellison v. Zatecky, 820 F.3d 271, 274-75 (7th Cir. 2016)
- Scruggs v. Jordan, 485 F.3d 934, 939 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Rhoiney v. Neal, 723 F. App'x 347, 348 (7th Cir. 2018)
- Superintendent, Mass. Corr. Inst. v. Hill, 472 U.S. 445, 454-56 (1985)
- Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539, 558, 563-67 (1974)
- Washington v. Boughton, 884 F.3d 692, 698 (7th Cir. 2018)
- Estelle v. McGuire, 502 U.S. 62, 68 n.2 (1991)
- Keller v. Donahue, 271 F. App'x 531, 532 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Piggie v. Cotton, 344 F.3d 674, 678 (7th Cir. 2003)
- Manley v. Butts, 699 F. App'x 574, 576 (7th Cir. 2017)
- Hunt v. Benefiel, No. 2:21-cv-00404-JPH-DLP, 2022 WL 4925027, at *5 (S.D. Ind. Oct. 4, 2022)
- Piggie v. Cotton, 342 F.3d 660, 666-67 (7th Cir. 2003)
- Perotti v. Marberry, 355 F. App'x 39, 43 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Withrow v. Larkin, 421 U.S. 35, 47 (1975)
- Eads v. Hanks, 280 F.3d 728, 729 (7th Cir. 2002)
- Moffat v. Broyles, 288 F.3d 978, 981 (7th Cir. 2002)
- Jones v. Cross, 637 F.3d 841, 849 (7th Cir. 2011)
- Eichwedel v. Chandler, 696 F.3d 660, 675 (7th Cir. 2012)
- Webb v. Anderson, 224 F.3d 649, 652 (7th Cir. 2000)

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