

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MICHIGAN, SOUTHERN DIVISION

Ted Boniecki v. City of Warren, et al.

No. 22-cv-11578 (E.D. Mich. Feb. 5, 2026) · No. 22-cv-11578 · Decided February 5, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan rejected Ted Boniecki’s objections to a magistrate judge’s report and recommendation and order concerning enforcement of Warren rental-inspection ordinances. The court denied motions to clarify a preliminary injunction and for a temporary restraining order, and affirmed denial of motions to join a state district court and its judicial officers as parties. The court held that the magistrate judge acted within her authority and that the existing injunction against Warren officials provided the relief at issue.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Linda V. Parker
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
DECIDED	February 5, 2026
DOCKET	22-cv-11578
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court reviewed a pro se plaintiff’s objections to a magistrate judge’s report and recommendation denying motions to clarify a preliminary injunction and for a temporary restraining order, and objections to a magistrate judge’s order denying non-party joinder and a representation/conflict motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(a) and 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(A), a magistrate judge’s ruling on a non-dispositive pretrial matter is reviewed for clear error or whether it is contrary to law. Objections to a report and recommendation on a dispositive matter receive de novo review under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court opinion

TOPICS

joinder

injunctions

default judgment

standing

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

constitutional law

municipal law

remedies

real estate

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the magistrate judge exceeded her authority by resolving Boniecki's motion for non-party joinder by order rather than by report and recommendation.
2. Whether joinder of the Michigan 37th District Court and its judicial officers was necessary to afford Boniecki relief concerning enforcement of Warren's rental ordinances.
3. Whether Boniecki was entitled to clarification of the preliminary injunction or a temporary restraining order based on an allegedly missed ticket and prior default judgment.
4. Whether the defendants' failure to respond or concur in Boniecki's motions required granting the requested relief or demonstrated a conflict of interest.

HOLDINGS

1. The magistrate judge properly resolved the non-party joinder motion by order because the motion was not dispositive of a claim or defense of a named party.
2. Joinder was not necessary because enjoining Warren and its enforcement officials was sufficient to prevent the challenged conduct and provide Boniecki the relief available in this action.
3. Boniecki was not entitled in this proceeding to have previously issued default judgments set aside or removed from the state court's website because the court had not determined that those judgments were unconstitutional.
4. A party's failure to respond or concur did not require the court to grant Boniecki's motions; the court was required to assess the motions' merits and whether the requested relief was available and warranted.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"A judge of the court may reconsider any pretrial matter under this subparagraph (A) where it has been shown that the magistrate judge's order is clearly erroneous or contrary to law." (6)

"A motion for joinder may qualify, if the failure to join an indispensable party will result in dismissal." (7)

"On appeal, the Sixth Circuit did not hold that any default judgment arising from the enforcement of Warren's ordinance was unconstitutional, only that the threat of a default judgment conferred standing on Boniecki." (8)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Boniecki alleged that Warren threatened warrantless searches and criminal prosecution unless rental inspections and permits were obtained for four properties. The district court entered a preliminary injunction barring

enforcement actions and collection efforts concerning those properties. A ticket issued to an occupant was initially missed because the state court's ticket-management system organized tickets by name and number rather than property address, but defendants represented that the error had been corrected. Boniecki sought to clarify the injunction, obtain a temporary restraining order, set aside or prevent enforcement of a prior default judgment, and join the 37th District Court and two of its judicial officers.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Boniecki sued the City of Warren and related defendants over alleged constitutional violations arising from Warren's rental-inspection and permitting ordinances. The district court previously entered a preliminary injunction, stipulated to by defendants, barring enforcement actions concerning four properties. The case was referred to Magistrate Judge Kimberly G. Altman, who recommended denying Boniecki's motions to clarify the injunction and for a temporary restraining order and separately denied his motion to join the Michigan 37th District Court and two judicial officers. The district court rejected Boniecki's objections, adopted the recommendation, denied the requested injunction-related motions, and affirmed the joinder decision.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Anderson v. Bessemer City, N.C., 470 U.S. 564, 573-74 (1985)
- United States v. U.S. Gypsum Co., 333 U.S. 364, 395 (1948)
- Bisig v. Time Warner Cable, Inc., 940 F.3d 205, 219 (6th Cir. 2019)
- Thomas v. Halter, 131 F. Supp. 2d 942, 944 (E.D. Mich. 2001)
- Smith v. Detroit Fed'n of Teachers Local 231, 829 F.2d 1370, 1373 (6th Cir. 1987)
- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140, 149 (1985)
- Carter v. Hickory Healthcare, Inc., 905 F.3d 963, 967 (6th Cir. 2018)
- Vogel v. U.S. Office Prods. Co., 258 F.3d 509, 514-15 (6th Cir. 2001)