

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

William Louis Armstrong, III v. Alter Trading Corporation et al.

Armstrong · No. 2:25-cv-01702-JPS · Decided May 11, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin addresses William Louis Armstrong, III’s motions for reconsideration and proposed second amended complaint asserting RICO-related claims against numerous defendants. The court denies the reconsideration motions as moot, defers ruling on in forma pauperis status, and finds that the complaint violates Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 and the court’s page and defendant limits. The court grants Armstrong one final opportunity to file a compliant third amended complaint by May 18, 2026, warning that failure to do so will result in dismissal.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	J. P. Stadtmueller
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	May 11, 2026
DOCKET	2:25-cv-01702-JPS
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se plaintiff sought leave to proceed in forma pauperis and moved for reconsideration of an earlier screening order requiring a shorter complaint with fewer defendants. The court denied the reconsideration motions as moot, deferred ruling on the in forma pauperis motion, and granted plaintiff one final opportunity to file a compliant third amended complaint.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Screening of a complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(h)(3), including review for frivolousness, failure to state a claim, immunity, and subject-matter jurisdiction; pro se allegations are liberally construed, but legal conclusions and unsupported factual conclusions are not accepted as true.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential federal district court order

PARTIES

William Louis Armstrong, III v. Alter Trading Corporation, Seven Stars Auto Parts LLC, Miller Compressing Company, Jon Spigel, Michael Goldstein, Robert Goldstein, Goldstein Group, Inc., Robert G. Ellis, Quarles & Brady, LLC, Alter Logistics & Transloading Company, MCC Holding Inc., John Busby, All Seasons Trucking 2 LLC, Toyota Motor Corporation, Toyota Motor North America, Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Toyota Financial Services, Toyota Tsusho Corporation, Toyota Tsusho America Inc., Altech Recycling LLC, Jeffrey Goldstein, Kathy Goldstein, Richard Goldstein, Josh Millan, Marc Goldstein, Nathan Millan, Samantha Goldstein, Lauren Goldstein, Jeremy Goldstein, Alex Goldstein, Jesse Goldstein, Renee Goldstein, David Klein, Joseph Poehlmann, United States, Chanel, Body Corporate Wisconsin LLC, Toyota Motor Credit Corporation, Bryan Downer, Anthony R. Gardiner, Jr., Alter Metal Recycling, Green Bridge Company

TOPICS

pleadings

motion for reconsideration

motion to amend

civil procedure

subject matter jurisdiction

PRACTICE AREAS

Civil procedure

Federal pleading

In forma pauperis screening

RICO litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Armstrong's amended complaint complied with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a) and the court's prior order limiting the complaint to fifteen pages and ten defendants.
2. Whether the court should screen the amended complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and determine whether it stated claims within the court's subject-matter jurisdiction.
3. Whether Armstrong's motions to reconsider the prior screening order remained justiciable after he filed an amended complaint.
4. Whether Armstrong should receive another opportunity to amend his complaint before dismissal.

HOLDINGS

1. Armstrong's amended complaint failed to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 and the court's prior order because it exceeded the page and defendant limits and used convoluted, insufficiently particularized allegations that did not provide fair notice of the claims or each defendant's role.
2. The court deferred ruling on Armstrong's motion to proceed in forma pauperis because the complaint was not yet in a form that could be properly screened for frivolousness, failure to state a claim, immunity, or subject-matter jurisdiction.
3. Armstrong's motions for reconsideration were denied as moot because he had filed an amended complaint and the motions sought relief from the court's ruling on the original complaint.

4. Armstrong was entitled to one final opportunity to amend his complaint to correct the pleading defects, subject to a fifteen-page limit, a ten-defendant limit, and the requirement that the amended complaint be complete in itself.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“While pro se pleadings are to be construed liberally, such filings must still comply with rules that govern civil cases, and court orders.” (Section 4.2)

“Plaintiff will be afforded a final opportunity to amend to correct these defects before it will dismiss the case.” (Section 4.2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Armstrong asserted federal and Wisconsin RICO claims and various criminal-law-related allegations against more than forty defendants. His amended complaint exceeded the court-ordered fifteen-page limit, named more than ten defendants, and included sparse, convoluted allegations and a predicate-acts chart that made it difficult to determine each defendant's role or the factual basis for each claim. The court also noted that one defendant identified only as Chanel lacked sufficient identifying information.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Armstrong initiated the action in November 2025 and filed an amended complaint asserting federal and state RICO-related claims against more than forty defendants. The court previously ordered him to file an amended complaint no longer than fifteen pages and naming no more than ten defendants. Armstrong instead filed another complaint exceeding both limits and moved for reconsideration. The court found the pleading violated Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 and the court's prior order, denied the reconsideration motions as moot, and allowed one final amendment by May 18, 2026, warning that noncompliance would result in dismissal without further notice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Rodriguez v. Crim. Just. Facility Safety Bldg., No. 23-CV-394, 2023 WL 3467565, at *1 (E.D. Wis. Apr. 7, 2023)
- Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 324, 325, 327 (1989)
- Floyd v. U.S. Postal Serv., 105 F.3d 274, 275-76 (6th Cir. 1997)
- Mitchell v. Farcass, 112 F.3d 1483, 1491 n.1 (11th Cir. 1997)
- Brewster v. N. Am. Van Lines, Inc., 461 F.2d 649, 651 (7th Cir. 1972)
- Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992)
- Hutchinson ex rel. Baker v. Spink, 126 F.3d 895, 900 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555-56 (2007)

- Kubiak v. City of Chicago, 810 F.3d 476, 480-81 (7th Cir. 2016)
- EEOC v. Concentra Health Servs., Inc., 496 F.3d 773, 776 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Tamayo v. Blagojevich, 526 F.3d 1074, 1081 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Brooks v. Ross, 578 F.3d 574, 581 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Kelsay v. Milwaukee Area Tech. Coll., 825 F. Supp. 215, 217 (E.D. Wis. 1993)
- Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520-21 (1972)
- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)
- Whitfield v. Synder, 263 F. App'x 518, 521 (7th Cir. 2008)
- McNeil v. United States, 508 U.S. 106, 113 (1993)
- Metro. Life Ins. Co. v. Johnson, 297 F.3d 558, 562 (7th Cir. 2002)
- In re Ready-Mixed Concrete Antitrust Litig., 261 F.R.D. 154, 161 (S.D. Ind. 2009)
- Aspera v. Copperweld Corp., No. 04 C 4358, 2006 WL 488686, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Feb. 24, 2006)
- U.S. Sec. & Exch. Comm'n v. Winemaster, 529 F. Supp. 3d 880, 906-07 (N.D. Ill. 2021)
- Alizadeh v. Tellabs, Inc., No. 13 C 537, 2014 WL 2726676, at *5 (N.D. Ill. June 16, 2014)
- Conlee v. WMS Indus., Inc., No. 11 C 3503, 2012 WL 3042498, at *4 (N.D. Ill. July 25, 2012)
- U.S. Sec. & Exch. Comm'n v. Ustian, 229 F. Supp. 3d 739, 778 (N.D. Ill. 2017)
- Weiland v. Palm Beach Cnty. Sheriff's Off., 792 F.3d 1313, 1324-25 (11th Cir. 2015)
- Koh v. Graf, No. 11-cv-02605, 2013 WL 5348326, at *5 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 24, 2013)
- Wilburn v. Kroll Substance Abuse Training, No. 10-CV-174, 2010 WL 2178963, at *2 (S.D. Ind. May 27, 2010)
- County of McHenry v. Ins. Co. of the West, 438 F.3d 813, 818 (7th Cir. 2006)
- Runnion ex rel. Runnion v. Girl Scouts of Greater Chi. & Nw. Ind., 786 F.3d 510, 519-20 (7th Cir. 2015)
- Luevano v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., 772 F.3d 1014, 1024 (7th Cir. 2013)
- Duda v. Bd. of Educ. of Franklin Park Pub. Sch. Dist. No. 84, 133 F.3d 1054, 1057 (7th Cir. 1998)
- Wellness Cmty.-Nat'l v. Wellness House, 70 F.3d 46, 49 (7th Cir. 1995)
- Fuhrer v. Fuhrer, 292 F.2d 140, 144 (7th Cir. 1961)

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