

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS

Charles Carpenter v. United States Postal Service, Lisa Pittman, and
Joseph Junti

Carpenter · No. 26-cv-00217-JPG · Decided April 16, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois dismissed Charles Carpenter’s employment-related action against the United States Postal Service and two employees without prejudice for lack of subject matter jurisdiction. The court held that the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act barred judicial review of alleged interference with or delay in workers’ compensation benefits proceedings, and denied Carpenter’s motion to proceed in forma pauperis.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
WRITING FOR THE COURT	J. Phil Gilbert
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
DECIDED	April 16, 2026
DOCKET	26-cv-00217-JPG
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court considered Plaintiff’s response to an order to show cause why the case should not be dismissed for lack of subject matter jurisdiction and sua sponte dismissed the action.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court independently considered whether it had subject matter jurisdiction over the complaint.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Charles Carpenter v. United States Postal Service, Lisa Pittman, Joseph Junti

TOPICS

- subject matter jurisdiction
- federal employment law
- administrative law
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court had subject matter jurisdiction over allegations that Postal Service employees interfered with the plaintiff's FECA and OWCP proceedings.
2. Whether the plaintiff's response should be considered despite its failure to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11(a)'s signature requirement.

HOLDINGS

1. The court lacked subject matter jurisdiction because adjudicating Carpenter's allegations would require judicial inquiry into the Secretary of Labor's administration of FECA benefits, which 5 U.S.C. § 8128(b) makes final and not subject to review by a court.
2. The court did not require Carpenter to correct the signature deficiency under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11(a) because dismissal for lack of subject matter jurisdiction was required.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The statute explicitly provides that the system it creates is the exclusive remedy for federal employees, and it denies federal courts the jurisdiction to review the final decisions of the Secretary of Labor in applying the Act.” (at 1)

“The action of the Secretary or his designee in allowing or denying a payment under this subchapter is—(1) final and conclusive for all purposes and with respect to all questions of law and fact; and (2) not subject to review by another official of the United States or by a court by mandamus or otherwise.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Carpenter alleged that Lisa Pittman falsely told medical staff that his injury did not occur on the job and that Joseph Junti attempted to obstruct his Office of Workers' Compensation Programs benefits. He claimed that their conduct caused delays and denial of federal workers' compensation benefits. Although he did not expressly challenge an OWCP benefits determination, resolving his allegations would require inquiry into whether the Secretary of Labor wrongfully delayed or denied benefits or improperly conducted the proceedings.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Carpenter filed an employment-related complaint on February 26, 2026, alleging that Postal Service employees interfered with his federal workers' compensation claim. On March 13, 2026, the court found that the allegations did not state a claim under a federal employment discrimination statute and ordered Carpenter to show cause why the case should not be dismissed for lack of jurisdiction. After Carpenter filed an unsigned response asserting that the case involved administration of a FECA claim, the court denied in forma pauperis status and dismissed the case without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Kyle v. Brennan, No. 17 C 7646, 2018 WL 3232794 (N.D. Ill. July 2, 2018)
- Czerkies v. U.S. Dep't of Lab., 73 F.3d 1435, 1437–43 (7th Cir. 1996)

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