

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
MISSISSIPPI

Linda Tallie v. Rehabilitation Centers, LLC d/b/a Millcreek

No. 1:25-cv-91 (N.D. Miss. Nov. 2025) · No. 1:25-cv-91 · Decided December 2, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi denies Defendant Rehabilitation Centers, LLC’s Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss Linda Tallie’s wrongful-termination claim. Applying Mississippi law, the court holds that Tallie plausibly alleged a McArn public-policy claim based on her termination after reporting alleged abuse of a vulnerable patient. The court concludes that questions concerning whether the alleged abuse was attributable to the employer are better resolved on a fuller record.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Senior U.S. District Judge; Glen H. Davidson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi, Aberdeen Division
DECIDED	December 2, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-91
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant's Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss Plaintiff's wrongful termination claim
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Rule 12(b)(6) plausibility standard
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished

TOPICS

- wrongful termination
- whistleblower
- retaliation
- employment at-will
- motions to dismiss
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- employment law
- civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff's wrongful termination claim under the public policy exception to at-will employment survives a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss
2. Whether Plaintiff adequately alleged an illegal act by the employer
3. Whether Plaintiff adequately alleged she was terminated because she reported the illegal act

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff plausibly alleged an illegal act (assault on a vulnerable adult) and the question of whether the employer can be vicariously liable for the employee's conduct is better resolved at summary judgment when a fuller record is available.
2. Plaintiff satisfied the third element by alleging temporal proximity between her report to state authorities and her termination, and that anonymous reports from Defendant's employees accused her of the same conduct she had reported about Sanita, who received no punishment.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“an employee who is discharged for reporting illegal acts of his employer to the employer or anyone else is not barred by the employment at will doctrine from bringing action in tort for damages against his employer”

“No matter how patients may be acting out, it is not within the prerogative of a worker to punish the patients, by assaulting them, such as pulling their hair.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff Linda Tallie worked at Defendant Rehabilitation Centers' Millcreek facility in Tupelo, Mississippi, which cares for disabled persons with mental illnesses. Plaintiff allegedly observed a fellow employee, Sanita, severely abusing a patient named Ashley by pulling her hair. After reporting the abuse internally to the facility director with no consequences, Plaintiff reported Defendant to the Mississippi Department of Human Services in November 2024. Approximately one month later, on December 6, 2024, Plaintiff was terminated based on anonymous reports that she had struck Ashley. Plaintiff denies this allegation and claims the termination was pretextual retaliation for her complaints.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a wrongful termination claim against Defendant. Defendant moved to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6), arguing the claim did not fall within the public policy exceptions to at-will employment. The Court denied the motion.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Walker v. Webco Indus., Inc., 562 F. App'x 215 (5th Cir. 2014)
- Kennedy v. Chase Manhattan Bank USA, NA, 369 F.3d 833 (5th Cir. 2004)

- Phillips v. City of Dallas, Tex., 781 F.3d 772 (5th Cir. 2015)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662 (2009)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544 (2007)
- Webb v. Morella, 522 F. App'x 238 (5th Cir. 2013)
- City of Clinton, Ark. v. Pilgrim's Pride Corp., 632 F.3d 148 (5th Cir. 2010)
- Fernandez-Montes v. Allied Pilots Ass'n, 987 F.2d 278 (5th Cir. 1993)
- Emesowum v. Houston Police Dep't, 561 F. App'x 372 (5th Cir. 2014)
- McArn v. Allied Bruce-Terminix Co., Inc., 626 So.2d 603 (Miss. 1993)
- Brandis Hope Cmty. Serv. LLC v. Walters, 391 So.3d 162 (Miss. 2024)
- Erie R. Co. v. Tompkins, 304 U.S. 64 (1938)
- Centennial Ins. Co. v. Ryder Truck Rental, Inc., 149 F.3d 378 (5th Cir. 1998)
- Hall v. Georgia Gulf Chemicals & Vinyls, ELC, 2010 WL 5333690 (S.D. Miss. 2010)
- McClinton v. Delta Pride Catfish, Inc., 792 So.2d 968 (Miss. 2001)