

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

Michael Dean Williams v. Crystal Flash Co.

No. 24-11640, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division (November 26, 2025)

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan dismissed Michael Dean Williams’s action against Crystal Flash Co. with prejudice under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 37(b)(2)(A). The dismissal was based on Williams’s repeated failure to comply with court orders, participate in discovery, attend conferences, and otherwise advance the case; the court also ordered him to show cause why defense attorney’s fees and costs should not be imposed as sanctions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Gershwin A. Drain
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
DECIDED	November 26, 2025
DOCKET	24-11640
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant orally moved to dismiss the action as a sanction for Plaintiff's repeated violations of court orders and discovery obligations. The district court granted the motion and dismissed the action with prejudice under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 37(b)(2)(A), while ordering Plaintiff to show cause why defense attorney fees and costs should not also be imposed.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The district court has discretion under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 37 to impose sanctions, including dismissal, for repeated and willful failure to comply with court orders.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Michael Dean Williams v. Crystal Flash Co.

TOPICS

sanctions costs attorney fees civil procedure civil rights

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure civil rights employment law remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether dismissal with prejudice was an appropriate sanction under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 37(b)(2)(A) for Plaintiff's repeated and willful violations of court orders and discovery obligations.
2. Whether the court should impose defense attorney fees and costs incurred as a result of Plaintiff's dilatory and abusive litigation practices.

HOLDINGS

1. When a party repeatedly misses deadlines and willfully fails to comply with court orders, the district court may impose sanctions under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 37, including dismissal of the party's claims or defenses.
2. Plaintiff's repeated, willful defiance of court orders and discovery obligations warranted dismissal of the action with prejudice as a sanction.
3. The court ordered Plaintiff to show cause why defense counsel's attorney fees and costs incurred since November 21, 2024 should not be imposed as sanctions.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"This is Plaintiff's final warning. Failure to comply with this Court's Orders will result in the imposition of sanctions, up to and including pre-filing restrictions and dismissal of this action." (PageID.1282)

"The Court will therefore impose sanctions against Plaintiff, including dismissal of this action and the imposition of attorney's fees and costs incurred as a result of Plaintiff's dilatory and abusive litigation practices." (PageID.1282)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff repeatedly failed to comply with the court's scheduling and discovery directives, including failing to serve initial disclosures and witness lists, failing to respond to discovery requests, and refusing to schedule his deposition. He failed to appear at multiple scheduled conferences and continued filing motions despite prior orders and an express final warning that noncompliance could result in dismissal. The court found that Plaintiff's conduct delayed the case and undermined judicial economy.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed claims under the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments, Title VII, and 18 U.S.C. § 241. The court previously dismissed the constitutional claims because Defendant was not a state actor and dismissed the criminal-conspiracy claim because § 241 does not create a private civil cause of action. After Plaintiff repeatedly

filed motions, failed to participate in scheduling and discovery, failed to appear at status and scheduling conferences, and violated prior court orders despite warnings, Defendant moved orally for dismissal. The court granted the motion and dismissed the remaining action with prejudice, reserving attorney fees and costs for further proceedings after a show-cause response.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Mager v. Wisconsin Central Ltd., 924 F.3d 831, 837-40 (6th Cir. 2019)

OPINION

Michael Dean Williams v. Crystal Flash Co.

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

SOUTHERN DIVISION

MICHAEL DEAN WILLIAMS,

Plaintiff, Case No.: 24-11640 v. Hon. Gershwin A. Drain

CRYSTAL FLASH CO.,

Defendant. _____/

ORDER GRANTING DEFENDANT’S ORAL MOTION TO DISMISS AND

DISMISSING ACTION WITH PREJUDICE PURSUANT TO RULE

37(b)(2)(A) OF THE FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

Plaintiff filed his Complaint on June 25, 2024, alleging claims under the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and criminal conspiracy under 18 U.S.C. § 241. ECF No. 1. The Court dismissed Plaintiff’s claims under the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments sua sponte on July 25, 2024 because Plaintiff failed to establish that Crystal Flash was a state actor. ECF No. 9, PageID.123-125. The Court further dismissed Plaintiff’s claim of criminal conspiracy because 18 U.S.C. § 241 is a criminal provision that does not create a private cause of action for individuals to seek civil remedies. Id., PageID.126. Plaintiff, proceeding pro se, filed a flurry of motions after the Court’s July 25, 2024 Opinion and Order of Partial Summary Dismissal, including two motions for summary judgment. See ECF Nos. 12, 14, 21, 27, 29, 30, 33. This Court disposed of those motions on November 7, 2024. ECF No. 41. On November 6, 2024, the parties appeared for a status conference, and Plaintiff was referred to the Federal Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic. ECF No. 45, PageID.587. The Court set a scheduling conference for November 20, 2024, and advised the parties to work together to craft a Rule 26 discovery plan. Id. Plaintiff refused to engage with Defendants’ counsel on the discovery plan. Id., PageID.588. Plaintiff

further failed to appear for the scheduling conference on November 20, 2024. Id. Plaintiff also refused to accept the Federal Pro Se Clinic's assistance. Id. Instead, Plaintiff filed a motion for the appointment of counsel, which the Court denied. ECF No. 48. Plaintiff sought to appeal this decision, and the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the appeal for lack of jurisdiction. ECF Nos. 51 and 58. Nevertheless, Plaintiff has continued to file pleadings in the appellate court, and the appellate court has continued to deny them. ECF Nos. 60, 63, 73 and 80. On August 26, 2025, this Court ruled on fifteen motions filed by Plaintiff and one filed by Defendants. ECF No. 95. In a 19-page opinion, this Court addressed each of Plaintiff's motions. Among other things, the court noted that Plaintiff had not served his Initial Disclosures, Witness or Exhibits Lists and had refused to schedule his deposition, in violation of the court's November 21, 2024 Scheduling Order. ECF No. 95, PageID.1270. The court warned Plaintiff: "This is Plaintiff's final warning. Failure to comply with this Court's Orders will result in the imposition of sanctions, up to and including pre-filing restrictions and dismissal of this action." ECF No. 95, PageID.1282. The court then issued a new Scheduling Order. On November 6, 2025, this Court held a status conference. Plaintiff failed to appear for the status conference once again. At the conference, Defendant's counsel confirmed that Plaintiff has not complied with this Court's August 26, 2025 Order. He has not served his Initial Disclosures or Witness Lists. Nor has he responded to Defendant's discovery requests. Counsel for Defendant orally moved for dismissal of this action at the conference. The Court granted Defendant's oral motion. Since the filing of his Complaint, Plaintiff has repeatedly delayed the case's progress, including by filing meritless and dilatory motions. Indeed, continuing to clog this court's docket with a case that has made no progress due to Plaintiff's refusal to abide by any court order or the federal court rules flies in the face of judicial economy. Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 37 explicitly authorizes the imposition of sanctions for a party's failure to comply with a court order. When a party repeatedly misses deadlines and willfully fails to comply with the orders of this Court, this Court has the discretion to dismiss that party's claims or defenses. See, e.g., *Mager v. Wisconsin Central Ltd.*, 924 F.3d 831, 837-40 (6th Cir. 2019). This Court has specifically warned Plaintiff that failure to comply with this Court's orders may result in the imposition of sanctions, up to and including dismissal of this action and the imposition of attorney's fees. ECF No. 45, PageID.589; ECF No. 95, PageID.1282. Plaintiff has continued to defy this Court's orders. The Court will therefore impose sanctions against Plaintiff, including dismissal of this action and the imposition of attorney's fees and costs incurred as a result of Plaintiff's dilatory and abusive litigation practices. Accordingly, this cause of action is **DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE**. Plaintiff **SHALL SHOW CAUSE** in writing, no later than December 9, 2025, why the Court should not enter sanctions against Plaintiff in the amount of defense counsel's costs and attorney's fees incurred since November 21, 2024, when Plaintiff was first warned that failure to appear as noticed and failure to comply with this Court's orders may result in the imposition of sanctions. **SO ORDERED**. Dated: November 26, 2025 /s/Gershwin A. Drain

GERSHWIN A. DRAIN

United States District Judge

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Copies of this Order were served upon attorneys of record on November 26, 2025, by electronic and/or ordinary mail. /s/ Kourtney Collins Case Manager

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