

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH
DAKOTA, SOUTHERN DIVISION

Douglas E. Anderson v. Jeff Van Gerpen, et al.

Douglas E. Anderson v. Jeff Van Gerpen, No. 4:26-CIV-04027-CBK (D.S.D. June 22, 2026) · No. 4:26-CIV-04027-CBK · Decided June 22, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of South Dakota dismissed Douglas E. Anderson’s pro se complaint with prejudice. The court concluded that the 179-page pleading violated Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8, abused the judicial process, and improperly sought interference with pending state proceedings. The court also invoked abstention principles and barred the Clerk’s Office from accepting further actions by Anderson without prior approval from a United States District Judge, except for a possible notice of appeal.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of South Dakota, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Charles B. Kornmann
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of South Dakota, Southern Division
DECIDED	June 22, 2026
DOCKET	4:26-CIV-04027-CBK
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed a 179-page pro se complaint seeking damages and injunctive relief. The district court dismissed the action with prejudice and imposed a prefiling-review requirement on future actions filed by plaintiff.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The opinion applies the district court's inherent authority and discretion to dismiss abusive litigation and to abstain under the Pullman doctrine; no separate appellate standard of review is stated.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown
PARTIES	Douglas E. Anderson v. Jeff Van Gerpen, et al.

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint should be dismissed for violating Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8.
2. Whether the court may dismiss the action under its inherent authority because plaintiff abused the judicial process.
3. Whether abstention under the Pullman doctrine was appropriate in light of plaintiff's attempts to interfere with pending state proceedings and state-law issues.
4. Whether dismissal should be with prejudice.
5. Whether the court could require prior approval by a United States District Judge before accepting future actions filed by plaintiff, subject to an exception for a notice of appeal.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint violated Rule 8 because it did not provide a short and plain statement of the grounds for jurisdiction and the claim for relief, and its allegations were not simple, concise, and direct.
2. A federal court may dismiss an action under its inherent authority when a litigant abuses the judicial process.
3. Abstention was appropriate because the complaint sought federal intervention in pending state proceedings and presented issues implicating unsettled state-law questions and federal-state comity.
4. Dismissal with prejudice was warranted based on the outrageous allegations, false claims, abuse of the judicial process, and plaintiff's history of attempting to harass courts and law-enforcement officials.
5. The clerk was ordered not to accept future actions filed by plaintiff without prior approval by a United States District Judge, except for a possible notice of appeal.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Pro se litigants, however, do not have the right to grossly violate the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.”

“When a litigant’s conduct abuses the judicial process, as here, the remedy of dismissal is within the inherent powers of the court.”

“This case should be dismissed with prejudice.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff filed a 179-page complaint containing numerous exhibits, alleged evidence, frivolous citations, and claims involving purported maritime torts, kidnapping, state-court actions, law-enforcement officials, and the validity of police oaths of office. The court characterized the pleading as abusive, incoherent, and materially

noncompliant with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8. The court also took judicial notice of several pending South Dakota criminal and foreclosure proceedings involving plaintiff.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Judge Schrier initially presided, denied injunctive relief, and later recused herself after plaintiff sued her in federal court in the District of Columbia. The case was randomly reassigned to Judge Kornmann, who dismissed the complaint for violating the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, abusing the judicial process, and implicating abstention principles based on pending state proceedings.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- *Keefer v. Provident Life & Accident Insurance Co.*, 238 F.3d 937, 940 (8th Cir. 2000)
- *Chrysler Corp. v. Carey*, 186 F.3d 1016, 1022 (8th Cir. 1999)
- *Pope v. Federal Express Corp.*, 974 F.2d 982, 984 (8th Cir. 1992)
- *Chambers v. NASCO, Inc.*, 501 U.S. 32, 44-45 (1991)
- *Colorado River Water Conservation District v. United States*, 424 U.S. 800, 817 (1976)
- *United States v. Dunkel*, 927 F.2d 955, 956 (7th Cir. 1991)
- *Railroad Commission v. Pullman Co.*, 312 U.S. 496 (1941)
- *George v. Parratt*, 602 F.2d 818, 820-22 (8th Cir. 1979)
- *Alleghany Corp. v. McCartney*, 898 F.2d 1138, 1142 (8th Cir. 1990)
- *Harman v. Forssenius*, 380 U.S. 528, 534 (1965)
- *Allegheny v. Frank Mashuda Co.*, 360 U.S. 185, 188 (1959)
- *Hunter, et al. v. Page County, Iowa, et al.* (8th Cir. May 17, 2024)