

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
VIRGINIA, RICHMOND DIVISION

**Carolyn Arhart Edwards and Misty Arhart Wood, Co-
Administrators of the Estate of Robert Joseph Edwards, Deceased v.
Henrico County Sheriff Alisa A. Gregory, Individually, et al.**

Civil Action No. 3:25-cv-00485-HEH (E.D. Va. Mar. 3, 2026) · No. 3:25-cv-00485-HEH · Decided March 31,
2026

SUMMARY

This memorandum opinion resolves motions to dismiss claims arising from the death of Robert Joseph Edwards while detained at the Henrico County Jail East. The court denies dismissal of the deliberate-indifference claim against nurse Pamela Coleman and the willful-and-wanton-negligence claims against Coleman and American Medical Staffing, Inc., but grants Sheriff Alisa A. Gregory’s motion to dismiss the Section 1983 policy claim. The opinion also notes the voluntary dismissal of claims against Deputy Brianna T. Lockhart and the plaintiffs’ withdrawal of a gross-negligence claim.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Richmond Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Henry E. Hudson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Richmond Division
DECIDED	March 31, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-cv-00485-HEH
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiffs filed a First Amended Complaint asserting claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and Virginia law. Defendants moved to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a Rule 12(b)(6) motion, the court accepts well-pleaded factual allegations as true, draws reasonable inferences in the plaintiff’s favor, and determines whether the complaint states a plausible claim for relief. Legal conclusions and conclusory recitations of claim elements receive no such deference.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Carolyn Arhart Edwards and Misty Arhart Wood, Co-Administrators of the Estate of Robert Joseph Edwards, Deceased v. Henrico County Sheriff Alisa A. Gregory, Individually, et al.

TOPICS

[section 1983](#)
[prisoners rights](#)
[medical malpractice](#)
[wrongful death](#)
[motions to dismiss](#)

PRACTICE AREAS

[civil rights](#)
[constitutional law](#)
[medical malpractice](#)
[wrongful death](#)
[civil procedure](#)

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the First Amended Complaint plausibly alleged that LPN Pamela Coleman acted with deliberate indifference to Edwards's serious medical need in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether the First Amended Complaint plausibly alleged that Sheriff Alisa A. Gregory had the knowledge and deliberate-indifference elements necessary for individual-capacity supervisory liability based on an allegedly unconstitutional medical-transport policy.
3. Whether the First Amended Complaint plausibly alleged willful and wanton negligence against Coleman under Virginia law.
4. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged vicarious liability against American Medical Staffing, Inc. for Coleman's alleged willful and wanton negligence.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint plausibly alleged that Coleman acted with deliberate indifference to Edwards's serious medical need because she allegedly disregarded obvious symptoms of a potentially life-threatening cardiac condition, failed to provide or obtain appropriate emergency care, and refused immediate hospital transport despite EMS's recommendation.
2. The complaint failed to plausibly allege individual-capacity supervisory liability against Gregory because it did not allege facts showing that she had actual or constructive knowledge that subordinates posed a pervasive and unreasonable risk of constitutional injury.
3. The complaint plausibly stated a Virginia-law claim for willful and wanton negligence against Coleman.
4. Because the complaint plausibly stated a willful-and-wanton-negligence claim against Coleman, it also plausibly stated a respondeat-superior claim against AMS based on Coleman's conduct.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“In considering a motion to dismiss, “[the Court] accept[s] as true all well-pleaded allegations and view[s] the complaint in the light most favorable to the plaintiff.”” (at 3)

“To prevail on a claim asserting denial of medical care under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must show facts that demonstrate deliberate indifference to a serious medical need.” (at 9)

“Taking the facts asserted in the FAC as true, including that Coleman either did not consult with or deliberately reported inaccurate information to the Jail’s physician and that Coleman purportedly believed that she needed a physician’s approval to transport Edwards to the hospital, the Court finds it plausible that Coleman’s alleged denial of medical care rises to the level of deliberate indifference under the Eighth Amendment standard.” (at 14)

“Accordingly, because the Court determined Plaintiffs’ Amended Complaint plausibly states a claim for willful and wanton negligence against Coleman—AMS’s employee—Plaintiffs also plausibly state a claim of willful and wanton negligence against AMS.” (at 18)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Robert Edwards was detained at the Henrico County Jail while awaiting adjudication of a grand-larceny charge and was also serving a jail sentence arising from Chesterfield County convictions. After experiencing recurring chest pain, Edwards allegedly suffered extreme chest pain, vomiting, and visible distress on November 30, 2024. Plaintiffs alleged that jail and medical personnel delayed responding, treated the symptoms as indigestion, refused or delayed hospital transport despite EMS's recommendation, and later delayed emergency treatment after Edwards collapsed. Edwards was transported to a hospital after suffering cardiac arrest and was pronounced dead.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs sued Sheriff Alisa A. Gregory, Chief Deputy Christina Pickens, Deputy Brianna T. Lockhart, LPN Pamela Coleman, and American Medical Staffing, Inc., alleging delayed and inadequate emergency medical care that contributed to Robert Edwards's death. Plaintiffs voluntarily dismissed the claims against Lockhart without prejudice and abandoned Count III. Defendants conceded that Count IV adequately stated a medical-negligence wrongful-death claim. The court granted Gregory's motion to dismiss Count II and denied the motion directed to Count I against Coleman and Count V against Coleman and AMS; the conclusion also refers to Count V against Gregory, although the court stated it was not addressing that claim because Gregory had not moved to dismiss it.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Venkatraman v. REI Systems, Inc., 417 F.3d 418, 420 (4th Cir. 2005)
- Megaro v. McCollum, 66 F.4th 151, 157 (4th Cir. 2023)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- West v. Atkins, 487 U.S. 42, 48 (1988)
- Parratt v. Taylor, 451 U.S. 527, 535 (1981)

- Daniels v. Williams, 474 U.S. 327, 328 (1986)
- Bonnell v. Beach, 408 F. Supp. 3d 733, 739 n.1 (E.D. Va. 2019)
- Chapman v. Houston Welfare Rights Organization, 441 U.S. 600, 615-18 (1979)
- Golden State Transit Corp. v. Los Angeles, 493 U.S. 103, 106 (1989)
- Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 103-06 (1976)
- Miltier v. Beorn, Miltier v. Beorn, 896 F.2d 848, 851-53 (4th Cir. 1990)
- Sosebee v. Murphy, 797 F.2d 179, 182 (4th Cir. 1986)
- Mata v. Saiz, 427 F.3d 745, 751, 756 (10th Cir. 2005)
- Gregg v. Georgia, 428 U.S. 153, 173 (1976)
- Young v. City of Mount Ranier, 238 F.3d 567, 575 (4th Cir. 2001)
- City of Revere v. Massachusetts General Hospital, 463 U.S. 239, 243-44 (1983)
- Short v. Hartman, 87 F.4th 593, 606, 611 (4th Cir. 2023)
- Bell v. Wolfish, 441 U.S. 520, 535-37 & n.5 (1979)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 837, 840, 842, 844 (1994)
- Jackson v. Lightsey, 775 F.3d 170, 178 (4th Cir. 2014)
- Hixson v. Moran, 1 F.4th 297, 302 (4th Cir. 2021)
- Adams v. Drew, 906 F. Supp. 1050, 1058 (E.D. Va. 1995)
- Boley v. Armor Correctional Health Services, 2:21-CV-187, 2022 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 56244, at *9, *25-26, *39 (E.D. Va. Mar. 28, 2022)
- Thompson v. Commonwealth, 878 F.3d 89, 108 (4th Cir. 2017)
- Scinto v. Stansberry, 841 F.3d 219, 226 (4th Cir. 2016)
- Makdessi v. Fields, 789 F.3d 126, 133 (4th Cir. 2015)
- Republican Party of North Carolina v. Martin, 980 F.2d 943, 952 (4th Cir. 1992)
- Hafer v. Melo, 502 U.S. 21, 27 (1991)
- Will v. Michigan Department of State Police, 491 U.S. 58, 71 (1989)
- Fujiwara v. Johnson, No. 1:24-CV-00957, 2026 WL 595694, at *6 (M.D.N.C. Mar. 3, 2026)
- Shaw v. Stroud, 13 F.3d 791, 799 (4th Cir. 1994)
- Whittaker v. O'Sullivan, No. 3:21-cv-474, 2022 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 142459, at *22 (E.D. Va. Aug. 9, 2022)
- Marro v. Briovarx Infusion Services, Inc., No. 1:18cv1266, 2019 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 234333, 2019 WL 10960566, at *1-2 (E.D. Va. Mar. 7, 2019)
- Boren v. Northwestern Regional Jail Authority, No. 5:13cv013, 2013 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 140169, at *16 (W.D. Va. Sept. 30, 2013)
- Green v. Ingram, 608 S.E.2d 917, 923 (Va. 2005)
- Smith v. Wellpath LLC, No. 2:20cv77, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 273246, at *36 (E.D. Va. Aug. 20, 2020)
- Dallas v. Craft, No. 3:21cv349, 2022 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 171365, at *32 (E.D. Va. Sept. 21, 2022)
- Hixson v. Hutcheson, No. 5:17-cv-032, 2018 WL 814059, at *9 (W.D. Va. Feb. 8, 2018)
- Roughton Pontiac Corp. v. Alston, 372 S.E.2d 147, 149 (Va. 1988)

- Moore v. Flagstar Bank, 6 F. Supp. 2d 496, 500 (E.D. Va. 1997)
- Pueschel v. United States, 369 F.3d 345, 353 n.3 (4th Cir. 2004)
- Vitol, S.A. v. Primerose Shipping Co., 708 F.3d 527, 539 (4th Cir. 2013)
- Bass v. E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co., 324 F.3d 761, 765 (4th Cir. 2003)
- Adams v. Drew, 906 F. Supp. 1050, 1058 (E.D. Va. 1995)

Retrieved from lawtools.ai · <https://lawtools.ai/cases/federal/united-states-district-court-for-the-eastern-district-of-vir/2026/carolyn-arhart-edwards-and-misty-arhart-wood-co-6l5ta0av>