

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

Patricia A. Oliver v. AmeriHealth Caritas Services, LLC and Blue
Cross Complete of Michigan, LLC

Oliver · No. 23-13071 · Decided March 12, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan granted defendants’ motion for summary judgment in Patricia Oliver’s Title VII race-discrimination and retaliation action. The court held that Oliver’s untimely responses to requests for admission were admitted by operation of law and that those admissions, along with the evidentiary record, precluded her claims.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Laurie J. Michelson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
DECIDED	March 12, 2026
DOCKET	23-13071
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff brought Title VII race-discrimination and retaliation claims after her termination. Defendants moved for summary judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 56. The court granted the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is proper when the materials in the record show no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. The nonmovant must identify specific facts creating a genuine issue and may not rely on allegations, denials, or unsupported argument.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	district court opinion; persuasive authority only
PARTIES	Patricia A. Oliver v. AmeriHealth Caritas Services, LLC, Blue Cross Complete of Michigan, LLC

TOPICS

summary judgment

title vii

racial discrimination

retaliation

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

employment law

civil rights

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether defendants were entitled to summary judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 56 on Oliver's Title VII race-discrimination claim.
2. Whether Oliver's untimely responses to requests for admission were deemed admitted by operation of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 36(a)(3).
3. Whether Oliver could avoid the effect of the admissions without moving under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 36(b) to withdraw or amend them.
4. Whether defendants were entitled to summary judgment on Oliver's Title VII retaliation claims.

HOLDINGS

1. Requests for admission are self-executing: matters not answered or objected to within the mandatory response period are admitted by operation of law.
2. Admissions that became effective under Rule 36 cannot be overcome at summary judgment by contradictory affidavit testimony or other evidence, and unsupported attorney argument does not create a genuine dispute of material fact.
3. Summary judgment was warranted on Oliver's Title VII race-discrimination claim because her admissions established that she had no facts showing race played a role in disciplinary or termination decisions, and she offered no supported evidence creating a genuine dispute or showing pretext.
4. Summary judgment was warranted on Oliver's Title VII retaliation claims because her admissions established that she had no facts or knowledge connecting her governmental or internal complaints to the termination or any disciplinary decision, and she offered no supported evidence of pretext.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A matter admitted under this rule is conclusively established unless the court, on motion, permits the admission to be withdrawn or amended.” (PageID.252–272)

“The Rule provides that “[a] matter is admitted unless, within 30 days after being served, the party to whom the request is directed serves on the requesting party a written answer or objection addressed to the matter and signed by the party or its attorney.”” (PageID.581–583)

“The court shall grant summary judgment if the movant shows that there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.” (PageID.584)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Oliver worked as a Provider Communications Consultant in AmeriHealth's Southfield, Michigan office, primarily writing, editing, and publishing a bi-monthly newsletter. She alleged that she was held to a different standard, disciplined for conduct for which similarly situated employees were not disciplined, and treated differently because she is Caucasian. After her termination, she asserted Title VII race-discrimination and retaliation claims. In discovery, she failed to timely respond to 117 requests for admission, including admissions that she had no facts showing race or protected activity played a role in the challenged employment decisions.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Oliver filed this employment-discrimination action against AmeriHealth Caritas Services, LLC and Blue Cross Complete of Michigan, LLC. Her initial counsel withdrew, and the court granted multiple stays and extensions for her to obtain replacement counsel; current counsel appeared shortly before responses to defendants' requests for admission were due. Oliver did not timely respond to 117 requests for admission and never moved to withdraw or amend the resulting admissions. After discovery, defendants moved for summary judgment, which the court granted because the admissions and un rebutted evidence defeated Oliver's discrimination and retaliation claims.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Mutchler v. Dunlap Mem'l Hosp., 485 F.3d 854, 857 (6th Cir. 2007)
- Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc., 477 U.S. 242, 247–48 (1986)
- Bethel v. Jenkins, 988 F.3d 931, 938 (6th Cir. 2021)
- Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317, 330 n.3 (1986)
- Goodson v. Brennan, 688 F. App'x 372, 375–77 (6th Cir. 2017)
- Williams v. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., 560 F. App'x 233, 244 (5th Cir. 2014)
- Locke v. City of Cookeville, 77 F.3d 482 (6th Cir. 1996)
- Lavado v. Keohane, 992 F.2d 601, 605–06 (6th Cir. 1993)
- Newman v. Fed. Express Corp., 266 F.3d 401, 406 (6th Cir. 2001)
- Laughlin v. City of Cleveland, 633 F. App'x 312, 315 (6th Cir. 2015)
- Ames v. Ohio Dep't of Youth Servs., 605 U.S. 303 (2025)
- Alzid v. Porter, No. 23-2098, 2024 WL 4579427, at *5 (6th Cir. Oct. 25, 2024)
- Rogers v. Henry Ford Health Sys., 897 F.3d 763 (6th Cir. 2018)

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