

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
ARKANSAS, NORTHERN DIVISION

David Lange v. Hennepin County, Minnesota, et al.

Lange · No. 3:25-cv-00297-KGB · Decided February 12, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas grants David Lange’s application to proceed in forma pauperis but dismisses his complaint without prejudice. The court holds that Lange’s § 1983 claims are barred by Heck v. Humphrey, his RICO and § 1985(3) claims are inadequately pleaded, and it declines supplemental jurisdiction over his state-law claims. The court also denies two motions seeking preliminary injunctive and emergency relief.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas, Northern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Kristine G. Baker
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas, Northern Division
DECIDED	February 12, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-cv-00297-KGB
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se plaintiff filed a federal complaint, an application to proceed in forma pauperis, and two motions seeking preliminary injunctive and related emergency relief. The district court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), dismissed the complaint without prejudice, and denied both motions for preliminary injunction.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For IFP screening, whether the complaint is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2). For preliminary injunctive relief, the Dataphase factors, with likelihood of success on the merits identified as most significant.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district-court order; precedential status unknown
PARTIES	David Lange v. Hennepin County, Minnesota, et al.

TOPICS

injunctions

section 1983

civil rights

pleadings

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

RICO

injunctive relief

federal jurisdiction

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Lange's claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 were barred by *Heck v. Humphrey* because success would imply the invalidity of his state conviction, imprisonment, or sentence.
2. Whether the court had jurisdiction under § 1983 to expunge criminal records or modify or dismiss a state-court warrant or conviction.
3. Whether Lange adequately pleaded a RICO enterprise and pattern of racketeering activity under 18 U.S.C. § 1962 and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 9(b).
4. Whether Lange adequately pleaded a class-based, invidiously discriminatory conspiracy and agreement under 42 U.S.C. § 1985(3).
5. Whether the court should exercise supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims and grant preliminary injunctive or emergency relief.

HOLDINGS

1. Claims under § 1983 that necessarily imply the invalidity of Lange's state conviction, continued imprisonment, or sentence are not cognizable unless the conviction or sentence has been reversed, expunged, invalidated, or called into question by federal habeas relief. Lange's malicious-prosecution, fabrication-of-evidence, retaliatory-prosecution, and conscience-shocking-abuse-of-process claims were therefore barred.
2. The federal district court lacked jurisdiction under § 1983 to modify a state-court order, dismiss a state-court warrant, or expunge state criminal records; habeas corpus is the federal remedy for attacking the validity of a conviction or confinement.
3. Lange failed to state a RICO claim because he did not plead with the required specificity an enterprise or coordinated conduct among the defendants, including the required who, what, when, where, and how of the alleged racketeering conduct.
4. Lange failed to state a claim under § 1985(3) because he did not plead particularized facts showing an agreement or meeting of the minds directed toward unconstitutional action, and his conclusory allegations of class-based racial animus were insufficient.
5. The court declined to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Lange's state-law claims after dismissing all federal claims.
6. Both motions for preliminary injunction and related emergency relief were denied because Lange failed to state a viable federal claim and therefore could not establish a likelihood of success on the merits.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Habeas corpus is the sole federal remedy for attacking the validity of a conviction or confinement.” (IV.A)

“RICO does not cover all instances of wrongdoing.” (IV.B)

“Threadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action, supported by mere conclusory statements, do not suffice.” (IV.C)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Lange alleged that officials in Minnesota and Arkansas engaged in malicious prosecution, evidence fabrication or suppression, retaliatory prosecution, racial manipulation of warrants, and related misconduct. He alleged that a Minnesota prosecution and a later Arkansas theft prosecution affected his custody, business interests, real-estate transactions, and property. At the time of filing, he had pleaded guilty in Arkansas to theft of property worth more than \$25,000, and he did not allege that the conviction had been vacated, expunged, or invalidated through habeas relief.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Lange filed claims under RICO, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1985(3), and state law based on alleged wrongful prosecutions, evidence suppression, interference with business interests, and related conduct in Minnesota and Arkansas. The court granted IFP status, screened the complaint, determined that the § 1983 claims were barred by Heck, the RICO and § 1985(3) claims were inadequately pleaded, and declined supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims. It denied both preliminary-injunction motions because Lange failed to state a viable federal claim and therefore could not show a likelihood of success on the merits.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Cross v. General Motors Corp., 721 F.2d 1152, 1157 (8th Cir. 1983)
- In re Williamson, 786 F.2d 1336, 1338 (8th Cir. 1986)
- Key v. Does, 217 F. Supp. 3d 1006, 1007 (E.D. Ark. 2016)
- Michau v. Charleston City, South Carolina, 434 F.3d 725, 728 (4th Cir. 2006)
- Lister v. Department of Treasury, 408 F.3d 1309, 1312 (10th Cir. 2005)
- Lopez v. Smith, 203 F.3d 1122, 1126 n.7 (9th Cir. 2000)
- McGore v. Wrigglesworth, 114 F.3d 601, 608 (6th Cir. 1997)
- LaFountain v. Harry, 716 F.3d 944, 951 (6th Cir. 2013)
- Heck v. Humphrey, 512 U.S. 477, 486-87 (1994)
- Callahan v. Rendlen, 806 F.2d 795, 796 (8th Cir. 1986)
- Harris v. Mo. Court of Appeals, W. Dist., 787 F.2d 427, 429 (8th Cir. 1986)
- Preiser v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 475, 500 (1973)
- Nitro Distrib., Inc. v. Alticor, Inc., 565 F.3d 417, 428 (8th Cir. 2009)

- Sedima S.P.R.L. v. Imrex Co., 473 U.S. 479, 495 (1985)
- Crest Constr. II, Inc. v. Doe, 660 F.3d 346, 354-55 (8th Cir. 2011)
- Craig Outdoor Adver., Inc. v. Viacom Outdoor, Inc., 528 F.3d 1001, 1027 (8th Cir. 2008)
- Summerhill v. Terminix, Inc., 637 F.3d 877, 880 (8th Cir. 2011)
- Boyle v. United States, 556 U.S. 938, 946-47 & n.4 (2009)
- Target Corp. v. LCH Pavement Consultants, LLC, 2013 WL 2470148, at *4 (D. Minn. June 7, 2013)
- In re Ins. Brokerage Antitr. Litig., 618 F.3d 300, 374 (3d Cir. 2010)
- Nettles v. UMB Bank, N.A., 2010 WL 11618679, at *3 (W.D. Mo. Sept. 13, 2010)
- Ybarra v. Legal Assistance of Dakota Cty., 2025 WL 3215659, at *8 (D. Minn. Nov. 18, 2025)
- Mettler v. Whitley, 165 F.3d 1197, 1206 (8th Cir. 1999)
- Andrews v. Fowler, 98 F.3d 1069, 1079 (8th Cir. 1996)
- Bray v. Alexandria Women's Health Clinic, 506 U.S. 263, 268 (1993)
- Harrison v. Springdale Water & Sewer Comm'n, 780 F.2d 1422, 1429 (8th Cir. 1986)
- Kelly v. City of Omaha, 813 F.3d 1070, 1077-78 (8th Cir. 2016)
- City of Omaha Emps. Betterment Ass'n v. City of Omaha, 883 F.2d 650, 652 (8th Cir. 1989)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- King v. City of Crestwood, Missouri, 899 F.3d 643, 651 (8th Cir. 2018)
- Kroupa v. Nielsen, 731 F.3d 813, 818 (8th Cir. 2013)
- Dataphase Sys. Inc. v. CL Sys., 640 F.2d 109, 114 (8th Cir. 1981)
- Watkins Inc. v. Lewis, 346 F.3d 841, 844 (8th Cir. 2003)
- S.J.W. ex rel. Wilson v. Lee's Summit R-7 Sch. Dist., 696 F.3d 771, 776 (8th Cir. 2012)