

SUPREME COURT OF MISSOURI

State ex rel. Joshua D. Hawley v. Midkiff

543 S.W.3d 604 (Mo. banc 2018) · Decided April 3, 2018

SUMMARY

The Missouri Supreme Court made permanent a preliminary writ of prohibition concerning the venue and proper respondent for Ricky Kidd's habeas corpus petition. The Court held that a habeas petition must name an individual capable of effectuating a change in the petitioner's custody and must be filed in the county where the petitioner is held in the custody of the Department of Corrections. Because Kidd was confined at Crossroads Correctional Center in DeKalb County, the Jackson County circuit court was ordered to transfer the case and name the warden as respondent.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Missouri
WRITING FOR THE COURT	George W. Draper III
JURISDICTION	Missouri
DECIDED	April 3, 2018
DISPOSITION	writ_granted
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The State sought an original writ of prohibition after the Jackson County circuit court refused to transfer a habeas corpus petition to DeKalb County and refused to name the Warden of Crossroads Correctional Center as the proper respondent. The Supreme Court of Missouri had issued a preliminary writ and made it permanent.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A writ of prohibition is appropriate to prevent a lower court from usurping judicial power, remedy an excess of authority or jurisdiction or an abuse of discretion, or prevent irreparable harm. Prohibition is also proper when a lower court lacks personal jurisdiction or when usurpation of jurisdiction is clearly evident.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published precedential opinion
PARTIES	The State of Missouri, ex rel. Joshua D. Hawley v. Midkiff

TOPICS

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PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

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habeas corpus

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether a habeas corpus petition must identify a named respondent who can effectuate a change in the petitioner's imprisonment or detention.
2. Whether venue for a habeas corpus petition filed by a prisoner in the custody of the Missouri Department of Corrections lies in the county where the prisoner is confined to serve the sentence, rather than in a county where the prisoner is only temporarily detained under a writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum.
3. Whether prohibition was appropriate to remedy the Jackson County circuit court's refusal to transfer the habeas proceeding and name the proper respondent.

HOLDINGS

1. A petition for a writ of habeas corpus must name or describe the person restraining the petitioner's liberty, and the respondent must be an individual capable of effectuating a change in the petitioner's imprisonment or detention as directed by the court.
2. A prisoner in the custody of the Missouri Department of Corrections must file a habeas corpus petition in the county where the prisoner is held in custody by the Department, even if the prisoner is temporarily outside the physical custody of the Department in another county.
3. Prohibition was appropriate, and the preliminary writ was properly made permanent, because the Jackson County circuit court exceeded its authority by refusing to transfer the habeas proceeding to DeKalb County and by failing to require a proper named respondent.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The named respondent must be an individual who can effectuate a change in the offender's imprisonment or detention as directed by the court." (607)

"Therefore, when Defendant filed his petition for a writ of habeas corpus while detained in Jackson County, he was nonetheless in the custody of the department of corrections, which incarcerated him at the Crossroads Correctional Center in DeKalb County." (608)

"Rule 91 provides there must be a named respondent and a petition for writ of habeas corpus must be filed in the county in which a petitioner is in the custody of the department of corrections." (608)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Ricky Kidd was serving consecutive life sentences without parole at Crossroads Correctional Center in DeKalb County under the custody of the Missouri Department of Corrections. He was temporarily transferred to Jackson County under a writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum to participate in a DNA-testing proceeding. While temporarily detained in Jackson County, Kidd filed a habeas corpus petition challenging his convictions and sentences, naming the Jackson County Detention Center director as respondent. After Kidd returned to DeKalb

County, the Jackson County circuit court declined to transfer venue or substitute the Crossroads warden as respondent.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Ricky Kidd filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus in Jackson County while temporarily detained there under a writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum. After Kidd returned to Crossroads Correctional Center in DeKalb County, the Jackson County circuit court denied motions to transfer venue and substitute the Warden as respondent, ultimately allowing the case to proceed without a named respondent. The court of appeals denied the State's writ petition, after which the State sought prohibition in the Supreme Court of Missouri.

DISPOSITION

writ_granted

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The Jackson County circuit court was required to transfer the habeas corpus proceeding to DeKalb County and recognize the Warden of Crossroads Correctional Center as the proper named respondent.

CASES CITED

- State v. Kidd, 990 S.W.2d 175 (Mo. App. W.D. 1999)
- State v. Kidd, 75 S.W.3d 804 (Mo. App. W.D. 2002)
- State ex rel. Strauser v. Martinez, 416 S.W.3d 798, 801 (Mo. banc 2014)
- State ex rel. Norfolk S. Ry. Co. v. Dolan, 512 S.W.3d 41, 45 (Mo. banc 2017)
- State ex rel. William Ranni Assocs., Inc. v. Hartenbach, 742 S.W.2d 134, 137 (Mo. banc 1987)
- State ex rel. Tarrasch v. Crow, 622 S.W.2d 928, 937 (Mo. banc 1981)
- Nicholson v. State, 524 S.W.2d 106, 109 (Mo. banc 1975)
- State v. King, 372 S.W.2d 857, 858-59 (Mo. 1963)
- United States v. Poole, 531 F.3d 263, 271-72 (4th Cir. 2008)