

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
KENTUCKY, BOWLING GREEN DIVISION

Jeffery Stinson v. United States District Court

Stinson · No. 1:25-CV-170-JHM · Decided February 11, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky dismissed Jeffery Stinson’s pro se prisoner civil-rights action following screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The court construed the claims against the United States District Court as arising under Bivens, but held that Bivens does not authorize damages claims against the United States or a federal governmental entity. The action was dismissed for failure to state a claim and because the defendant was immune from monetary relief.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky, Bowling Green Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Joseph H. McKinley Jr.
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky, Bowling Green Division
DECIDED	February 11, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-CV-170-JHM
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se pretrial detainee civil-rights action screened under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court must dismiss a prisoner complaint that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant. For failure to state a claim, the court accepted well-pleaded factual allegations as true and viewed the complaint in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, but did not accept bare legal conclusions.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; memorandum opinion from a federal district court with no reporter citation.
PARTIES	Jeffery Stinson v. United States District Court

TOPICS

section 1983

sovereign immunity

civil rights

prisoners rights

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

federal civil procedure

constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the United States District Court and its employees could be sued under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether the complaint could proceed as a Bivens action against the United States District Court.
3. Whether the defendant was immune from a Bivens claim for monetary relief.

HOLDINGS

1. Section 1983 applies to civil-rights claims against state or local governmental actors, not federal actors; therefore, the United States District Court and its employees were not subject to suit under § 1983.
2. A Bivens action for damages may not be brought against the United States or a federal governmental agency or entity.
3. The action was subject to dismissal for failure to state a claim and for seeking monetary relief from a defendant immune from such relief.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“However, “a Bivens action may not be brought against the United States and other federal governmental agencies or entities.”” (III.B)

“For these reasons, the action will be dismissed for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted and for seeking monetary relief from a Defendant immune from such relief.” (IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Stinson, a pretrial detainee at the Allen County Detention Center, sued the United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky over alleged problems obtaining papers related to his federal criminal proceedings and his transportation after revocation of supervised release. He alleged that he was sexually assaulted while in transit through Atlanta and that he was returned to Atlanta despite a sentencing recommendation that he not be housed there. He sought damages after stating that he could not find an attorney to take the case.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Jeffery Stinson filed a civil-rights complaint for damages against the United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky. The court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A and dismissed it for failure to state a claim and because the defendant was immune from monetary relief.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- McGore v. Wigglesworth, 114 F.3d 601, 604 (6th Cir. 1997)
- Jones v. Bock, 549 U.S. 199 (2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Tackett v. M & G Polymers, USA, LLC, 561 F.3d 478, 488 (6th Cir. 2009)
- Gunasekera v. Irwin, 551 F.3d 461, 466 (6th Cir. 2009)
- Columbia Natural Res., Inc. v. Tatum, 58 F.3d 1101, 1109 (6th Cir. 1995)
- Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520–21 (1972)
- Jourdan v. Jabe, 951 F.2d 108, 110 (6th Cir. 1991)
- McDonald v. Hall, 610 F.2d 16, 19 (1st Cir. 1979)
- Bivens v. Six Unknown Agents, 403 U.S. 388 (1971)
- King v. Fuller, No. 4:08-cv-36, 2008 WL 4613076, at *2 (E.D. Tenn. Oct. 15, 2008)
- Brown v. U.S. Dep’t of Just., No. 3:23-CV-00072-JHM, 2023 WL 6929814, at *2 (W.D. Ky. Oct. 19, 2023)
- Gaddy v. S.C. Dist. Ct., No. CA 8:13-2387-JFA-JDA, 2014 WL 1094442, at *4 (D.S.C. Mar. 14, 2014)
- FDIC v. Meyer, 510 U.S. 471, 486 (1994)
- Scoyni v. United States Dist. Ct. of Idaho 9th Cir., No. 1:19-CV-00232-DCN, 2019 WL 5587212, at *2 (D. Idaho Oct. 29, 2019)
- Scott v. U.S. Dep’t of Just., No. 2:21-CV-11146, 2021 WL 2895293, at *3 (E.D. Mich. July 9, 2021)
- LeVay v. Morken, 598 F. Supp. 3d 655, 663 (E.D. Mich. 2022)
- Olita v. United States, No. 21-2763-JTF-TMP, 2022 WL 874179, at *1 (W.D. Tenn. Mar. 23, 2022)