

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF  
ALABAMA

David Randall Poyner v. Kenneth Peters

Poyner v. Peters · No. Civ. A. No. 25-492-KD-MU · Decided February 25, 2026

SUMMARY

The court denies David Randall Poyner’s motion for appointment of counsel in his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 habeas action. The court concludes that Poyner articulated his claim, the applicable legal doctrines were not complex, and the interests of justice did not require appointed counsel at that stage.

CASE DETAILS

|                       |                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COURT                 | United States District Court for the Southern District of Alabama                                         |
| WRITING FOR THE COURT | P. Bradley Murray                                                                                         |
| JURISDICTION          | United States District Court for the Southern District of Alabama                                         |
| DECIDED               | February 25, 2026                                                                                         |
| DOCKET                | Civ. A. No. 25-492-KD-MU                                                                                  |
| DISPOSITION           | other                                                                                                     |
| PROCEDURAL POSTURE    | Petitioner moved for appointment of counsel in a pending 28 U.S.C. § 2254 habeas action.                  |
| STANDARD OF REVIEW    | Discretionary determination whether appointment of counsel is warranted under 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(a)(2)(B). |
| PRECEDENTIAL VALUE    | Unknown; district court order                                                                             |
| PARTIES               | David Randall Poyner v. Kenneth Peters, Warden, Fountain Correctional Facility                            |

TOPICS

- federal habeas corpus
- post-conviction relief
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- federal habeas corpus
- post-conviction relief
- appointment of counsel

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should appoint counsel for the petitioner in this § 2254 proceeding under 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(a)(2)(B).

## HOLDINGS

1. Appointment of counsel is discretionary in a federal habeas proceeding, and the petitioner did not demonstrate that the interests of justice required appointment of counsel at that stage.

## KEY QUOTATIONS

*“No constitutional right to counsel exists in federal habeas corpus proceedings.”*

*“Petitioner has not demonstrated that the interests of justice require appointment of counsel at this juncture of the proceedings.”*

## FACTUAL BACKGROUND

David Randall Poyner is pursuing a federal habeas petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. He requested appointed counsel, claiming that he lacked the ability to present or investigate his case and lacked funds to retain counsel. The court reviewed his petition and supplemental filings and found that he had articulated his claim and supporting factual allegations and that the applicable legal doctrines were not unique or complex.

## PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Poyner filed a § 2254 petition and supplemental filings. He then moved for appointment of counsel, asserting that he could not adequately present or investigate his case and lacked funds to hire counsel. The motion was referred to the magistrate judge under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(A), Rule 72, and the local rules, and was denied.

## DISPOSITION

other

## CASES CITED

- Wright v. Johnson, No. 5:15-cv-00423-CAR-CHW, 2017 WL 3167326, at \*4 (M.D. Ga. Mar. 14, 2017)
- McGriff v. Department of Corrections, 338 F.3d 1231, 1235 (11th Cir. 2003)
- Pennsylvania v. Finley, 481 U.S. 551, 555 (1987)