

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

Kyle Corrigan, et al. v. City of Oshkosh, et al.

Corrigan · No. 25-CV-1515 · Decided December 2, 2025

SUMMARY

The court dismissed Bright Line Investigations, LLC, as a plaintiff because it failed to obtain counsel, and dismissed Kyle Corrigan’s action without prejudice. The court held that an Oshkosh police officer’s access to vehicle-registration information while investigating a suspicious vehicle was a permissible law-enforcement use under the Driver’s Privacy Protection Act. The court also concluded that information identifying an LLC was not protected personal information under the Act and that Corrigan failed to state plausible federal or state claims.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Byron B. Conway
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	December 2, 2025
DOCKET	25-CV-1515
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed claims arising from a police officer's access to a vehicle registration record and the alleged disclosure of information in an incident report. Defendants moved to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6). The district court dismissed Bright Line Investigations, LLC, because it failed to obtain counsel, granted defendants' motion, and dismissed the action without prejudice.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the complaint to determine whether it stated a plausible claim for relief and considered dismissal for failure to prosecute based on the failure to respond to the motion to dismiss.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court decision
PARTIES	Kyle Corrigan, Bright Line Investigations, LLC v. City of Oshkosh, et al.

TOPICS

motions to dismiss

civil procedure

statutory interpretation

civil rights

municipal liability

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

municipal law

statutory interpretation

Driver's Privacy Protection Act

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether an LLC may proceed as a plaintiff without representation by licensed counsel.
2. Whether a law enforcement officer's access to a vehicle registration record while responding to a suspicious-vehicle report is a permissible use under the Driver's Privacy Protection Act.
3. Whether the Driver's Privacy Protection Act protects information identifying a limited liability company as the registrant of a vehicle.
4. Whether the complaint stated plausible claims under the Driver's Privacy Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983, 1985, and 1986, state law, or Monell against the City of Oshkosh.

HOLDINGS

1. A limited liability company may not proceed pro se and must proceed through licensed counsel; because no counsel appeared for Bright Line Investigations, LLC, it was dismissed as a plaintiff.
2. The officer's access to the vehicle's motor-vehicle record was a permissible use under the Driver's Privacy Protection Act because it was undertaken by a law enforcement agency in carrying out its functions.
3. The DPPA does not protect information concerning an artificial entity such as a limited liability company because the statute's protection applies to personal information belonging to an individual.
4. The complaint failed to state a plausible claim under the DPPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983, 1985, or 1986, or any asserted state law, and the action was dismissed without prejudice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“That an officer’s first step in responding to such a complaint would be to run that vehicle’s license plate is not only logical and reasonable, but it is expressly permitted under the DPPA as an action by a law enforcement agency in carrying out its functions.”

“The DPPA restricts “personal information,” see 18 U.S.C. § 2721(a)(1), which it defines as certain information belonging to an “individual,” 18 U.S.C. § 2725(3). It does not protect information regarding an artificial entity such as a limited liability company like Bright Line Investigations.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Corrigan alleged that he was legally parked and conducting surveillance when an Oshkosh police officer responding to a report of a suspicious person and vehicle ran the license plate of Corrigan's vehicle. He claimed that the access violated the Driver's Privacy Protection Act and supported claims under 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983, 1985, and 1986, state law, and Monell liability against the City. He also appeared to challenge the release of an incident report identifying Bright Line Investigations, LLC, as the vehicle's registrant.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Kyle Corrigan filed the action on behalf of himself and Bright Line Investigations, LLC. The court ordered the LLC to obtain counsel within 20 days, warning that it would be dismissed if counsel did not appear; no counsel appeared. Defendants moved to dismiss, and Corrigan did not respond by the deadline. The court nevertheless considered the motion on its merits and dismissed the complaint and action without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Rowland v. California Men's Colony, Unit II Men's Advisory Council, 506 U.S. 194, 201–02 (1993)
- Muzikowski v. Paramount Pictures Corp., 322 F.3d 918, 924 (7th Cir. 2003)
- Scandia Down Corp. v. Euroquilt, Inc., 772 F.2d 1423, 1427 (7th Cir. 1985)
- Senne v. Village of Palatine, 784 F.3d 444, 448 (7th Cir. 2015)
- Monell v. Department of Social Services, 436 U.S. 658 (1978)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN KYLE CORRIGAN, et al., Plaintiffs, v. Case No. 25-CV-1515 CITY OF OSHKOSH, et al., Defendants. DECISION AND ORDER Kyle Corrigan, proceeding pro se, filed this action on behalf of himself and Bright Line Investigations, LLC. Corrigan can represent himself, but an artificial entity like an LLC must proceed by counsel or not at all.

Rowland v. California Men's Colony, Unit II Men's Advisory Council, 506 U.S. 194, 201–02 (1993); Muzikowski v. Paramount Pictures Corp., 322 F.3d 918, 924 (7th Cir. 2003); Scandia Down Corp. v. Euroquilt, Inc., 772 F.2d 1423, 1427 (7th Cir. 1985).

Therefore, on October 31, 2025, the court ordered Bright Line Investigations to obtain counsel within 20 days and ordered that if it failed to do so it would be dismissed as a plaintiff. Counsel has not appeared on behalf of Bright Line Investigations, and therefore it will be dismissed as a plaintiff.

The defendants have also filed a motion to dismiss. (ECF No. 3.) Corrigan's response was due no later than November 20, 2025. See Civ. L.R. 7(b). He has failed to respond to the motion. "Failure to comply with the briefing requirements in Civil L. R. 7(a)-(b) may result in sanctions up to and including the Court denying or granting the motion." Civ. L.R. 7(d).

Alternatively, when a plaintiff fails to respond to a motion to dismiss the court may dismiss the action for failure to prosecute. See Civ. L.R. 41(c). Nonetheless, having reviewed the defendants' motion, the court concludes that it is appropriate to address the motion on its merits. Corrigan

alleges that he was legally parked and conducting surveillance of a residence when an Oshkosh Police Officer, responding to a citizen's report of a suspicious person and vehicle, arrived and ran the plate of Corrigan's vehicle.

This, Corrigan alleges, violated that the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA) and supports claims under 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983, 1985, and 1986, and various state laws. He also alleges that the City of Oshkosh is liable under Monell, see *Monell v. Department of Soc. Svcs.*, 436 U.S. 658 (1978).

In 1989, a stalker murdered an actress after he obtained her address from California motor vehicle records. *Senne v. Vill. of Palatine*, 784 F.3d 444, 448 (7th Cir. 2015). That incident gave rise to the DPPA, which restricts access to personal information in government motor vehicle records. *Id.* However, there are many permissible uses of personal information under the DPPA including "by any government agency, including any court or law enforcement agency, in carrying out its functions, or any private person or entity acting on behalf of a Federal, State, or local agency in carrying out its functions." 18 U.S.C. § 2721(b)(1).

Corrigan's claims rely on his assertion that an Oshkosh Police Officer accessed his personal information (specifically the information contained in his vehicle registration) when that officer responded to a call of a suspicious vehicle. That an officer's first step in responding to such a complaint would be to run that vehicle's license plate is not only logical and reasonable, but it is expressly permitted under the DPPA as an action by a law enforcement agency in carrying out its functions.

Thus, the premise of Corrigan's complaint—that it was somehow improper for an officer to access his motor vehicle record—is meritless. The allegations in the complaint do not suggest that it was in any way improper for the police officer to access Corrigan's motor vehicle record.

Therefore, he has no plausible claim under the DPPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983, 1985, and 1986, or any state law. Corrigan may also be alleging that a defendant's release of an incident report pursuant to Corrigan's open record's request was improper because it disclosed that the vehicle was registered to Bright Line Investigations. Insofar as Corrigan sought to present such a claim in his complaint, again the claim is meritless.

The DPPA restricts "personal information," see 18 U.S.C. § 2721(a)(1), which it defines as certain information belonging to an "individual," 18 U.S.C. § 2725(3). It does not protect information regarding an artificial entity such as a limited liability company like Bright Line Investigations.

Having concluded that Corrigan has failed to state a claim, the court would ordinarily give him an opportunity to amend his complaint. However, the court is unable to glean any way by which amendment may give rise to a plausible cause of action under the circumstances presented.

Moreover, Corrigan has apparently abandoned this action by failing to respond to the defendants' motion to dismiss. Therefore, the court will also dismiss this action but will do so without prejudice. IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Bright Line Investigations, LLC, is dismissed as a plaintiff. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the defendants' motion to dismiss is granted.

Corrigan's complaint and this action are dismissed without prejudice. The Clerk shall enter judgment accordingly. Dated at Green Bay, Wisconsin this 2nd day of December, 2025. s/ Byron B. Conway BYRON B. CONWAY U.S. District Judge