

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
ARKANSAS

Brandon Lacy v. Dexter Payne, Director, Arkansas Division of
Correction

No. 5:19-cv-95-DPM (E.D. Ark. Feb. 17, 2026) · No. No. 5:19-cv-95-DPM · Decided February 17, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas denies Brandon Lacy’s remaining motion to alter or amend the judgment and denies his motion to file a supplemental habeas petition. The court concludes that newly produced prosecutor’s files do not establish manifest error, prejudice, or grounds to overcome procedural defaults on Lacy’s claims concerning ineffective assistance, medical-examiner testimony, victim-family views, and jail correspondence. The proposed supplemental claims are denied as futile and, in one instance, unduly delayed.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas
WRITING FOR THE COURT	D. P. Marshall Jr.
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas
DECIDED	February 17, 2026
DOCKET	No. 5:19-cv-95-DPM
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Federal habeas petitioner moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e) to alter or amend the judgment and sought leave to file a supplemental habeas petition based on materials obtained from the prosecutor's files. The district court denied both motions.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A Rule 59(e) motion requires a showing of manifest error of law or fact. Leave to amend under Rule 15(a)(2) may be denied when amendment would be futile or unduly delayed. The court also applied habeas procedural-default, prejudice, and deferential-review principles.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished, nonprecedential federal district court order
PARTIES	Brandon Lacy v. Dexter Payne, Director, Arkansas Division of Correction

TOPICS

federal habeas corpus post-conviction relief motion to amend ineffective assistance due process

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus criminal procedure post-conviction relief constitutional law civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether newly obtained prosecutor-file materials demonstrated manifest error of law or fact warranting alteration or amendment of the judgment under Rule 59(e).
2. Whether the prosecutor-file materials established cause or prejudice sufficient to excuse procedural default of Lacy's claims.
3. Whether the materials supported a meritorious Brady, Napue, or prosecutorial-misconduct claim.
4. Whether Lacy should receive leave under Rule 15(a)(2) to file supplemental habeas claims.
5. Whether the proposed supplemental claims were futile or unduly delayed.

HOLDINGS

1. The Rule 59(e) motion was properly denied because Lacy did not demonstrate manifest error of law or fact, and the newly produced materials did not undermine the judgment.
2. The prosecutor-file materials did not establish cause or prejudice sufficient to overcome procedural default, and the related claims remained meritless.
3. Leave to supplement was denied because the proposed claims were futile and, for at least one claim, unduly delayed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The prosecutor’s office has made two productions, providing hundreds of pages. This Court is not persuaded that any materials are being withheld.” (at 2)

“Though Chaddock may have gone further to exonerate Lacy in her phone conversation with the prosecutor, this Court is not persuaded that the interview notes would have made any material difference in the admissibility of her testimony or in the trial’s outcome.” (at 12)

“This proposed claim doesn’t grow out of the prosecutor’s file; it springs from previously available defense material; and Lacy offers no good reason for only raising it after Judgment.” (at 15)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Lacy was convicted and sentenced to death for the killing of Randy Walker, with co-defendant Brody Laswell involved in the events. His habeas claims concerned alleged ineffective assistance regarding penalty-phase evidence, the medical examiner's testimony about whether Walker was alive when the fire began, and the exclusion or alleged suppression of evidence concerning Laswell's jail correspondence and disciplinary history.

Prosecutor-file materials included notes concerning Walker's family, Dr. Frank Peretti, and Rebecca Chaddock, but the court found that the materials added no material information undermining the prior judgment.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Lacy previously sought discovery concerning the prosecutor's files to develop procedurally defaulted habeas claims. The court initially denied discovery as premature, later permitted a subpoena for limited prosecutor files, and reviewed materials produced after Lacy moved to alter or amend the judgment. The court concluded that the materials did not establish manifest error, prejudice, a meritorious Brady or prosecutorial-misconduct claim, or grounds to reopen the case, and denied the remaining Rule 59(e) motion and motion to supplement.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Perez v. Does 1-10, 931 F.3d 641, 646-47 (8th Cir. 2019)
- Geier v. Missouri Ethics Commission, 715 F.3d 674, 678 (8th Cir. 2013)
- Shinn v. Martinez Ramirez, 596 U.S. 366 (2022)
- Martinez v. Ryan, 566 U.S. 1, 14 (2012)
- Lacy v. State, 2010 Ark. 388, 377 S.W.3d 227, 236-37
- Klein v. Martin, No. 25-51, slip op. at 9 (U.S. Jan. 26, 2026) (per curiam)
- Napue v. Illinois, 360 U.S. 264, 272 (1959)
- Banks v. Dretke, 540 U.S. 668, 698-99 (2004)
- Reuter v. Jax Ltd., Inc., 711 F.3d 918, 922 (8th Cir. 2013)