

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MISSOURI, EASTERN DIVISION

Griffin v. Caleres, Inc.

Griffin · No. 4:25 CV 979 CDP · Decided February 23, 2026

SUMMARY

The court denied Caleres, Inc.’s motion to dismiss portions of Ebony Griffin’s Title VII retaliation and employment discrimination action. The court held that allegations concerning events before Griffin’s termination were like or reasonably related to the allegations in her EEOC charge and therefore were not subject to dismissal for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, Eastern Division
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri
DECIDED	February 23, 2026
DOCKET	4:25 CV 979 CDP
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff brought a Title VII retaliation and employment-discrimination action against her former employer. Defendant moved for partial dismissal, arguing that allegations concerning events before July 8, 2024 had not been administratively exhausted.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a motion to dismiss, the court accepts the complaint's allegations as true and liberally construes the complaint in the plaintiff's favor. The complaint must contain enough factual matter to state a facially plausible claim. Pro se pleadings are liberally construed, although they must still allege sufficient facts to support the claims advanced.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Ebony Griffin v. Caleres, Inc.

TOPICS

- title vii
- retaliation
- employment discrimination
- motions to dismiss
- pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether allegations concerning discriminatory and retaliatory events occurring before the plaintiff's July 8, 2024 termination were administratively exhausted because they were like or reasonably related to the allegations in her EEOC charge.
2. Whether those pre-termination allegations should be stricken from the amended complaint.

HOLDINGS

1. A Title VII plaintiff is deemed to have exhausted administrative remedies for judicial allegations that are like or reasonably related to the allegations timely presented in the administrative charge. Griffin's allegations concerning events leading up to her termination were related to the substance of her EEOC charge and therefore were not subject to dismissal or striking for failure to exhaust.
2. The defendant's motion for partial dismissal was denied because it provided no valid basis for striking the plaintiff's pre-termination allegations.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“[A] plaintiff will be deemed to have exhausted administrative remedies if the allegations of the judicial complaint are like or reasonably related to the administrative charges that were timely brought.”

“[T]he administrative complaint must be construed liberally in order not to frustrate the remedial purposes of Title VII, . . . and the plaintiff may seek relief for any discrimination that grows out of or is like or reasonably related to the substance of the allegations in the administrative charge.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Griffin worked for Caleres beginning in 2019 and transferred laterally in February 2023. She alleged that her supervisor subjected her to discriminatory treatment and comments based on race and gender, that she reported the conduct internally, and that she contacted the EEOC. After she filed a new EEOC charge on July 2, 2024 and notified Caleres, she was told that her position would be terminated on July 8, 2024. Griffin alleged that Caleres retaliated against her through the termination and later by providing negative references.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Griffin filed an amended complaint alleging that Caleres retaliated against her for reporting discriminatory conduct and filing an EEOC charge. Caleres moved for partial dismissal and submitted Griffin's most recent EEOC charge. The court denied the motion and directed that the case be set for a Track 2 Rule 16 scheduling conference by separate order.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Milligan v. City of Red Oak, 230 F.3d 355, 360 (8th Cir. 2000)
- Brady v. Medtronic, Inc., No. 13-cv-62199-RNS, 2014 WL 1377830, at *8 n.1 (S.D. Fla. Apr. 8, 2014)
- Blakley v. Schlumberger Tech. Corp., 648 F.3d 921, 931 (8th Cir. 2011)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Kottschade v. City of Rochester, 319 F.3d 1038, 1040 (8th Cir. 2003)
- Topchian v. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., 760 F.3d 843, 849 (8th Cir. 2014)
- Stone v. Harry, 364 F.3d 912, 914 (8th Cir. 2004)
- Wedow v. City of Kansas City, Mo., 442 F.3d 661, 672 (8th Cir. 2006)
- Anderson v. Block, 807 F.2d 145, 148 (8th Cir. 1986)
- Nichols v. Am. Nat'l Ins. Co., 154 F.3d 875, 886-87 (8th Cir. 1998)

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