

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MICHIGAN, SOUTHERN DIVISION

Williams v. Melvin, Blalock, and Winter

Williams · No. 2:23-cv-12868 · Decided March 9, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan adopted a magistrate judge’s Report and Recommendation because neither party filed timely objections. The court granted defendants’ motion for summary judgment and dismissed with prejudice the prisoner civil rights claims arising from an alleged strip-search.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Brandy R. McMillion
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan
DECIDED	March 9, 2026
DOCKET	2:23-cv-12868
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff brought a pro se prisoner civil-rights action alleging constitutional violations during a strip-search. Defendants moved for summary judgment. A magistrate judge recommended granting the motion, and the district court adopted the recommendation after neither party filed objections.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	When no party timely objects to a magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation, the district court is released from its duty to conduct an independent review of the matter. The court may accept the recommendation without expressing views on the merits of the magistrate judge's conclusions.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown
PARTIES	Henry Williams v. Antonio Melvin, Andrew Blalock, Robert Winter

TOPICS

summary judgment

prisoners rights

civil rights

constitutional law

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

constitutional law

civil rights

prisoner litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the district court was required to independently review the magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation when neither party timely objected.
2. Whether the court should adopt the unobjected-to recommendation to grant defendants' motion for summary judgment.
3. Whether all claims should be dismissed with prejudice after summary judgment was granted.

HOLDINGS

1. A party's failure to timely object to a magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation releases the district court from its duty to independently review the matter and permits the court to accept the recommendation without expressing views on the merits of the magistrate judge's conclusions.
2. Failure to timely object to a magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation forfeits the party's further right to appeal the recommended disposition.
3. The magistrate judge's recommended disposition was adopted, defendants' motion for summary judgment was granted, and all claims were dismissed with prejudice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The failure to object to an R&R releases the Court from its duty to independently review the matter.”

“Similarly, failure to object to an R&R forfeits any further right to appeal.”

“IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that all claims in this action are DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Williams, a pro se prisoner, alleged that Sergeant Antonio Melvin, Officer Andrew Blalock, and Officer Robert Winter violated his constitutional rights during a strip-search. Defendants moved for summary judgment, asserting among other grounds that Williams could not establish Sergeant Melvin's personal involvement, that the Fourth Amendment did not apply to searches relating to a legitimate penological interest, and that the defendants were shielded from civil damages for discretionary conduct. The opinion did not independently resolve the merits of those allegations because neither party objected to the magistrate judge's recommended disposition.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Williams filed this prisoner civil-rights action against three correctional officers. Defendants moved for summary judgment on grounds including lack of personal involvement, the asserted inapplicability of the Fourth

Amendment to searches conducted for a legitimate penological interest, and qualified immunity. Magistrate Judge Anthony P. Patti issued a Report and Recommendation on February 9, 2026, recommending that the motion be granted. Neither party objected within the prescribed period, so the district court adopted the recommended disposition, granted summary judgment, and dismissed all claims with prejudice.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140, 149 (1985)
- Ivey v. Wilson, 832 F.2d 950, 957-58 (6th Cir. 1987)
- Berkshire v. Dahl, 928 F.3d 520, 530 (6th Cir. 2019)

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