

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
MISSISSIPPI, NORTHERN DIVISION

Blake Lewis v. Entergy Mississippi, LLC

Lewis · No. 3:25-CV-323-HTW-ASH · Decided March 31, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi denied Entergy Mississippi, LLC’s Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss Blake Lewis’s claims for race discrimination under Title VII and 42 U.S.C. § 1981. The court held that Lewis plausibly alleged race discrimination and could plead alternative theories of race discrimination and retaliation at the motion-to-dismiss stage.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, Northern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Henry T. Wingate
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, Northern Division
DECIDED	March 31, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-CV-323-HTW-ASH
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff brought claims for race discrimination under Title VII and 42 U.S.C. § 1981. Defendant moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) to dismiss for failure to state a claim, arguing that plaintiff's allegations of retaliation for reporting a safety violation were inconsistent with his race-discrimination theory.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a Rule 12(b)(6) motion, the court accepts well-pleaded facts as true and views them in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, while disregarding conclusory allegations, unwarranted deductions, and legal conclusions masquerading as factual allegations. The complaint must contain sufficient factual matter to state a claim that is plausible on its face.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; persuasive value only
PARTIES	Blake Lewis v. Entergy Mississippi, LLC

TOPICS

employment discrimination

title vii

motions to dismiss

pleadings

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PRACTICE AREAS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Lewis plausibly alleged race discrimination under Title VII and 42 U.S.C. § 1981.
2. Whether Lewis's allegation that his termination was motivated by retaliation for reporting a safety violation precluded him from also pleading race discrimination.
3. Whether Lewis was required to plead a prima facie case under the McDonnell Douglas framework to survive a Rule 12(b)(6) motion.

HOLDINGS

1. Lewis plausibly alleged race discrimination by asserting that he was a qualified white employee who was terminated and replaced by a Black employee, and that Entergy fabricated or revived allegations of racial misconduct as a pretext for the termination.
2. Lewis could plead retaliation and race discrimination in the alternative, even if the theories might later conflict.
3. A plaintiff asserting employment discrimination is not required to plead a prima facie case under the McDonnell Douglas framework to survive a motion to dismiss.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Crucially, however, the United States Supreme Court has recognized that a plaintiff need not plead a prima facie case of discrimination to survive a motion to dismiss.” (Section III)

“While Lewis’s claims of retaliation and race discrimination may eventually reach a point of conflict, he may properly plead both at the outset of litigation.” (Section III)

“This Court finds that Lewis has provided enough factual content to satisfy the liberal pleading requirements of Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a) and survive Defendant’s Motion to Dismiss.” (Section IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Blake Lewis, a white male, worked as a journeyman lineman for Entergy Mississippi from January 2019 until his termination on November 12, 2024. After Lewis reported a serious electrical-safety violation involving other employees, Entergy investigated Lewis's prior comment about Brazilian nuts and a workplace prank. Entergy terminated Lewis for alleged racial discrimination against a Black coworker, and Lewis alleged that the stated reason was pretextual and that he was replaced by a Black male employee.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Lewis filed an EEOC charge on February 1, 2025. The EEOC issued a Determination and Notice of Rights on February 7, 2025, and Lewis filed this action on May 5, 2025. Entergy moved to dismiss, and the court denied the motion, concluding that Lewis plausibly alleged race discrimination and could plead inconsistent theories in the alternative.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- McDonald v. Santa Fe Trail Transp. Co., 427 U.S. 273, 280 (1976)
- Young v. City of Houston, 906 F.2d 177, 180 (5th Cir. 1990)
- Ames v. Ohio Dep't of Youth Servs., 605 U.S. 303 (2025)
- Suggs v. Lowndes Cty. Sch. Dist., 804 F. Supp. 2d 510, 514 (N.D. Miss. 2011)
- LaPierre v. Benson Nissan, Inc., 86 F.3d 444, 448 n.2 (5th Cir. 1996)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Cicalese v. Univ. of Tex. Med. Branch, 924 F.3d 762, 765-66 (5th Cir. 2019)
- Guidry v. Bank of LaPlace, 954 F.2d 278, 281 (5th Cir. 1992)
- Lawrence v. Univ. of Tex. Med. Branch at Galveston, 163 F.3d 309, 311 (5th Cir. 1999)
- McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green, 411 U.S. 792, 802 (1973)
- Swierkiewicz v. Sorema N.A., 534 U.S. 506, 511 (2002)
- Heinsohn v. Carabin & Shaw, P.C., 832 F.3d 224, 235 (5th Cir. 2016)
- Gorman v. Verizon Wireless Tex., L.L.C., 753 F.3d 165, 171 (5th Cir. 2014)

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