

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
OHIO, EASTERN DIVISION

Cheria Brown v. Equifax Information Services, LLC

Brown · No. 5:25CV1020 · Decided February 4, 2026

SUMMARY

The court memorializes rulings from a February 2, 2026 telephonic status conference in a consumer dispute involving Equifax. It denies Equifax’s motion to dismiss without prejudice, denies or partially grants several discovery-related motions, sets May 4, 2026 as the discovery deadline, and orders the parties to address remaining discovery disputes. The court also denies Plaintiff Brown’s motion to compel Equifax’s representative to travel to Ohio for a deposition, finding that she failed to establish good cause for that relief under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c).

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	John R. Adams
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
DECIDED	February 4, 2026
DOCKET	5:25CV1020
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	During a telephonic status conference in a Fair Credit Reporting Act action, the court ruled on the parties' pending motions concerning dismissal, discovery, and the location of a deposition.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court applied Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), under which the court has discretion to designate the time and place of a deposition and the party seeking protection must demonstrate good cause with particular and specific facts.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential interlocutory case-management order

TOPICS

- discovery dispute
- motions to dismiss
- summary judgment
- credit reporting
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

consumer protection

Fair Credit Reporting Act

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Equifax's motion to dismiss should be denied without prejudice subject to possible refiling as a motion for summary judgment.
2. Whether discovery should be stayed or Brown should be permitted to defer responding to discovery pending resolution of the motion to dismiss.
3. Whether the discovery deadline should be extended and what discovery obligations the parties should undertake.
4. Whether Brown established good cause under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c)(1) to require an Equifax representative to travel to Ohio for a deposition.

HOLDINGS

1. A party seeking a protective order or other protection concerning the time or place of a deposition must establish good cause under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c)(1) through a particular and specific demonstration of annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, undue burden, or expense; Brown's conclusory reliance on her pro se status did not satisfy that burden.
2. Equifax's motion to dismiss was denied without prejudice, subject to refiling as a motion for summary judgment if appropriate.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c) affords this Court “wide discretion to limit discovery to prevent ‘annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, or undue burden or expense,’ including with regard to the designation of the time and place of depositions.” ”

“To do so, Brown must illustrate the potential for “‘annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, or undue burden or expense’ ... with ‘a particular and specific demonstration of fact, as distinguished from stereotyped and conclusory statements.’ ” ”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Brown sought to require an Equifax representative to travel to Ohio for a deposition. She relied primarily on her pro se status and asserted that travel to Georgia would impose an undue burden, but did not provide additional supporting facts or explain why written deposition questions or videoconferencing would not address the cost concern. The court also ordered Brown to provide medical authorizations, treatment-provider information, tax returns, credit applications, and job history, while requiring Equifax to produce relevant policies.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff Cheria Brown sued Equifax Information Services, LLC. Equifax moved to dismiss and to stay discovery; Brown moved for leave to defer responding to discovery and moved to compel an Equifax

representative to travel to Ohio for a deposition. The court denied the motion to dismiss without prejudice, denied the discovery stay and Brown's motion as moot, partially granted Equifax's motion to extend discovery, and denied the motion to compel.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Lomax v. Sears, Roebuck & Co., No. 99-6589, 2000 WL 1888715, at *3 (6th Cir. Dec. 19, 2000)
- Shannon v. Taesa Airlines, No. 2:93-CV-689, 1994 WL 931216, at *3 (S.D. Ohio Nov. 10, 1994)
- Nix v. Sword, 11 F. App'x 498, 500 (6th Cir. 2001)
- Nemir v. Mitsubishi Motors Corp., 381 F.3d 540, 550 (6th Cir. 2004)
- Gulf Oil Co. v. Bernard, 452 U.S. 89, 102 n. 163 (1981)