

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

Jason James Hyatt v. Josh Kaul, Wisconsin Attorney General, Jared
Hoy, Wisconsin DOC Secretary, Troy Enger, Wisconsin DCC
Administrator, and Anya Kauffman, Wisconsin DCC Probation and
Parole Agent

Hyatt v. Kaul · No. 3:26-cv-00226 · Decided May 27, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin ordered Jason James Hyatt to file an amended petition for habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The court identified deficiencies concerning the proper respondent, required petition information and form, exhaustion of state remedies, timeliness, and the showing required under § 2254(d). Hyatt was given until July 1, 2026, to amend and was warned that failure to do so could result in dismissal.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	William M. Conley
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	May 27, 2026
DOCKET	3:26-cv-00226
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner filed a pro se petition for a federal writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The court conducted preliminary review under Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases and ordered petitioner to file an amended petition and supporting brief.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases, the court must examine the petition and supporting exhibits and dismiss the action if it plainly appears that the petitioner is not entitled to relief. At preliminary review, the court considers whether the petition states viable constitutional or federal-law claims, whether available state remedies have been exhausted, and whether the petition is timely.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Jason James Hyatt v. Josh Kaul, Wisconsin Attorney General, Jared Hoy, Wisconsin DOC Secretary, Troy Enger, Wisconsin DCC Administrator, Anya Kauffman, Wisconsin DCC Probation and Parole Agent

TOPICS

federal habeas corpus post-conviction relief pleadings civil procedure statute of limitations

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus post-conviction relief civil procedure constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the petition sufficiently identified the state official having custody of Hyatt as required by Rule 2(a) of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases.
2. Whether the petition complied with Rule 2(c) and Rule 2(d) by stating all grounds for relief, the facts supporting each ground, and using the required petition form.
3. Whether the petition demonstrated exhaustion of available state remedies and compliance with the one-year federal habeas statute of limitations.
4. Whether Hyatt showed that any state-court merits adjudication satisfied the demanding standard for federal relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d).
5. Whether Hyatt should be permitted to cure the pleading deficiencies by filing an amended petition and supporting brief.

HOLDINGS

1. A § 2254 petitioner must name the state officer who has custody of the petitioner, and listing multiple individuals without identifying the specific custodian fails to satisfy Rule 2(a).
2. A § 2254 petition must state all available grounds for relief and the facts supporting each ground and must substantially follow the required federal or local form.
3. A state prisoner seeking federal habeas relief must demonstrate that available state remedies were exhausted by fully and fairly presenting the federal claims through one complete round of state-court review, and must address the federal habeas statute of limitations.
4. When a state court has adjudicated a claim on the merits, a federal habeas petitioner must show that the state decision was contrary to or involved an unreasonable application of clearly established Supreme Court law, or rested on an unreasonable determination of the facts.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The petition is before the court for preliminary review under Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases, which requires the court to examine the petition and any supporting exhibits and dismiss the action if it “plainly appears” that petitioner is not entitled to relief.”

“Because the pleadings are deficient, the court will require petitioner to replead using the requisite form, either the one appended to the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases or the one available on the court’s website, which will be provided along with this order.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Hyatt was convicted in Portage County Circuit Court in 2015 of second-degree recklessly endangering safety, false imprisonment, and bail jumping after pleading no contest. He unsuccessfully sought to withdraw his plea. On November 4, 2016, he was sentenced to eleven years of initial confinement followed by seven years of extended supervision. By the time he filed the federal petition, he was no longer incarcerated but apparently remained subject to extended supervision.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Hyatt challenges his 2015 Portage County, Wisconsin conviction and sentence after pleading no contest and unsuccessfully seeking to withdraw the plea. The federal petition was deficient because it did not identify the proper custodian, state all grounds and supporting facts, use the required form, or demonstrate exhaustion and timeliness. The court did not reach the merits and ordered Hyatt to amend by July 1, 2026, warning that failure to do so could result in dismissal under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b).

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520-21 (1972)
- Spencer v. Kemna, 523 U.S. 1, 7 (1998)
- Jones v. Cunningham, 371 U.S. 236, 242 (1963)
- Cochran v. Buss, 381 F.3d 637, 640 (7th Cir. 2004)
- O’Sullivan v. Boerckel, 526 U.S. 838, 845-48 (1999)
- Lieberman v. Thomas, 505 F.3d 665, 670 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Malone v. Walls, 538 F.3d 744, 753 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Picard v. Connor, 404 U.S. 270, 275-76 (1971)
- Baldwin v. Reese, 541 U.S. 27, 29 (2004)

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