

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
PENNSYLVANIA

Manasseh N. Corder v. Dr. Laurel Harry, et al.

Corder · No. 1:25-cv-01700 · Decided April 2, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania grants Manasseh N. Corder’s motion to withdraw his civil action and dismisses the complaint without prejudice under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a)(2). The court denies the defendants’ motion to dismiss as moot after finding that voluntary dismissal would not cause significant prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Karoline Mehalchick
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania
DECIDED	April 2, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-cv-01700
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court considered Defendants' motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim and Plaintiff's motion to withdraw the complaint.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A motion for voluntary dismissal under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a)(2) lies within the sound discretion of the district court. The court assesses whether dismissal would cause the defendant legal prejudice or litigation expense warranting conditions or denial.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Manasseh N. Corder v. Dr. Laurel Harry, et al.

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- motions to dismiss
- pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- prisoner civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff's motion to withdraw the complaint should be construed as a motion for voluntary dismissal under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a)(2).
2. Whether voluntary dismissal without prejudice would cause Defendants sufficient legal prejudice or litigation expense to warrant denial of the motion or imposition of conditions.
3. Whether Defendants' motion to dismiss should be denied as moot after the complaint was voluntarily dismissed.

HOLDINGS

1. A motion expressly seeking to end a civil action may be construed as a request for voluntary dismissal under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a)(2), even when the plaintiff does not identify a specific statutory authority.
2. Voluntary dismissal without prejudice should be granted where the relevant Rule 41(a)(2) factors show that the defendant will not suffer significant prejudice beyond the mere prospect of a second lawsuit.
3. After dismissing the complaint without prejudice, the court denied Defendants' motion to dismiss as moot.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A motion for voluntary dismissal under Rule 41(a)(2) lies within the sound discretion of the district court.”
(II)

“Generally, “Rule 41 motions should be allowed unless [the] defendant will suffer some prejudice other than the mere prospect of a second lawsuit.”” (II)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Corder filed a civil complaint and was granted in forma pauperis status. After the complaint was served, Defendants moved to dismiss for failure to state a claim, and Corder filed an opposition. Before resolution of the dispositive motion, Corder expressly sought to withdraw the action, and the court found no significant prejudice to Defendants from dismissal without prejudice.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed the complaint on September 11, 2025, and the court later granted him leave to proceed in forma pauperis and served the named defendants. Defendants moved to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6), and Plaintiff opposed that motion before filing a motion to withdraw the action. The court construed the withdrawal motion as a request for voluntary dismissal under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a)(2), granted it without prejudice, and denied the motion to dismiss as moot.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Dodge-Regupol, Inc. v. RB Rubber Prods., Inc., 585 F. Supp. 2d 645, 652 (M.D. Pa.)
- In re Paoli R.R. Yard PCB Litig., 916 F.2d 829, 863 (3d Cir. 1990)

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