

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
FLORIDA, PENSACOLA DIVISION

Rodel Saranglao Manimtim v. Mark Rubin

Manimtim v. Rubin · No. 3:25-cv-486/MCR/ZCB · Decided January 20, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida adopted a magistrate judge’s Report and Recommendation and dismissed the plaintiff’s action at the screening stage. The court held that Younger abstention barred claims for equitable relief relating to ongoing state child-support enforcement proceedings and that judicial and sovereign immunity barred the damages and official-capacity claims. The court denied pending motions as moot and directed the clerk to close the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, Pensacola Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	M. Casey Rodgers
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, Pensacola Division
DECIDED	January 20, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-cv-486/MCR/ZCB
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court reviewed a magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation recommending dismissal at the screening phase. After providing Plaintiff an opportunity to object and conducting de novo review of the timely objections, the district court adopted the Report and Recommendation and dismissed the complaint.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	De novo review of timely objections to a magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential federal district court order; precedential status unknown in the source metadata.
PARTIES	Rodel Saranglao Manimtim v. Mark Rubin

TOPICS

civil procedure

equitable relief

contempt

family law

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

family law

judicial immunity

sovereign immunity

Younger abstention

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Younger abstention required dismissal of Plaintiff's claims for equitable relief based on ongoing state child-support contempt-related proceedings.
2. Whether Defendant was entitled to absolute judicial immunity from Plaintiff's damages claims brought against him in his individual capacity.
3. Whether Plaintiff's official-capacity claims were barred by sovereign immunity.

HOLDINGS

1. Younger abstention was appropriate because the allegations showed active state-court oversight of the child-support arrearages through contempt proceedings, and substantial state interests were implicated.
2. Defendant was entitled to absolute judicial immunity from the damages claims because his child-support-officer duties were functionally comparable to judicial responsibilities and he acted within his judicial capacity and jurisdiction.
3. The official-capacity claims were barred by sovereign immunity because they were claims against the State, and the allegations showed an opportunity for substantive review.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“judicial immunity is extended to officials other than judges [if] their judgments are functionally comparable to those of judges” (2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff challenged conduct by Defendant, a state court child-support officer, arising from child-support arrearages and related contempt proceedings. The complaint alleged that Plaintiff had been found in contempt and faced possible incarceration if he did not pay the arrearages. Defendant's challenged conduct occurred while performing duties functionally comparable to those of a judge and within the officer's judicial capacity.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a civil-rights complaint against a state court child-support officer, asserting claims for equitable relief and damages in connection with child-support arrearages and contempt proceedings. The magistrate judge recommended dismissal during screening. The district court overruled Plaintiff's objections, adopted the Report and Recommendation, dismissed the complaint under Younger abstention and applicable immunities, denied pending motions as moot, and closed the case.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Pompey v. Broward County, 95 F.3d 1543, 1548 (11th Cir. 1996)
- Antoine v. Byers & Anderson, Inc., 508 U.S. 429, 436 (1993)
- Stevens v. Osuna, 877 F.3d 1293, 1308 (11th Cir. 2017)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA PENSACOLA DIVISION RODEL SARANGLAO MANIMTIM, Plaintiff, v. Case No.: 3:25-cv-486/MCR/ZCB MARK RUBIN, Defendant. _____/ ORDER The Magistrate Judge issued a Report and Recommendation, recommending the dismissal of this suit at the screening phase. ECF No. 6.

The Court furnished the Plaintiff a copy of the Report and Recommendation and afforded an opportunity to file objections pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 636(b)(1). The Court has made a de novo determination of all timely filed objections. See ECF No. 7.

Having considered the Report and Recommendation and the timely filed objections, the Court agrees that Younger abstention is appropriate as to claims for equitable relief. Despite Plaintiff's argument that no state court "case" is currently pending, the complaint alleges that he has been found in contempt and is under threat of incarceration if he does not pay the arrearages.

In these circumstances, the state 1 child support courts have active oversight over the areas underlying this suit and substantial state interests exist sufficient to invoke Younger, as in Pompey v. Broward Cnty., 95 F.3d 1543, 1548 (11th Cir. 1996) (concluding there was a state court proceeding because the plaintiffs could be brought "before the court for civil contempt for any child support arrearage").

Additionally, the Court rejects Plaintiff's argument that the Magistrate Judge failed to consider his individual capacity claims. As discussed in the Report and Recommendation, the claims for damages are based on Defendant's conduct as a state court child support officer, duties that are functionally comparable to the responsibilities of a judge. See Antoine v. Byers & Anderson, Inc., 508 U.S. 429, 436 (1993) (stating "judicial immunity is extended to officials other than judges [if] their judgments are functionally comparable to those of judges") (internal alterations accepted and internal quotations omitted).

And judicial absolute immunity applies to all actions of a judicial officer within their judicial jurisdiction, whether based on individual or official capacity. See Stevens v. Osuna, 877 F.3d 1293,

1308 (11th Cir. 2017) (applying absolute immunity as protecting an immigration judge from damages for claims alleging both official and individual capacity conduct).

The allegations show that Defendant was acting within his judicial capacity and not in the absence of all jurisdiction. Also, the Court agrees with the Magistrate Judge that 2 there was an opportunity for substantive review, and the official capacity claims are claims against the state, which has sovereign immunity.

Therefore, the Report and Recommendation will be adopted. Accordingly, it is ORDERED: 1. The Magistrate Judge's Report and Recommendation, ECF No. 6, is adopted incorporated by reference in this Order. 2. Plaintiff's complaint, ECF No. 1, is DISMISSED under the Younger abstention doctrine and because it seeks relief from an immune party. 3. All pending motions are DENIED as moot.

4. The Clerk of Court is directed to close the case. DONE AND ORDERED this 20th day of January 2026. M. Casey Rodgers M. CASEY RODGERS UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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