

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION**

**Carlton Wright v. Shane Nelson, Krul Lieutenant, Gard Captain,
and Lee Sergeant**

Wright · No. 1:23-cv-00459-TWP-MKK · Decided February 17, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana denied Defendants' belated motion in limine seeking to exclude many of Plaintiff's proposed exhibits. The court held that the motion was untimely, motions in limine were unnecessary in the bench trial, and the evidentiary objections could not be resolved before Plaintiff offered the documents and established their purposes and foundations.

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION CARLTON WRIGHT,)) Plaintiff,)) v.) No. 1:23-cv-00459-TWP-MKK) SHANE NELSON,) KRUL Lieutenant,) GARD Captain,) LEE Sergeant,)) Defendants.) ORDER DENYING MOTION IN LIMINE This matter is before the Court on a belated Motion in limine filed by Defendants on February 13, 2026.

(Dkt. 125). Defendants seek to preclude admission of many of Plaintiff's proposed exhibits. For the reasons explained below the motion is denied. First, according to the Final Pretrial Conference Order, motions in limine were due January 7, 2026. (Dkt. 105). Defendants' motion, filed more than five weeks later, is too late. Next, motions in limine "perform[] a gatekeeping function and permit[] the trial judge to eliminate from further consideration evidentiary submissions that clearly ought not be presented to the jury because they clearly would be inadmissible for any purpose."

Jonasson v. Lutheran Child & Fam. Servs., 115 F.3d 436, 440 (7th Cir. 1997). Because this is a bench trial, motions in limine are not necessary to prevent prejudicial evidence from being shown to the jury. See City of Joliet v. Mid-City Nat. Bank of Chi., No. 05 C 6746, 2012 WL 5463792, at *11 (N.D. Ill. Nov. 5, 2012) (denying a motion in limine because "Rule 403's concerns carry significantly less weight in a bench trial, where there is a presumption that the court is not improperly influenced by the evidence brought before it").

In addition, "[t]he movant has the burden of demonstrating that the evidence is inadmissible on any relevant ground, for any purpose." Stewart v. Jackson, 2021 WL 1660976, at *1 (N.D. Ind. Apr. 28, 2021) (internal quotation omitted). Defendants seek to exclude evidence they contend is

not properly authenticated, hearsay evidence, and "evidence lacking personal knowledge." Next, as explained on the record, each request fails on the merits.

It appears from the motion that the witnesses may be able to authenticate or demonstrate personal knowledge of many of the exhibits Defendants seek to exclude. Before Plaintiff seeks to admit the documents at issue and demonstrates the purpose for their admission, the Court cannot determine whether they are properly authenticated, contain inadmissible hearsay, or that any particular witness lacks personal knowledge of those documents.

For the reasons explained above, the Motion /n Limine, Dkt. [125], is DENIED. IT IS SO ORDERED. Date: 2/17/2026 O lathe» Lact Hon. Tange Walton Pratt, Judge United States District Court Southern District of Indiana Distribution: CARLTON WRIGHT 208902 WESTVILLE - CF WESTVILLE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY Inmate Mail/Parcels 5501 South 1100 West WESTVILLE, IN 46391 Joseph Thomas Lipps BBFCS ATTORNEYS jlupps@bbfcslaw.com