

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
MISSOURI, SOUTHERN DIVISION

S.T. v. Oregon County Ambulance District, et al.

Case No. 25-03235-CV-S-LMC · No. 25-03235-CV-S-LMC · Decided January 7, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri grants Plaintiff S.T.’s motion to proceed under a pseudonym in an action alleging sexual harassment, sex discrimination, retaliation, and related claims against the Oregon County Ambulance District and others. The court concludes that the sensitive and highly personal nature of the allegations and potential trauma support pseudonymous litigation, while permitting reconsideration if the case proceeds to trial.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Lajuana M. Counts
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri
DECIDED	January 7, 2026
DOCKET	25-03235-CV-S-LMC
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to proceed under a pseudonym at the outset of an employment-discrimination and retaliation action. Defendants consented to the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court exercises discretion by balancing the plaintiff’s substantial privacy interest against the customary and constitutionally embedded presumption of openness in judicial proceedings, considering factors favoring and opposing pseudonymous litigation.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished and nonprecedential district court order
PARTIES	S.T. v. Oregon County Ambulance District, et al.

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- employment discrimination
- retaliation
- sexual harassment

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

employment law

civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff should be permitted to litigate under a pseudonym because the sensitive and highly personal nature of her allegations, alleged trauma, and potential safety and reputational harms outweigh the presumption of openness in judicial proceedings.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff may proceed under the pseudonym S.T. during the discovery period because the sensitive and highly personal nature of the allegations and the trauma she allegedly experienced outweigh the presumption of openness at this stage, particularly where Defendants consent and will not be unfairly prejudiced.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Ultimately, ‘the Court must determine whether the plaintiff ‘has a substantial privacy right which outweighs the customary and constitutionally-embedded presumption of openness in judicial proceedings.’” (Order)

“Given the sensitive and highly personal nature of the matters alleged, as well as the trauma Plaintiff has already experienced, the Court will grant the request to proceed via pseudonym during the discovery period and will reconsider the matter if the case goes to trial.” (Order)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that she met Kenneth McKenzie while training to become an EMT and was later hired as his assistant by the Oregon County Ambulance District. She alleged that her employment was conditioned on a sexual relationship with McKenzie and that, when she attempted to end the relationship, he threatened her with violence, discharge, and death. After she reported McKenzie's conduct to the Ambulance District's Board of Directors, she was suspended and terminated. Plaintiff asserted claims under Title VII, the Missouri Human Rights Act, Missouri's whistleblower statute, the First Amendment, and state assault law.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a complaint asserting sex-discrimination, retaliation, public-accommodation, whistleblower, First Amendment retaliation, and assault claims. She then moved to proceed under the pseudonym S.T. The district court granted the motion during the discovery period, subject to reconsideration if the case proceeds to trial.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- AB v. HRB Pro. Res. LLC, 2020 WL 12675330, at *1 (W.D. Mo. Dec. 31, 2020)

- T.S.H. v. Nw. Missouri State Univ., 2019 WL 5057586, at *1 (W.D. Mo. Oct. 8, 2019)
- W.G.A. v. Priority Pharmacy, Inc., 184 F.R.D. 616, 617 (E.D. Mo. 1999)
- Doe v. Frank, 951 F.2d 320, 323 (11th Cir. 1992)
- Cajune v. Indep. Sch. Dist. 194, 105 F.4th 1070, 1077 (8th Cir. 2024)
- Doe v. Univ. of Nebraska, 2025 WL 1580919, at *1 (D. Neb. June 4, 2025)
- Doe v. Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2025 WL 1331700, at *1 (D. Neb. May 7, 2025)
- J.H. v. McLarty Auto. Grp., LLC, 2025 WL 2969086, at *1 (W.D. Mo. Oct. 20, 2025)
- Doe v. Sutton, 2025 WL 871656, at *4, *6 (E.D. Mo. Mar. 20, 2025)
- Doe v. Heartland Ivy Partners LLC, 2025 WL 26643, at *1 (D. Minn. Jan. 3, 2025)
- Does 1-8 v. Presley, 2024 WL 4108015, at *2 (E.D. Ark. Sept. 6, 2024)

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