

SUPREME COURT OF MINNESOTA

Andrew Tyler Jones v. Steven C. Borchardt

775 N.W.2d 646 (Minn. 2009) · No. A08-556 · Decided December 3, 2009

SUMMARY

The Minnesota Supreme Court held that Minn. Stat. § 641.12, subd. 3(a) authorizes a county to require payment for confinement costs incurred only after conviction, not for preconviction confinement. The court reversed and remanded after concluding that Olmsted County had improperly billed Andrew Tyler Jones for 286 days of preconviction confinement. The court did not reach Jones's separate indigence, equal protection, or due process arguments.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Minnesota
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Meyer, Justice; Dietzen, Justice
JURISDICTION	Minnesota
DECIDED	December 3, 2009
DOCKET	A08-556
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Jones brought an action challenging Olmsted County's requirement that he pay the costs of his preconviction confinement. Both parties moved for summary judgment. The district court granted summary judgment to the county, and the Minnesota Court of Appeals affirmed. The Minnesota Supreme Court reversed and remanded.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Statutory construction is reviewed de novo.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Minnesota Supreme Court opinion; precedential
PARTIES	Andrew Tyler Jones v. Steven C. Borchardt

TOPICS

- statutory interpretation
- plain meaning rule
- legislative intent
- criminal procedure
- municipal law

PRACTICE AREAS

- statutory interpretation
- criminal procedure
- municipal law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Minn. Stat. § 641.12, subd. 3(a), authorizes a county to require an offender to pay costs incurred during confinement before conviction.
2. Whether the court needed to decide whether the county properly considered Jones's indigence or whether the statute violated equal-protection or due-process rights.

HOLDINGS

1. A county may require a person to pay confinement costs under Minn. Stat. § 641.12, subd. 3(a), but only costs incurred after conviction; the statute does not authorize billing for preconviction confinement costs.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“We hold that a county may require persons to pay the costs of their confinement under Minn.Stat. § 641.12, subd. 3(a), but only the costs of confinement incurred after conviction.” (648)

“Because the county required Jones to pay for costs incurred before conviction, the county erred in its application of subdivision 3(a).” (648)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Jones was arrested and charged with three counts of aggravated robbery and, because he could not post bail, spent 286 days in the Olmsted County jail before sentencing. He pleaded guilty, was sentenced to 78 months in prison, and was transferred to a state correctional facility. Olmsted County billed him \$25 per day, totaling \$7,150, for the entire confinement period, including the time before his guilty plea and conviction.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

After Jones pleaded guilty to three aggravated-robbery charges and was sentenced, Olmsted County billed him \$7,150 for 286 days of jail confinement, including the period before his conviction. Jones sued, asserting that Minn. Stat. § 641.12, subd. 3(a), did not authorize collection of preconviction confinement costs. The district court upheld the county's billing decision and the statute's constitutionality; the court of appeals affirmed. The supreme court reversed on statutory-interpretation grounds and did not reach Jones's indigence, equal-protection, or due-process arguments.

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

Remanded to the district court for further proceedings consistent with the opinion.

CASES CITED

- Jones v. Borchardt, 759 N.W.2d 50 (Minn. App. 2009)

- D.M.S. v. Barber, 645 N.W.2d 383, 386 (Minn. 2002)
- State v. Stevenson, 656 N.W.2d 235, 238-39 (Minn. 2003)
- Urban v. American Legion Department of Minnesota, 723 N.W.2d 1, 5 (Minn. 2006)
- American Family Insurance Group v. Schroedl, 616 N.W.2d 273, 277 (Minn. 2000)

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