

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

Jeremy Knutson v. Ashwaubenon Public Safety Department, Capt.
Kubacki, and K9 Officer Teske

Knutson · No. 25-CV-1690 · Decided January 23, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin granted Jeremy Knutson leave to proceed in forma pauperis and waived the initial partial filing fee. The court stayed his 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action under the Younger abstention doctrine because the claims could interfere with his pending Wisconsin state criminal proceedings, and directed that the case be administratively closed pending resolution of those proceedings. The order also required collection of the remaining filing fee from his inmate trust account.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Byron B. Conway
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	January 23, 2026
DOCKET	25-CV-1690
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Screening order on a pro se pretrial detainee's 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint, together with motions to proceed in forma pauperis and to waive the initial partial filing fee.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The complaint was screened under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b) to determine whether it was frivolous or malicious, failed to state a claim, or sought monetary relief from an immune defendant, and whether it satisfied the plausibility and notice-pleading requirements of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown
PARTIES	Jeremy Knutson v. Ashwaubenon Public Safety Department, Capt. Kubacki, K9 Officer Teske

TOPICS

section 1983

fourth amendment

civil procedure

federalism

prisoners rights

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

constitutional law

federal civil procedure

criminal procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court could adjudicate Knutson's Fourth Amendment § 1983 claims while related state criminal proceedings were pending.
2. Whether the federal civil rights action should be stayed and administratively closed rather than dismissed because the requested relief was monetary and could become time-barred during the state proceedings.
3. Whether Knutson should be permitted to proceed without prepaying the filing fee and whether the initial partial filing fee should be waived.

HOLDINGS

1. The court must abstain from adjudicating Knutson's federal constitutional claims because deciding them could interfere with the ongoing state criminal proceedings.
2. Because Knutson sought monetary damages, the court was required to stay and administratively close the action rather than dismiss it, pending resolution of the state criminal proceedings.
3. Knutson was granted leave to proceed without prepayment of the filing fee, and the court waived the initial partial filing fee because he lacked funds to pay it.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Under the Younger abstention doctrine, federal courts must abstain from taking jurisdiction over federal constitutional claims that may interfere with on-going state proceedings.” (Analysis section)

“Therefore, the Court must stay this federal civil rights action pending resolution of Brown County Case No. 25CF1547.” (Analysis section)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Knutson, a pretrial detainee awaiting trial in Brown County Case No. 25CF1547, alleged that K9 Officer Teske detained him in Green Bay and threatened to release a police dog if he did not submit to a search. After Knutson requested a sergeant, Captain Kubacki arrived, and the officers allegedly kicked his feet out from under him, searched his pockets, handcuffed him, and placed him in a vehicle while checking his name. Knutson alleged that the officers did not provide Miranda warnings and sought monetary damages under § 1983.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Knutson filed a § 1983 complaint alleging Fourth Amendment violations arising from his detention, search, use of force, handcuffing, and arrest by local officers. The court granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis and

waived the initial partial filing fee. Applying Younger abstention because related criminal proceedings were pending in Brown County Circuit Court, the court stayed the federal action and directed the clerk to administratively close it.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662 (2009)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544 (2007)
- D.S. v. E. Porter Cty. Sch. Corp., 799 F.3d 793 (7th Cir. 2015)
- Buchanan–Moore v. County of Milwaukee, 570 F.3d 824 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Younger v. Harris, 401 U.S. 37 (1971)
- SKS & Assocs., Inc. v. Dart, 619 F.3d 674 (7th Cir. 2010)
- Shaw v. County of Milwaukee, No. 21-1410, 2022 WL 1001434, at *2 (7th Cir. Apr. 4, 2022)
- Simpson v. Rowan, 73 F.3d 134 (7th Cir. 1995)

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