

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

Chelsea Ward v. HRM Services, LLC

Case No. 6:25-cv-03245-MDH (W.D. Mo. Feb. 17, 2026) · No. 6:25-cv-03245-MDH · Decided February 17, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri grants Chelsea Ward’s motion for leave to file an amended complaint out of time. The court finds good cause under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 16(b), concludes that the proposed FLSA overtime claim was already included in the original complaint, and determines that the proposed wiretapping claim is not futile. The court also finds that any prejudice to HRM Services, LLC is outweighed by the prejudice Ward would face if amendment were denied.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Douglas Harpool
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, Southern Division
DECIDED	February 17, 2026
DOCKET	6:25-cv-03245-MDH
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 16(b) and 15(a) for leave to file an amended complaint after the scheduling-order deadline. The motion sought to add a wiretapping claim and to clarify or separately plead an FLSA overtime claim.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Rule 16(b)(4), modification of a scheduling order requires good cause and the judge's consent, with diligence as the primary measure of good cause. After good cause is shown, amendment is evaluated under Rule 15(a)(2)'s liberal standard.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court order; precedential status unknown and generally nonprecedential.

TOPICS

motion to amend

civil procedure

flsa

pleadings

statutory interpretation

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

employment law

Fair Labor Standards Act

wiretapping and privacy

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Ward established good cause under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 16(b)(4) to amend her complaint after the scheduling-order deadline.
2. Whether the proposed FLSA overtime count constituted a new claim requiring a separate showing of good cause.
3. Whether the proposed wiretapping claim was futile under Missouri and analogous federal wiretapping statutes.
4. Whether allowing the amendment would cause undue prejudice to HRM Services under Rule 15(a)(2).

HOLDINGS

1. Ward established good cause under Rule 16(b)(4) because she acted diligently after receiving more than 200 pages of discovery, including the email that revealed the potential wiretapping claim, and her approximately two-week delay after the amendment deadline was not dilatory.
2. The proposed amended complaint did not add a new FLSA overtime claim because the original complaint already alleged that Ward worked more than forty hours per week without receiving time-and-a-half pay and sought relief encompassing those damages.
3. The proposed wiretapping claim was not futile because the evidence described a manager using a work phone to record an oral conversation between Ward and a coworker, and the court concluded that the alleged conduct could fall within Missouri's wiretapping statute.
4. Any prejudice to HRM Services from allowing the amendment was outweighed by the prejudice Ward would suffer if she were denied the opportunity to assert a claim revealed through discovery.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The primary measure of good cause is the movant's diligence in attempting to meet the order's requirements." (Analysis I.A)

"The Court finds that Plaintiff's Proposed Amended Complaint does not add an additional claim with its FLSA Overtime claim." (Analysis I.B)

"For the reasons stated, Plaintiff's Motion to Leave to File Amended Complaint Out of Time is GRANTED." (Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Chelsea Ward worked for HRM Services, LLC as a Portfolio Support Technician from August 5, 2024, until her termination on or about August 7, 2025. She alleged that she worked more than forty hours per week without receiving overtime compensation and that HRM retaliated against her after she discussed wages and employment policies with coworkers and protested workplace treatment. During discovery, Ward received an email indicating that an HRM manager had recorded a conversation between Ward and a coworker and provided the recording to human resources, which Ward sought to use as the basis for a proposed wiretapping claim.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Ward filed an FLSA overtime and retaliation complaint on August 29, 2025. The court entered a scheduling order requiring motions to amend pleadings by December 24, 2025. After receiving discovery on December 5, 2025, Ward moved on January 7, 2026, for leave to amend out of time. The court granted the motion, finding good cause, no futile proposed claim, and no undue prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Sherman v. Winco Fireworks, Inc., 532 F.3d 709, 715-16 (8th Cir. 2008)
- Rahn v. Hawkins, 464 F.3d 813, 822 (8th Cir. 2006)
- Midwest Med. Sols., LLC v. Exactech U.S., Inc., 95 F.4th 604, 606-07 (8th Cir. 2024)
- In re Target Corp. Secs. Litig., 955 F.3d 738, 744-45 (8th Cir. 2020)
- Foman v. Davis, 371 U.S. 178, 182 (1962)
- Roberson v. Hayti Police Dept., 241 F.3d 992, 995 (8th Cir. 2001)
- Hoechst Farms, Inc. v. MO Cold Logistics, LLC, No. 4:24-CV-720-MTS, 2024 WL 5262871, at *1 (E.D. Mo. Dec. 31, 2024)