

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Rivera v. Doerer

Rivera · No. 1:24-cv-01577 JLT HBK (HC) · Decided August 20, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California adopted the magistrate judge’s findings and recommendations in Felix A. Rivera, Jr.’s § 2241 habeas proceeding. The court denied Rivera’s motion to dismiss, granted the respondent’s motion to dismiss to the extent the petition was denied on the merits, and denied the petition based on the finding that the Bureau of Prisons correctly calculated his sentence credits. The court declined to issue a certificate of appealability and directed the Clerk to close the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jennifer L. Thurston
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	August 20, 2025
DOCKET	1:24-cv-01577 JLT HBK (HC)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner sought habeas relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 based on an alleged Bureau of Prisons sentence-calculation error. After a magistrate judge recommended denying relief and granting Respondent's motion to dismiss to the extent the petition failed on the merits, the district court conducted de novo review, adopted the findings and recommendations, denied Petitioner's motion to dismiss, denied the habeas petition on the merits, and closed the case.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	De novo review of the magistrate judge's findings and recommendations under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1), with objections required to be specific under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(b)(2).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; nonprecedential
PARTIES	Felix A. Rivera, Jr. v. Doerer

TOPICS

federal habeas corpus

post-conviction relief

subject matter jurisdiction

motions to dismiss

pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus

post-conviction relief

criminal procedure

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Rivera's motion to dismiss the federal indictment under Rule 12(b)(1) could be considered in this § 2241 proceeding.
2. Whether the district court had jurisdiction in a § 2241 proceeding to consider Rivera's challenge to the legality of his confinement or federal sentence, which was properly brought under § 2255 in the sentencing court.
3. Whether the BOP correctly calculated Rivera's sentence and whether he was entitled to additional credit for time already credited toward his state sentence.
4. Whether Rivera's nonspecific objection to the magistrate judge's findings and recommendations warranted rejection of those findings.
5. Whether a certificate of appealability should issue to the extent the petition was treated as a disguised § 2255 motion.

HOLDINGS

1. The court denied Rivera's motion to dismiss the federal indictment because the indictment challenge was unrelated to his § 2241 claim concerning execution of his sentence and challenged determinations made by separate entities.
2. The court lacked jurisdiction to consider Rivera's construed § 2255 challenge to the legality of his confinement because such a challenge must be brought in the court of conviction, the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida.
3. The BOP did not err in calculating Rivera's sentence, and Rivera was not entitled to separate or additional credit for time spent in state custody or temporarily in federal custody when that time had already been credited toward his state sentence.
4. The court adopted the findings and recommendations because Rivera's single-sentence objection did not specifically address the magistrate judge's factual or legal findings.
5. The court declined to issue a certificate of appealability to the extent the petition was a disguised § 2255 motion.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"Petitioner did not file a motion to amend the Petition under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15, and any request to amend would not be looked upon favorably by the Court..." (at 2)

"the BOP did not err in calculating Petitioner's sentence." (at 2)

"failure to file objections within the specified time may result in the waiver of rights on appeal." (at 3)

“Reasonable jurists would not find the Court’s determinations here debatable or wrong, or that issues presented are deserving of encouragement to proceed further.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Rivera, a federal prisoner, claimed that the Bureau of Prisons incorrectly calculated his sentence by failing to provide separate or additional credit for time spent in Florida state custody and while temporarily transferred to federal custody under a writ of habeas corpus ad prosequendum. The time had already been credited toward his state sentence. Rivera also attempted to challenge the federal indictment and the legality of his confinement, matters distinct from the execution-of-sentence claim presented in the § 2241 petition.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Rivera filed a § 2241 petition challenging the BOP's calculation of his sentence. He later moved to dismiss the underlying federal indictment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(1), asserting lack of subject matter jurisdiction. The magistrate judge recommended denying that motion because the indictment challenge was unrelated to the § 2241 execution-of-sentence claim and any legality-of-confinement challenge belonged in the sentencing court under § 2255; the magistrate judge also concluded that the BOP had correctly calculated the sentence. Rivera filed only a general, nonspecific objection, and the district court adopted the findings and recommendations after de novo review.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Franklin v. Johnson, 290 F.3d 1223, 1232 (9th Cir. 2002)
- Wilkerson v. Wheeler, 772 F.3d 834, 838-39 (9th Cir. 2014)
- Baxter v. Sullivan, 923 F.2d 1391, 1394 (9th Cir. 1991)
- Lockert v. Faulkner, 843 F.2d 1015, 1019 (7th Cir. 1988)
- Greenwood v. FAA, 28 F.3d 971, 977 (9th Cir. 1994)
- Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 327, 335-36 (2003)
- Harrison v. Ollison, 519 F.3d 952, 958 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
10 CALIFORNIA 11 FELIX A. RIVERA, JR.,) Case No.: 1:24-cv-01577 JLT HBK (HC)) 12
13 Petitioner,) ORDER ADOPTING THE FINDINGS AND) RECOMMENDATIONS, DENYING
14 v.) PETITIONER’S MOTION TO DISMISS,) GRANTING RESPONDENT’S MOTION TO
DOERER,) DISMISS TO THE EXTENT THE PETITION) WAS DENIED ON THE

MERITS, DENYING 15 Respondent.) THE PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS) CORPUS,
AND DIRECTING CLERK OF 16) COURT TO CLOSE THIS CASE) 17) (Docs.

1, 9, 14, 15) 18 Felix A. Rivera, Jr., a federal prisoner, is proceeding pro se with his petition for writ of 19 habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, asserting a sentence calculation error by the Bureau 20 of Prisons. (Doc. 1.) Petitioner then moved for dismissal of the underlying federal indictment 21 pursuant to Rule 12(b)(1) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, asserting a lack of subject 22 matter jurisdiction.

(Doc. 9.) Respondent moved to dismiss the petition, asserting Petitioner did 23 not exhaust his administrative remedies and the petition failed on the merits. (Doc. 14.) 24 Addressing Petitioner's motion to dismiss, the magistrate judge observed that Petitioner 25 "appears to allege a new claim for relief that is entirely unrelated to the claim in his Petition 26 asserting the BOP erred in calculating his sentence." (Doc.

15 at 4.) The magistrate judge noted 27 that "Petitioner did not file a motion to amend the Petition under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 28 15, and any request to amend would not be looked upon favorably by the Court..." (Id.)

To the 1 extent Petitioner challenged the indictment, the magistrate judge found such could not be raised 2 before this Court because it is "unrelated to the execution of his sentence claim raised in the 3 Petition, and challenge[s] different determinations by separate entities." (Id.)

In addition, the 4 magistrate judge found this "Court would lack jurisdiction over the claim in Petitioner's 5 construed § 2255 motion regarding the legality of his confinement," because such should be 6 raised in the court of conviction, the Middle District of Florida. (Id. at 4-5.)

Therefore, the 7 magistrate judge recommended the Court "deny[] Petitioner's motion to dismiss his federal 8 indictment and vacate his sentence in the Middle District of Florida." (Id. at 5.) 9 The magistrate judge also found that it appeared Petitioner did "not fully exhaust[] his 10 administrative remedies" before filing the petition. (Doc. 15 at 6.)

However, the magistrate 11 judge declined to make a finding as to exhaustion, because "Petitioner's sole ground for relief has 12 no merit." (Id., citing 28 U.S.C. § 2254(b)(2) ["An application for a writ of habeas corpus may 13 be denied on the merits, notwithstanding the failure of the applicant to exhaust the remedies 14 available in the courts of the State"]; *Franklin v. Johnson*, 290 F.3d 1223, 1232 (9th Cir.

2002).) 15 Specifically, the magistrate judge found that "the BOP did not err in calculating Petitioner's 16 sentence." (Id. at 8; see also id. at 8-10.) The magistrate judge found that contrary to Petitioner's 17 argument, he was "not entitled to any separate or additional credit for the time he spent in state 18 custody, including time while he was on loan from Florida state authorities to the

MDFL under 19 the [writ of habeas corpus ad prosequendum], because it was already properly credited toward his 20 state sentence.” (Id. at 9-10.)

Therefore, the magistrate judge found Petitioner was “not entitled 21 to habeas corpus relief on his § 2241 Petition,” and recommended the Court grant Respondent’s 22 motion to dismiss, to the extent the Petition was denied on the merits. (Id. at 10.) 23 The Court served the Findings and Recommendations upon all parties and notified them 24 that any objections were due within 14 days after service.

In addition, the Court advised the 25 parties that “failure to file objections within the specified time may result in the waiver of rights 26 on appeal.” (Id., citing *Wilkerson v. Wheeler*, 772 F.3d 834, 838-39 (9th Cir. 2014); *Baxter v. Sullivan*, 923 F.2d 1391, 1394 (9th Cir. 1991)). Respondent did not file any objections. 28 Petitioner timely filed objections, consisting of a single sentence: “In accordance with 1 Federal Civil Rule 12 (b)(1) all actions must stop and the issue of subject matter jurisdiction must 2 be found.” (Doc.

16 at 1.) Thus, Petitioner reiterates the argument made in his motion to dismiss, 3 but he does not address the specific findings of the magistrate judge concerning his motion and 4 the Petition, or the legal bases for these findings. Towards this end, Petitioner fails to make any 5 objections to the factual or legal findings by the magistrate judge. See Fed.

R. Civ. P. 72(b)(2) 6 (requiring any objections to magistrate judges' findings and recommendations to be “specific”); 7 *Lockert v. Faulkner*, 843 F.2d 1015, 1019 (7th Cir. 1988) (“[a] district judge should not have to 8 guess what arguments an objecting party depends on when reviewing a magistrate judge’s 9 report”); see also *Greenwood v. FAA*, 28 F.3d 971, 977 (9th Cir.

1994) (noting the court “will not 10 manufacture arguments” for parties). 11 According to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1), this Court performed a de novo review of this case. 12 Having carefully reviewed the matter, including Petitioner’s objections, the Court concludes the 13 Findings and Recommendations are supported by the record and proper analysis. 14 Next, the Court determines whether to issue a certificate of appealability.

A petitioner 15 seeking a writ of habeas corpus has no absolute entitlement to appeal a district court’s denial of 16 his petition, and an appeal is only allowed in certain circumstances. *Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 537 17 U.S. 322, 335–36 (2003); 28 U.S.C. § 2253. Notably, the Ninth Circuit indicated that “[w]here a 18 petition purportedly brought under § 2241 is merely a ‘disguised’ § 2255 motion, the petitioner 19 cannot appeal from the denial of that petition without a [certificate of appealability].” *Harrison v. Ollison*, 519 F.3d 952, 958 (9th Cir.

2008). Generally, the Court may only issue a certificate of 21 appealability “if jurists of reason could disagree with the district court’s resolution of [the 22 petitioner’s] constitutional claims or

that jurists could conclude the issues presented are adequate 23 to deserve encouragement to proceed further.” Miller-El, 537 U.S. at 327; Slack v. McDaniel, 24 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000).

Reasonable jurists would not find the Court’s determinations here 25 debatable or wrong, or that issues presented are deserving of encouragement to proceed further. 26 Petitioner also does not make the required substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional 27 right. Consequently, to the extent the petition is a disguised Section 2255 motion, the Court 28 declines to issue a certificate of appealability.

1 Based upon the foregoing, the Court ORDERS: 2 1. The Findings and Recommendations issued on July 28, 2025 (Doc. 15) are 3 ADOPTED in full. 4 2. Petitioner’s motion to dismiss (Doc. 9) is DENIED. 5 3. Respondent’s motion to dismiss (Doc. 14) is GRANTED, to the extent the petition 6 is addressed on the merits. 7 4.

The petition for writ of habeas corpus (Doc. 1) is DENIED on the merits. 8 5. The Court declines to issue a certificate of appealability. 9 6. The Clerk of Court is directed to close this case. 10 IT IS SO ORDERED. 12 | Dated: _August 19, 2025 Cerin | Tower TED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28