

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
PENNSYLVANIA

Jason M. Urbassik v. Venango County Prison, et al.

No. 1:25-CV-70, United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania (March 19, 2026)

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania dismissed Jason M. Urbassik’s pro se civil rights action against Venango County Prison and the Venango County Court of Common Pleas as legally frivolous and for failure to state a claim under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e). The court adopted the magistrate judge’s Report and Recommendation, denied the request for appointed counsel based on the absence of special circumstances, and directed the Clerk to close the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Susan Paradise Baxter
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania
DECIDED	March 19, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-CV-70
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff's action was removed from the Venango County Court of Common Pleas. After screening and multiple opportunities to amend, the magistrate judge recommended dismissal as legally frivolous and for failure to state a claim. The district court conducted de novo review, adopted the Report and Recommendation, dismissed the action, and closed the case.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	De novo review of the complaint, the case documents, the Report and Recommendation, and Plaintiff's objections under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) (1).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; memorandum order from a federal district court with no reported citation.

TOPICS

- pleadings
- motions to dismiss
- civil procedure
- section 1983
- civil rights

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

constitutional law

remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the action should be dismissed as legally frivolous and for failure to state a claim under the court's screening authority in 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e).
2. Whether Plaintiff had shown special circumstances warranting appointment of counsel in the civil-rights action.
3. Whether Plaintiff should receive another opportunity to amend his complaint.

HOLDINGS

1. The action was dismissed as legally frivolous and for failure to state a claim pursuant to the court's screening authority under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e).
2. Plaintiff was not entitled to appointment of counsel because he did not demonstrate special circumstances supporting appointment.
3. No further opportunity to amend the complaint was granted.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“IT IS ORDERED that this matter be dismissed as legally frivolous and for failure to state a claim pursuant to the Court’s screening authority under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e).”

“Having reviewed all of Plaintiff’s filings, this Court finds no special circumstances that would support the “appointment” of counsel in this civil rights actions.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, proceeding pro se, alleged that Venango County Prison and the Venango County Court of Common Pleas violated his constitutional rights beginning with his arrest. He was given several opportunities to amend his complaint, but the district court concluded after reviewing his filings that the action remained legally frivolous and failed to state a claim. Plaintiff also generally requested appointment of counsel.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The action was received on March 17, 2025, and removed by Defendants from the Venango County Court of Common Pleas. The matter was referred to Chief United States Magistrate Judge Richard A. Lanzillo, who issued a Report and Recommendation on February 23, 2026, recommending dismissal under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e) and denial of further leave to amend. Plaintiff objected, but the district court adopted the recommendation after de novo review, dismissed the case, and directed the Clerk to close it.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Parkell v. Danberg, 833 F.3d 313, 340 (3d Cir. 2016)

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