

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Daevon J. Taylor v. Los Angeles County Superior Court

Taylor v. Los Angeles County Superior Court · No. 2:25-cv-03147-TJH (DTB) · Decided January 8, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California issued an order to show cause why Daevon J. Taylor’s habeas petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 should not be dismissed. The court identified the Rooker-Feldman doctrine, Younger abstention, and the apparent absence of a custody requirement as grounds supporting dismissal. Taylor was ordered to respond or request voluntary dismissal by February 6, 2026.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	David T. Bristow
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	January 8, 2026
DOCKET	2:25-cv-03147-TJH (DTB)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner filed a pro se petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 seeking federal intervention in pending California criminal proceedings. The magistrate judge screened the petition and issued an order to show cause why it should not be dismissed, allowing petitioner until February 6, 2026, to respond.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Preliminary habeas screening under Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases, as applied to a § 2241 petition through Habeas Rule 1(b).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; district-court order to show cause and not a final merits judgment.
PARTIES	Daevon J. Taylor v. Los Angeles County Superior Court

TOPICS

- federal habeas corpus
- habeas corpus
- subject matter jurisdiction
- criminal procedure
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus

criminal procedure

federal jurisdiction

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the federal district court may exercise jurisdiction over a habeas petition seeking review of or intervention in pending state criminal proceedings.
2. Whether Younger abstention bars federal habeas intervention in the pending state criminal proceedings.
3. Whether the petition satisfies the custody requirement for federal habeas jurisdiction when petitioner alleges that he has been released on bond and does not challenge the legality of existing custody.

HOLDINGS

1. The petition appears subject to dismissal under the Rooker-Feldman doctrine because the relief sought would require the federal district court to review and invalidate decisions and actions taken in the ongoing state criminal proceedings.
2. Younger abstention appears to require the federal court to refrain from intervening in Taylor's ongoing state criminal proceedings because the proceeding is ongoing, implicates important state interests, provides an adequate opportunity to raise constitutional claims, and the requested relief would substantially interfere with the proceeding.
3. The petition appears jurisdictionally deficient because Taylor alleges that he was released on bond and does not claim that he is in custody in violation of the Constitution or federal law.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"[T]he essence of habeas corpus is an attack by a person in state custody upon the legality of that custody, and . . . the traditional function of the writ is to secure release from illegal custody." (Analysis, Section III)

"Younger . . . reaffirmed the long-standing principle that federal courts sitting in equity cannot, absent exceptional circumstances, enjoin pending state criminal proceedings." (Analysis, Section III)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Taylor was the subject of pending criminal proceedings in Los Angeles County Superior Court and alleged that his arrest and related search warrants were facially defective. He also challenged charges including felon in possession, alleged denial of discovery, and reliance on a previously vacated restraining order. Taylor stated that he had been released on bond and sought federal declarations that the state arrest and prosecution were unconstitutional, dismissal of the state charges, and other emergency relief.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Taylor filed the petition on April 6, 2025. The action was dismissed without prejudice on August 8, 2025, after Taylor failed to submit a complete in forma pauperis request, but the court vacated the dismissal and reopened the action on October 29, 2025. The court later granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis and, after screening the petition and related motions, issued this order to show cause rather than entering a final dismissal.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Baily v. Hill, 599 F.3d 976, 979-82 (9th Cir. 2010)
- Bennet v. Yoshina, 140 F.3d 1218, 1223 (9th Cir. 1998) (as amended)
- Bostic v. Carlson, 884 F.2d 1267, 1269-70 (9th Cir. 1989)
- Burnett v. Lampert, 432 F.3d 996, 999 (9th Cir. 2005)
- D.C. Ct. App. v. Feldman, 460 U.S. 462, 482-86 (1983)
- Dubinka v. Judges of Sup. Ct., 23 F.3d 218, 221 (9th Cir. 1994)
- Kelly v. Robinson, 479 U.S. 36, 49 (1986)
- Maleng v. Cook, 490 U.S. 488, 490 (1989)
- Middlesex Cnty. Ethics Comm. v. Garden State Bar Ass'n, 457 U.S. 423, 437 (1982)
- Preiser v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 475, 484 (1973)
- Race v. Salmonsens, 131 F.4th 792, 794 (9th Cir. 2025)
- ReadyLink Healthcare, Inc. v. State Comp. Ins. Fund, 754 F.3d 754, 758 (9th Cir. 2014)
- Rooker v. Fidelity Trust, 263 U.S. 413, 415-16 (1923)
- Younger v. Harris, 401 U.S. 37 (1971)
- Arevalo v. Hennessy, 882 F.3d 763, 765 (9th Cir. 2018)

OPINION

Daevon J. Taylor v. Los Angeles County Superior Court

PER CURIAM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10

WESTERN DIVISION

11 DAEVON J. TAYLOR,) Case No. 2:25-cv-03147-TJH (DTB)) 12) 13 Petitioner,) ORDER
TO SHOW CAUSE)

) REGARDING DISMISSAL

14 v.)) 15)

LOS ANGELES COUNTY)

16 SUPERIOR COURT,)

) 17) Respondent.) 18 19 I.

20 PROCEEDINGS

21 On April 6, 2025, petitioner Daevon J. Taylor (“Petitioner”), proceeding pro 22 se, filed a

Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus by a Person in State Custody pursuant 23 to 28 U.S.C. § 2241 (“Petition” or “Pet.”). (Docket No. 1). On April 28, 2025, 24 Petitioner filed a Request to Proceed Without Prepayment of Filing Fees. (Docket 25 No. 4). On June 11, 2025, Petitioner filed the following documents: “Emergency 26 Motion for Temporary Restraining Order, Federal Oversight, and Order to Show 27 Cause re: Preliminary Injunction” (Docket No. 5); “Emergency Request for 28 1 Immediate Review of Habeas Corpus Petition and Constitutional Relief” (Docket 2 No. 6); and Notice of Submission of Exhibits and Sworn Declaration Into Court 3 Record” (Docket No. 8). 4 On June 12, 2025, the District Judge issued an Order regarding Petitioner’s 5 Request to Proceed Without Prepayment of Filing Fees which was incomplete. 6 (Docket No. 7). Petitioner was to refile a complete request within 30 days of the 7 Court’s Order. On August 8, 2025, as Petitioner failed to comply with the Court’s 8 Order, the District Judge dismissed this action without prejudice. (Docket No. 10). 9 On October 7, 2025, Petitioner filed a Motion to Vacate the Dismissal along with a 10 Support Declaration and a Notice of Errata Regarding Case Number. (Docket Nos. 11 11-13). On October 29, 2025, the Court granted Petitioner’s Motion to Vacate and 12 reopened this action ordering the Clerk to file Petitioner’s CV-60 which was attached 13 to his Motion to Vacate. (Docket No. 14). On November 17, 2025, the Court granted 14 Petitioner’s Request to Proceed in Forma Pauperis. (Docket No. 16). 15 On November 16, 2025, Petitioner filed the following documents: 16 “Emergency Motion for Order to Show Cause and Order Requiring Response Under 17 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2243” (“Motion”) (Docket No. 17); “Table of Exhibit’s In 18 support of Emergency Motion For Order To Show Cause And Order Requiring 19 Response Under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2243” (Docket No. 18); and “Declaration of 20 Daevon J Taylor in Support of Emergency Motion For Order To Show Cause And 21 Order Requiring Response Under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2243” (“Taylor Decl.”) 22 23 (Docket No. 19). 24 In the Petition, as well as by the Motion, Petitioner seeks this Court to 25 intervene in his ongoing state criminal proceedings in Los Angeles County Superior 26 Court, Case No. 24 JCF 03632-01. (Pet. at 1-2; Motion at 2-3). Specifically, 27 Petitioner contends that his arrest and the accompanying search warrants relating to 28 his ongoing state criminal proceedings were based on facially defective warrants, 1 and that the proceedings are also based on a restraining order which had previously 2 been vacated. (Pet. at 2; Motion at 2-3). Plaintiff also alleges that he was improperly 3 charged with the offense of “felon in possession,” and that he has repeatedly been 4 denied discovery in his state criminal proceedings. (Motion at 2-3). Petitioner raises 5 multiple constitutional claims in the Petition, and seeks, inter alia, to have his current 6 state court arrest and prosecution be declared unconstitutional and to have his 7 pending state court charges dismissed. (Pet. at 4). 8 II. 9

LEGAL AUTHORITY

10 A federal court is required to screen all habeas petitions upon filing and must 11 summarily dismiss a petition “[i]f it plainly appears from the petition and any 12 attached exhibits that the petitioner is not entitled to relief in the district court.” Rule 13 4, Rules Governing Section 2254

Cases in the United States District Courts (“Habeas 14 Rule” or “Habeas Rules”). Habeas petitions brought pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, 15 such as the instant Petition, are subject to Habeas Rule 4. See Habeas Rule 1(b) (a 16 district court may “apply any or all of these rules” to any habeas petition); see also 17 *Bostic v. Carlson*, 884 F.2d 1267, 1269-70 (9th Cir. 1989) (affirming district court’s 18 dismissal of a Section 2241 petition under Habeas Rules 1(b) and (4)). 19 Thus, the Court is required to screen the instant Petition prior to ordering 20 service to determine whether it “plainly” appears Petitioner is entitled to relief. The 21 Court has therefore screened the Petition pursuant to Habeas Rule 4 and, as set forth 22 23 below, has determined that Petitioner is not entitled to habeas relief. However, 24 before dismissing the Petition, the Court will first provide Petitioner the opportunity 25 to be heard following this notice of the grounds for dismissal. See *Race v. 26 Salmonsens*, 131 F.4th 792, 794 (9th Cir. 2025) (reversing sua sponte order of 27 dismissal pursuant to Habeas Rule 4 where district court provided no notice to 28 petitioner prior to order of dismissal). 1 Accordingly, the Court hereby issues this Order to Show Cause why the 2 Petition should not be dismissed and specifically orders Petitioner to respond to 3 the Order to Show Cause in writing by no later than February 6, 2026. The Court 4 further directs Petitioner to review the information that follows, which provides 5 additional explanation as to why the Petition appears to be subject to dismissal and 6 may assist Petitioner in determining how to respond. 7 III. 8

ANALYSIS

9 The Court finds that the Petition is subject to dismissal on multiple grounds, 10 all of which arise from the fact that Petitioner is seeking to have this federal court 11 12 intervene in his pending state court criminal proceeding. 13 As an initial matter, this Court is prohibited from exercising any appellate 14 jurisdiction over rulings or decisions made in Petitioner’s state court criminal 15 proceedings. Pursuant to the Rooker-Feldman Doctrine, a federal district court is 16 barred from exercising appellate jurisdiction over state court decisions. See *D.C. Ct. 17 App. v. Feldman*, 460 U.S. 462, 482-86 (1983); *Rooker v. Fidelity Trust*, 263 U.S. 18 413, 415-16 (1923); *Bennet v. Yoshina*, 140 F.3d 1218, 1223 (9th Cir. 1998) (as 19 amended). Review of state court decisions may be conducted only by the United 20 States Supreme Court. See *Feldman*, 460 U.S. at 486; see also 28 U.S.C. §1257. 21 The Rooker-Feldman Doctrine applies even when the challenge to a state 22 court proceeding is based on federal constitutional issues, such as those raised in the 23 Petition. See *Dubinka v. Judges of Sup. Ct.*, 23 F.3d 218, 221 (9th Cir. 1994) 24 (citations omitted). The relief sought in the Petition – for this Court to declare 25 Petitioner’s arrest and pending prosecution unlawful, and to dismiss all charges 26 based on an invalid warrant – amounts to an appeal of the decisions and actions of 27 the court and prosecutor in Petitioner’s ongoing state court proceedings and is 28 1 therefore barred by the Rooker-Feldman Doctrine. Habeas relief is therefore 2 precluded. 3 This Court is also prohibited from intervening in a pending state court 4 proceeding by the Supreme Court’s decision in *Younger v. Harris*, 401 U.S. 37 5 (1971). “*Younger* . . . reaffirmed the long-standing principle that federal courts 6 sitting in

equity cannot, absent exceptional circumstances, enjoin pending state criminal proceedings.” ReadyLink Healthcare, Inc. v. State Comp. Ins. Fund, 754 F.3d 754, 758 (9th Cir. 2014). Abstention “is appropriate when: (1) [T]here is an ongoing state judicial proceeding; (2) the proceeding implicates important state interests; (3) there is an adequate opportunity in the state proceedings to raise constitutional challenges; and (4) the requested relief seeks to enjoin or has the practical effect of enjoining the ongoing state judicial proceeding.” Arevalo v. Hennessy, 882 F.3d 763, 765 (9th Cir. 2018) (cleaned up). Exceptions to Younger abstention arise if bad faith, harassment, or some other extraordinary circumstances in the state proceedings would make abstention inappropriate. See Middlesex Cnty. Ethics Comm. v. Garden State Bar Ass’n, 457 U.S. 423, 437 (1982). All of the Younger factors are present in Petitioner’s case, as there is an ongoing state judicial proceeding - Petitioner has criminal charges pending against him in the Los Angeles County Superior Court criminal proceedings. (Pet. at 2-3). This proceeding implicates California’s important interest in preserving the integrity of its criminal justice proceedings. See Kelly v. Robinson, 479 U.S. 36, 49 (1986) (“[T]he States’ interest in administering their criminal justice systems free from federal interference is one of the most powerful of the considerations that should influence a court considering equitable types of relief.”). Petitioner has not alleged that he will be deprived of an adequate opportunity to raise his constitutional claims at trial or on appeal. In addition, while Petitioner does not seek to enjoin the criminal proceedings directly, the relief sought in the Petition (and the Motion) would substantially interfere with the state-court proceedings and would amount to enjoining the proceeding. Finally, the Court cannot infer from the Petition or Motion any bad faith, harassment, or extraordinary circumstances that would make abstention inappropriate. Accordingly, Younger requires the Court to abstain from intervening in Petitioner’s state criminal proceedings through the requested habeas relief. Finally, it appears habeas relief is unwarranted in this matter on the basis that Petitioner is not currently in custody. As set forth above, a state prisoner may bring a federal habeas petition “only on the ground that he is in custody in violation of the Constitution or laws or treaties of the United States.” 28 U.S.C. § 2254(a). “[T]he essence of habeas corpus is an attack by a person in state custody upon the legality of that custody, and . . . the traditional function of the writ is to secure release from illegal custody.” Preiser v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 475, 484 (1973); Burnett v. Lampert, 432 F.3d 996, 999 (9th Cir. 2005). This Court lacks jurisdiction in this matter because Petitioner is not claiming that he is in custody in violation of the Constitution or other federal law. See Baily v. Hill, 599 F.3d 976, 979-82 (9th Cir. 2010) (§ 2254’s jurisdictional requirement includes that the habeas challenge be to the lawfulness of petitioner’s custody); see also Maleng v. Cook, 490 U.S. 488, 490 (1989) (“in custody” requirement is jurisdictional). Petitioner alleges in the Petition

that he has been released on bond pending his on-going state criminal proceedings, and that he is therefore not in custody. (See Petition at 2; Taylor Decl., ¶ 1). Thus, Petitioner is not

challenging the legality of his custody, since he is not in custody, 22 23 and habeas relief is therefore unwarranted. 24 Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, the Court finds that it appears 25 from the face of the Petition that Petitioner is not entitled to habeas relief. However, 26 as noted previously, before recommending the dismissal of the Petition, the Court 27 will afford Petitioner the opportunity to be heard. Accordingly, the Court provides 28 as follows: 1 Petitioner's Options 2 If Petitioner contends that he is, in fact, raising cognizable habeas challenges, 3 ||he must clearly explain this in a written response to this Order to Show Cause. 4 || Petitioner must file with the court a written response to the Order to Show Cause on > || or before February 6, 2026. In his response to the Order to Show Cause, Petitioner 6 || may set forth any reasons he wishes to argue against the dismissal of the action. 7 Alternatively, Petitioner may request a voluntary dismissal of this action 8 || without prejudice pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(a). A Notice of ? Dismissal form is attached for Petitioner's convenience. The Court advises 10 Petitioner, however, that if Petitioner should later attempt to again raise any dismissed claims in a subsequent habeas petition, those claims may be time-barred under the statute of limitations in 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d)(1) ("A 1-year period of ° limitation shall apply to an application for a writ of habeas corpus by a person in 4 custody pursuant to the judgment of a State court.""). Such dismissal request must also be filed on or before February 6, 2026. The Court warns Petitioner that failure to timely file and serve a response ig directed in this Order will result in a recommendation that this action be 19 dismissed for lack of jurisdiction, for failure to prosecute, and/or for failure to 20 obey Court orders. 99 || Dated: January 8, 2026 nu / bh

DAVID T. BRISTOW

23 United States Magistrate Judge 24 25 26 27 28