

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
GEORGIA

Russbel Omar Tapia Tobar v. Warden, Folkston ICE Processing
Facility

Tobar · No. 5:26-cv-90 · Decided January 26, 2026

SUMMARY

This order in a 28 U.S.C. § 2241 habeas action directs service of the petition on the Warden, the Attorney General, and the United States Attorney’s Office. It grants the petitioner leave to proceed in forma pauperis subject to objection and sets deadlines for the respondent’s answer, potential motions, and the petitioner’s replies. The order also establishes procedures for requesting interim relief from immigration detention or removal.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia, Waycross Division
DECIDED	January 26, 2026
DOCKET	5:26-cv-90
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Initial screening of a 28 U.S.C. § 2241 petition challenging immigration detention; the court ordered service, required an expedited answer, and set procedures for any interim-relief motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Initial habeas screening under Rules 1(b) and 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases, as applied to the § 2241 petition.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Russbel Omar Tapia Tobar v. Warden, Folkston ICE Processing Facility

TOPICS

- immigration detention
- federal habeas corpus
- service of process
- injunctions
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the petition should be served because it does not plainly appear that the petitioner is not entitled to habeas relief.
2. What response, record-production, and interim-relief procedures should govern the pending § 2241 habeas proceeding.

HOLDINGS

1. Because it did not plainly appear that petitioner was not entitled to relief, the court ordered service of the petition and required the respondent to answer and certify the true cause of detention.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“I find that it does not plainly appear that Petitioner is not entitled to relief.”

“Importantly, a petitioner who seeks release from detention while the Petition is pending must demonstrate in the motion for interim relief: (1) a likelihood of success on the merits of a substantial constitutional claim; and (2) extraordinary and exceptional circumstances exist that make release necessary to preserve the effectiveness of the habeas corpus relief sought.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner Russbel Omar Tapia Tobar was detained at the Folkston ICE Processing Facility and sought habeas relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. The order does not resolve the merits of the detention challenge; it directs the respondent to certify the true cause of detention and produce relevant records. The court also addressed procedures for any request for interim relief, including release from detention.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Petitioner filed a petition for habeas corpus relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 and moved to proceed in forma pauperis. After reviewing the petition under Rules 1(b) and 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases, the court found that it did not plainly appear that petitioner was not entitled to relief, granted in forma pauperis status subject to objection, directed service, and established deadlines for the respondent's answer and any reply.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Wilcox v. Ford, 813 F.2d 1140 (11th Cir. 1987)
- Gomez v. United States, 899 F.2d 1124 (11th Cir. 1990)
- Wilson v. Sec’y, Dep’t of Corr., No. 17-10060-D, 2017 WL 11815408, at *1 (11th Cir. May 10, 2017)
- Mapp v. Reno, 241 F.3d 221, 225 (2d Cir. 2001)

OPINION

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA WAYCROSS DIVISION RUSSBEL OMAR TAPIA TOBAR,¹ Petitioner, CIVIL ACTION NO.: 5:26-cv-90 v. WARDEN, FOLKSTON ICE PROCESSING FACILITY, Respondent. O RDE R Service of the Petition. I have reviewed Petitioner's 28 U.S.C. § 2241 Petition for Habeas Corpus Relief. I find that it does not plainly appear that Petitioner is not entitled to relief.

See Rules 1(b) and 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases. Therefore, the Court directs the United States Marshal to serve a copy of the Petition, doc. 1, and a copy of this Order by registered or certified mail upon: (1) the Attorney General of the United States; (2) the named Warden-Respondent; and (3) the civil process clerk at the office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia.

See Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(i). The Court DIRECTS the Clerk of Court to provide a courtesy copy of this Order and the Petition to the United States Attorney's Office at: Bradford.Patrick@usdoj.gov; Woelke.Leithart@usdoj.gov; and Keveya.Sturkey@usdoj.gov. Answer Due in 7 Days.

The Warden-Respondent must file an answer to the Petition within 7 business days of the date of this Order. See, e.g., 28 U.S.C. § 2243. The Answer must 1 I GRANT Petitioner's Motion for Leave to Proceed in Forma Pauperis, subject to objection. Doc.

1. address the allegations in the Petition, certify the true cause of the detention, and show cause why the Petition should not be granted. The Answer shall constitute a return for the purposes of 28 U.S.C. § 2243, as long as it certifies the true cause of detention. Counsel for the Warden-Respondent shall provide all relevant records, including orders, recordings, transcripts, and other records from ICE, that are available to counsel at the time of the Answer.

Counsel shall promptly supplement the answer with any additional records that counsel obtains after filing the Answer. The Warden-Respondent will be permitted to file additional motions, including a motion to dismiss, within 21 days of filing the Answer. Reply Due in 3 Days. Petitioner shall file any desired Reply to the Answer within 3 days of the date the Answer is served.

Petitioner shall file any desired response to a motion to dismiss within 14 days of service. Requests for Interim Relief. This Petition will be resolved in the ordinary course. Recently, petitioners in similar circumstances have sought various forms of interim relief, including a prohibition on the petitioner's removal from the United States, a prohibition on ICE from transferring the petitioner from one detention facility to another within the United States, and interim release from detention while the habeas petition is pending.

To the extent Petitioner is requesting interim relief, Petitioner shall file an independent motion titled “Motion for Interim Relief” separate from the Petition. Petitioner should not make a request for interim relief in the body of the Petition or in a request for preliminary injunctive relief (e.g., a motion for temporary restraining order or a motion for preliminary injunction, or motion for order to show cause).

The Warden-Respondent shall file a response to any motion for interim relief within 7 days of the date the motion is served. If there is a motion currently pending, the Warden-Respondent shall file a response to that Motion within 7 days of the date of this Order. Importantly, a petitioner who seeks release from detention while the Petition is pending must demonstrate in the motion for interim relief: (1) a likelihood of success on the merits of a substantial constitutional claim; and (2) extraordinary and exceptional circumstances exist that make release necessary to preserve the effectiveness of the habeas corpus relief sought.

See, e.g., *Wilcox v. Ford*, 813 F.2d 1140 (11th Cir. 1987); *Gomez v. United States*, 899 F.2d 1124 (11th Cir. 1990); and *Wilson v. Sec’y, Dep’t of Corr.*, No. 17-10060-D, 2017 WL 11815408, at *1 (11th Cir. May 10, 2017); see also *Mapp v. Reno*, 241 F.3d 221, 225 (2d Cir. 2001). SO ORDERED, this 26th day of January, 2026. BO UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA