

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

Christopher Goodvine v. John and Jane Doe Nurses, et al.

Goodvine · No. 24-cv-702-pp · Decided December 22, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin denied Christopher Goodvine’s motion for reconsideration concerning his Monell claims against Milwaukee County and Wellpath, and denied as moot his motion concerning state-law claims. The court granted Sheriff Denita Ball’s motion to dismiss for lack of diligence because Goodvine failed to identify the Doe defendants or explain his inability to do so. The case was dismissed without prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	December 22, 2025
DOCKET	24-cv-702-pp
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The plaintiff moved for reconsideration of the court's screening order under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 54(b). Sheriff Denita Ball moved to dismiss under Rule 41(b) for failure to prosecute because the plaintiff failed to identify the Doe defendants as ordered.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A nonfinal order may be reconsidered under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 54(b) before entry of judgment. Reconsideration is appropriate only to correct a manifest error of law or fact or to consider newly discovered evidence. Dismissal for failure to prosecute under Rule 41(b) is reviewed under the court's authority to manage its docket and enforce compliance with its orders.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Christopher Goodvine v. John and Jane Doe Nurses, et al., Denita Ball

TOPICS

- motion for reconsideration
- motions to dismiss
- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

prisoner medical care

constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court should reconsider its screening determination that the complaint did not plausibly allege a Monell claim against Milwaukee County or Wellpath.
2. Whether the court should reconsider the screening order because it did not expressly state whether the plaintiff could proceed on state-law negligence and malpractice claims.
3. Whether the case should be dismissed without prejudice under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b) for the plaintiff's failure to identify the Doe defendants and failure to respond to Sheriff Ball's motion.

HOLDINGS

1. Reconsideration was denied because the plaintiff did not show a manifest error of law or fact, newly discovered evidence, or sufficient facts supporting a plausible inference that Milwaukee County or Wellpath maintained a policy or custom that caused his constitutional injury.
2. The motion for reconsideration concerning the state-law claims was denied as moot because the court was dismissing the case without prejudice for lack of diligence.
3. The action was properly dismissed without prejudice for lack of diligence under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b) because the plaintiff failed to identify the Doe defendants, failed to explain his inability to do so, and failed to respond to Sheriff Ball's motion.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Motions for reconsideration serve a very limited purpose in federal civil litigation: “to correct manifest errors of law or fact or to present newly discovered evidence.”” (Motion for Reconsideration section)

“The complaint’s allegation that upon information and belief, the jail routinely denies incarcerated individuals access to narcotics is conclusory and does not state a plausible Monell claim.” (Motion for Reconsideration section)

“The court ORDERS that this case is DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE for lack of diligence.”
(Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Goodvine alleged that, while temporarily transferred from a Wisconsin Department of Corrections institution to the Milwaukee County Jail, he did not receive Lyrica prescribed for his chronic painful condition and was given Tylenol instead. He alleged two jail stays in August and September 2023 during which he experienced pain because Lyrica was not provided. He also alleged, on information and belief, that Wellpath and Milwaukee County routinely denied incarcerated persons access to prescribed narcotic medication. The court found that these allegations did not plausibly establish a policy or custom causing a constitutional deprivation.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A and permitted the plaintiff to proceed against Doe nurses and a Doe doctor on an Eighth Amendment medical-treatment claim, while dismissing proposed Monell claims against Milwaukee County and Wellpath at screening. Sheriff Ball was named only for the limited purpose of helping identify the Doe defendants, and the plaintiff was ordered to identify them within sixty days after Ball's counsel appeared. After the plaintiff failed to identify the Doe defendants, failed to explain his inability to do so, and did not respond to Ball's motion, the court denied reconsideration of the Monell ruling, denied as moot reconsideration concerning state-law claims, granted Ball's motion, and dismissed the action without prejudice for lack of diligence.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Galvan v. Norberg, 678 F.3d 581, 587 n.3 (7th Cir. 2012)
- Cheese Depot, Inc. v. Sirob Imports, Inc., 2019 WL 1505399, at *1 (N.D. Ill. Apr. 5, 2019)
- Morningware, Inc. v. Hearthware Home Products, Inc., 2011 WL 1376920, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Apr. 12, 2011)
- Rothwell Cotton Co. v. Rosenthal & Co., 827 F.2d 246, 251 (7th Cir. 1987)
- Keene Corp. v. International Fidelity Insurance Co., 561 F. Supp. 656, 665-66 (N.D. Ill. 1983), aff'd, 736 F.2d 388 (7th Cir. 1984)
- Oto v. Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 224 F.3d 601, 606 (7th Cir. 2000)
- Sedrak v. Callahan, 987 F. Supp. 1063, 1069 (N.D. Ill. 1997)
- Acantha LLC v. DePuy Orthopaedics Inc., 2018 WL 2290715, at *1 (E.D. Wis. May 19, 2018)
- Bank of Waunakee v. Rochester Cheese Sales, Inc., 906 F.2d 1185, 1191 (7th Cir. 1990)
- Monell v. Department of Social Services of the City of New York, 436 U.S. 658 (1978)
- Waters v. City of Chicago, 580 F.3d 575, 581 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Estate of Sims ex rel. Sims v. County of Bureau, 506 F.3d 509, 515 (7th Cir. 2007)
- McCauley v. City of Chicago, 671 F.3d 611, 616, 618-19 (7th Cir. 2011)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)