

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
TENNESSEE

Anton Andreyevich Iagounov v. Warden John Mattos, et al.

No. 3:26-cv-00314 · No. 3:26-cv-00314 · Decided May 27, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee addresses a federal pretrial detainee’s petition for habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. The court concludes that jurisdiction lies in the District of Nevada, where the petitioner is confined and where his immediate custodian and underlying criminal proceedings are located. The court grants the respondent’s motion insofar as it directs transfer of the petition to the District of Nevada under 28 U.S.C. § 1631.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee
DECIDED	May 27, 2026
DOCKET	3:26-cv-00314
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 challenging the legality of his detention. The United States, on behalf of the United States Marshals Service, moved to dismiss or alternatively transfer the petition. The court granted the motion insofar as it directed transfer of the petition to the United States District Court for the District of Nevada.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Rule 4 of the Rules Governing § 2254 Cases, applied to § 2241 petitions, the petition may be denied if it plainly appears from the petition and attached exhibits that the petitioner is not entitled to relief.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court memorandum opinion and order
PARTIES	Anton Andreyevich Iagounov v. Warden John Mattos, United States Marshals Service, CoreCivic, other named respondents

TOPICS

- federal habeas corpus
- subject matter jurisdiction
- venue
- motions to dismiss
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus

federal civil procedure

subject matter jurisdiction

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether a § 2241 petition challenging present physical confinement may be heard in a district other than the district where the petitioner is confined and where the immediate custodian is located.
2. Whether the petition should be dismissed without prejudice or transferred under 28 U.S.C. § 1631 when the court lacks jurisdiction.

HOLDINGS

1. For a challenge to present physical confinement, the proper respondent is the petitioner's immediate custodian, and jurisdiction lies only in the federal district where the petitioner is confined. Because Petitioner was confined in Nevada and Warden Mattos was located there, the Middle District of Tennessee lacked jurisdiction.
2. When a federal court lacks jurisdiction, transfer under 28 U.S.C. § 1631 is appropriate if transfer is in the interest of justice. Under the circumstances, transfer of the petition to the District of Nevada was preferable to dismissal.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“the proper respondent is the petitioner’s immediate custodian, and jurisdiction lies only in the district of confinement.” (434-35, 442-44)

“For the reasons set forth above, Respondent’s Motion to Dismiss, or in the Alternative, to Transfer (Doc. No. 6) is GRANTED insofar as the Clerk is DIRECTED to transfer the petition (Doc. No. 1) filed by Petitioner under Section 2241 to the United States District Court for the District of Nevada pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1631.” (Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner was sentenced in the Eastern District of California to two years and three months' imprisonment for impersonating a federal officer. He was later indicted in the District of Nevada on fifteen counts involving false information and hoax offenses and was being held as a federal pretrial detainee at the Nevada Southern Detention Center in Pahrump, Nevada. He named, among others, the facility's warden, John Mattos, the United States Marshals Service, and CoreCivic as respondents. He filed the present § 2241 petition in the Middle District of Tennessee, asserting that CoreCivic's connection to that district supported jurisdiction.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Petitioner was convicted and sentenced in the Eastern District of California and was later indicted in the District of Nevada on federal false-information and hoax charges. While detained in Nevada, he filed prior § 2241 petitions in the District of Nevada, including one dismissed because his claims belonged in his criminal case. He filed this petition in the Middle District of Tennessee based on CoreCivic's alleged location or headquarters

there. The court concluded that jurisdiction lay only in the district of confinement and transferred the petition to the District of Nevada under 28 U.S.C. § 1631.

DISPOSITION

other

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The Clerk was directed to transfer the § 2241 petition to the United States District Court for the District of Nevada pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1631. All future filings were directed to be made in that court.

CASES CITED

- Williams v. Holloway, No. 2:14-cv-02652-STA-tmp, 2016 WL 1058017, at *4 n.2 (W.D. Tenn. Mar. 14, 2016)
- Rumsfeld v. Padilla, 542 U.S. 426, 434-35, 442-44 (2004)
- Ozturk v. Hyde, 136 F.4th 382, 390 (6th Cir. 2025)

OPINION

Iagounov

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE DIVISION

ANTON ANDREYEVICH IAGOUNOV,)

also known as Ninjavelli,)) Petitioner,) No. 3:26-cv-00314) v.)) WARDEN JOHN MATTOS, et al.,)) Respondents.)

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Anton Andreyevich Iagounov, a federal pre-trial detainee currently in the custody of the Nevada Southern Detention Center in Pahrump, Nevada, has filed a Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241. (Doc. No. 1). He paid the filing fee. (Doc. No. 1-2). The petition names multiple Respondents, including the United States Marshals Service, a federal agency within the United States Department of Justice. See 28 U.S.C. § 561(a). The United States Attorney's Office represents federal agencies, including the United States Marshals Service, in civil litigation on behalf of the Department of Justice. See 28 U.S.C. §§ 516 and 547. The United States, on behalf of the United States Marshals Service, has responded to Petitioner's petition, as directed by the Court, by filing a Motion to Dismiss, or in the Alternative, to Transfer. (Doc. No. 6). The Motion is ripe for review.

I. STANDARD FOR PETITIONS UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 2241

A petition will be denied "if it plainly appears from the petition and any attached exhibits that the

petitioner is not entitled to relief.” Rule 4 of the Rules Governing § 2254 Cases in the United States District Courts. The Rules Governing 2254 Cases (“Habeas Rules”) apply to habeas petitions under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. See *Williams v. Holloway*, No. 2:14-cv-02652-STA-tmp, 2016 WL 1058017, at *4 n.2 (W.D. Tenn. Mar. 14. 2016).

II. REVIEW OF SECTION 2241 PETITION

A. Procedural History and Factual Background Petitioner received a sentence in the Eastern District of California on February 6, 2025, of two years and three months’ imprisonment for impersonating a federal officer. In that case, Petitioner attempted to acquire protected information using false court documents. On May 8, 2025, Petitioner was indicted in the United States District Court for the District of Nevada on fifteen counts related to false information and hoax offenses. See *United States of America v. Anton Andreyevich Iagounov*, Case 3:25-cr-00017-ART-CSD. Petitioner acknowledges that he is currently a federal pretrial detainee in that case and is confined in the Nevada Southern Detention Center, a CoreCivic detention facility, located in Pahrump, Nevada. (Doc. No. 1 at 1). The Warden of that facility, John Mattos, is also named as a Respondent in the instant petition. On July 17, 2025, Petitioner filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241 in the United States District Court for the District of Nevada (Case No. 3:25-cv-00365- ART-CSD). That petition was dismissed by that Court on July 23, 2025, because the “proper vehicle for Iagounov’s claims [is] through a motion or petition in his criminal case.” (Id., Doc. No. 3; see also Doc. No. 10). Petitioner has continued to pursue similar claims in his criminal case, including motions to dismiss and motions to disqualify, all of which have been denied. His jury trial is currently scheduled in the District of Nevada for August 18, 2026. (See Case No. 3:25-cr- 00017- ART-CSD-1 (Doc. No. 45)). On March 17, 2026, Petitioner filed the instant petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 in this Court challenging the legality of his detention. According to Petitioner, he filed his petition in this Court because his “immediate custodian”—Respondent CoreCivic—is “located and headquartered” in this district. (Doc. No. 1 at 4, 7). Petitioner claims that “‘Core Civic’ personnel do not have any statutory authority . . . in supervising or maintaining custody of federal prisoners”, and that “it is illegal for anyone other than the USMS [United States Marshals Service] to have custody over a federal prisoner” (Id. at 4). On April 29, 2026, Petitioner filed another habeas petition in the United States District Court for the District of Nevada, again naming the United States Marshals Service as a respondent. (See Case No. 2:26-cv-01313). The petition was denied by Order entered on May 1, 2026, and judgment was entered in favor of the respondents. (See id., Doc. No. 4).

B. Analysis The Supreme Court has made clear that for challenges to present physical confinement, the proper respondent is the petitioner’s immediate custodian, and jurisdiction lies only in the district of confinement. *Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, 542 U.S. 426, 434-35, 442-444 (2004) (the default rule is that the proper respondent is the warden of the facility where the prisoner is being held, not the Attorney General or some other remote supervisory official) (requiring a Section 2241 petitioner to “file the petition in the district of confinement”); *Ozturk v. Hyde*, 136 F.4th 382, 390 (6th Cir.

2025) (same). Here, Petitioner is confined in Nevada, and his immediate custodian, Warden Mattos, is located in Nevada. Accordingly, the United States District Court for the District of Nevada is the only court with jurisdiction over Petitioner's present custodian. Because this Court lacks jurisdiction, the Court must determine whether the appropriate course of action is to dismiss the petition without prejudice or transfer it to the correct federal court. 28 U.S.C. § 1631. Under Section 1631, if a federal court finds there is a "want of jurisdiction, the court shall, if it is in the interest of justice, transfer such action" to the correct court rather than dismissing it. *Id.* Here, Petitioner is presently confined in Nevada, his custodian is there, and his underlying criminal proceedings are pending there. To this Court's knowledge, he has no current federal habeas proceedings pending in Nevada. The Court finds that transfer is the appropriate option under the circumstances.

I. CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, Respondent's Motion to Dismiss, or in the Alternative, to Transfer (Doc. No. 6) is GRANTED insofar as the Clerk is DIRECTED to transfer the petition (Doc. No. 1) filed by Petitioner under Section 2241 to the United States District Court for the District of Nevada pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1631. All future filings in this case shall be made in that court. IT IS SO ORDERED. Wau. Eushea aren eh Ginstinttg
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE