

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
ALABAMA

Richard Shields, as Guardian Ad Litem of Thomas Sanspree, an
incompetent person v. Qshequila Ephriam and Felicia Webb

Civil Action No. 1:24-00318-TFM-N · No. Civil Action No. 1:24-00318-TFM-N · Decided February 20, 2026

SUMMARY

This Report and Recommendation addresses separate motions to dismiss filed by defendants Qshequila Ephriam and Felicia Webb in an action brought on behalf of a pretrial detainee. The magistrate judge concludes that the plaintiff failed to exhaust available administrative remedies under the Prison Litigation Reform Act and recommends dismissal with prejudice of the federal claims; the document text provided is incomplete and does not include the final disposition of the state-law claims or the signature and date.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Alabama
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Katherine P. Nelson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Alabama
DECIDED	February 20, 2026
DOCKET	Civil Action No. 1:24-00318-TFM-N
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Report and recommendation on Defendants' separate motions to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a motion to dismiss for failure to exhaust administrative remedies under the PLRA, the court applies the Eleventh Circuit's two-step Turner v. Burnside framework: first, conflicting factual allegations are viewed in the plaintiff's favor; if dismissal is not warranted at that stage, the court makes specific findings resolving disputed exhaustion facts. The defendants bear the burden of proving failure to exhaust. Factual disputes may be resolved on affidavits and exhibits when no evidentiary hearing is requested.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

motions to dismiss

prisoners rights

section 1983

subject matter jurisdiction

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

prison litigation

constitutional law

torts

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Sanspree failed to exhaust available administrative remedies before bringing his § 1983 claims under the PLRA.
2. Whether the Baldwin County Corrections Center grievance process was unavailable because Sanspree lacked kiosk access while in isolation or because investigators allegedly led him to believe that he could pursue charges only after release.
3. Whether the court should decline supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law assault-and-battery claims after dismissal of all federal claims.

HOLDINGS

1. The Baldwin County Corrections Center's grievance procedure was available to Sanspree, and he failed to timely and properly exhaust it before filing his federal claims.
2. The federal § 1983 claims should be dismissed with prejudice for failure to exhaust administrative remedies under the PLRA.
3. After dismissal of all federal claims, the court should decline to continue exercising supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law assault-and-battery claims and dismiss them without prejudice to timely refiling in state court.

KEY QUOTATIONS

““Exhaustion is no longer left to the discretion of the district court, but is mandatory.”” (at 85)

““Accordingly, an inmate is required to exhaust those, but only those, grievance procedures that are ‘capable of use’ to obtain ‘some relief for the action complained of.’”” (at 1859)

“That all federal claims asserted in the operative complaint (Doc# 55) be **DISMISSED** with prejudice under Rule 12(b) for failure to exhaust administrative remedies under the PLRA;” (Conclusion ¶ 1)

“That the Court then decline to continue exercising supplemental jurisdiction over the state law claims in the operative complaint under § 1367(c)(3), and accordingly **DISMISS** those claims without prejudice so that they may be timely refiled in state court;” (Conclusion ¶ 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Thomas Sanspree was a pretrial detainee at the Baldwin County Corrections Center with a documented history of mental illness and a recent mental-health crisis involving threats of self-harm. On May 16-17, 2024, Sergeant Qshequilla Ephraim allegedly struck Sanspree while he was restrained in a chair, and Nurse Felicia Webb allegedly struck or shoved his head and neck during a wellness check. Sanspree alleged that he was left

restrained and without further safety or medical checks, and he later asserted federal civil-rights claims and state assault-and-battery claims. The jail grievance procedure required an inmate request and grievance within five days, but Sanspree did not submit a request concerning the incidents until May 28, 2024 and never completed the formal grievance process.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed an amended complaint asserting 42 U.S.C. § 1983 claims for excessive force and deliberate indifference, along with Alabama assault-and-battery claims. Defendants moved to dismiss, principally arguing that Plaintiff failed to exhaust available administrative remedies under the Prison Litigation Reform Act. The magistrate judge recommended granting the motions as to the federal claims and declining supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims, subject to review by the assigned district judge after any objections.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Pintando v. Miami-Dade Hous. Agency*, 501 F.3d 1241, 1243 (11th Cir. 2007) (per curiam)
- *Dresdner Bank AG, Dresdner Bank AG in Hamburg v. M/V OLYMPIA VOYAGER*, 463 F.3d 1210, 1215 (11th Cir. 2006)
- *Woodford v. Ngo*, 548 U.S. 81, 85, 94-95, 126 S. Ct. 2378, 165 L. Ed. 2d 368 (2006)
- *Sims v. Secretary, Florida Department of Corrections*, 75 F.4th 1224, 1230 (11th Cir. 2023)
- *Jones v. Bock*, 549 U.S. 199, 218, 127 S. Ct. 910, 166 L. Ed. 2d 798 (2007)
- *Turner v. Burnside*, 541 F.3d 1077, 1082-83 (11th Cir. 2008)
- *Porter v. Nussle*, 534 U.S. 516, 532, 122 S. Ct. 983, 152 L. Ed. 2d 12 (2002)
- *McGuire-Mollica v. Federal Bureau of Prisons*, 146 F.4th 1308, 1313-14 (11th Cir. 2025)
- *Ross v. Blake*, 578 U.S. 632, 136 S. Ct. 1850, 195 L. Ed. 2d 117 (2016)
- *Booth v. Churner*, 532 U.S. 731, 738, 741 n.6, 121 S. Ct. 1819, 149 L. Ed. 2d 958 (2001)
- *Varner v. Shepard*, 11 F.4th 1252, 1258 (11th Cir. 2021)
- *Whatley v. Smith*, 898 F.3d 1072, 1083 & n.58 (11th Cir. 2018)
- *Bryant v. Rich*, 530 F.3d 1368, 1374-78 (11th Cir. 2008)
- *Crocker v. Beatty*, 995 F.3d 1232, 1246 (11th Cir. 2021)
- *Patel v. Lanier County, Georgia*, 969 F.3d 1173, 1181-82 (11th Cir. 2020)
- *Johnson v. Meadows*, 418 F.3d 1152, 1159 (11th Cir. 2005)
- *Baltin v. Alaron Trading Corp.*, 128 F.3d 1466, 1469 (11th Cir. 1997)
- *Silas v. Sheriff of Broward County, Florida*, 55 F.4th 863, 865-66 (11th Cir. 2022)
- *Raney v. Allstate Insurance Co.*, 370 F.3d 1086, 1089 (11th Cir. 2004)
- *Carnegie-Mellon University v. Cohill*, 484 U.S. 343, 350 n.7, 108 S. Ct. 614, 98 L. Ed. 2d 720 (1988)
- *Vibe Micro, Inc. v. Shabanets*, 878 F.3d 1291, 1296 (11th Cir. 2018)

- *Artis v. District of Columbia*, 583 U.S. 71, 75, 138 S. Ct. 594, 199 L. Ed. 2d 473 (2018)

Retrieved from lawtools.ai · <https://lawtools.ai/cases/state/united-states-district-court-for-the-southern-district-of-alabama-united-states-district-court-for-t/2026/richard-shields-as-guardian-ad-litem-of-thomas-sanspree-an-wm92zde0>