

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
LOUISIANA, MONROE DIVISION

Frederick Johnson v. Warden Jergens

Civil Action No. 26-0585, Section P (W.D. La. Mar. 10, 2026) (report and recommendation) · No. 3:26-cv-00585 · Decided March 10, 2026

SUMMARY

This Report and Recommendation addresses Frederick Johnson’s 28 U.S.C. § 2241 petition challenging his pretrial detention in Louisiana state criminal proceedings. The magistrate judge recommends dismissal without prejudice because Johnson had not exhausted available state remedies and federal abstention principles counseled against interference with the pending state prosecution.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, Monroe Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Kayla D. McClusky
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, Monroe Division
DECIDED	March 10, 2026
DOCKET	3:26-cv-00585
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner, a state pretrial detainee proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis, filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 challenging the lack of a speedy trial, failure to arraign him on all charges, and failure to set bond. The magistrate judge issued a report and recommendation that the petition be dismissed without prejudice.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Review of a state pretrial habeas petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2241, including exhaustion of available state remedies and abstention principles governing federal interference with pending state criminal proceedings.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Frederick Johnson v. Warden Jergens

TOPICS

federal habeas corpus

speedy trial

sixth amendment

bail

federalism

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus

criminal procedure

constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether a federal court may grant pretrial § 2241 habeas relief based on an alleged violation of the Sixth Amendment speedy-trial right when the petitioner has not been tried, convicted, or exhausted available state remedies.
2. Whether a federal court should intervene in a pending state criminal proceeding to order release or otherwise grant relief based on the state trial court's alleged failure to set bond.
3. Whether the petition should be dismissed without prejudice because federal habeas relief is not an appropriate vehicle for disrupting the pending state prosecution absent special circumstances.

HOLDINGS

1. Pretrial federal habeas relief is generally unavailable to adjudicate a claim that a state is barred from trying a petitioner because of an alleged Sixth Amendment speedy-trial violation, particularly where the petitioner has not been tried or convicted and has not exhausted available state remedies.
2. Pretrial federal habeas corpus is not an appropriate vehicle for adjudicating a claim seeking release from a pending state prosecution based on the state trial court's failure to set bond, absent special circumstances.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“There is ‘an important distinction between a petitioner who seeks to abort a state proceeding or to disrupt the orderly functioning of state judicial processes by litigating a speedy trial defense to a prosecution prior to trial, and one who seeks only to enforce the state’s obligation to bring him promptly to trial.’” (at 3)

“The constitutional right to a speedy trial does not qualify as ‘a per se ‘special circumstance’ which would obviate the exhaustion requirement.’” (at 4)

“Here, Petitioner clearly seeks to ‘disrupt the orderly functioning of state judicial processes’ or to otherwise ‘derail’ or ‘abort’ his pending state-court proceeding, seeking release from confinement free from any bond obligations.” (at 5)

“Federal habeas corpus should not be used as a ‘pretrial motion forum for state prisoners.’” (at 6)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Johnson was a pretrial detainee at the Ouachita Parish Correctional Center while Louisiana prosecuted him on criminal charges. He alleged that he had been incarcerated for eleven months, that the state trial court had not

arraigned him on all charges, and that the court had failed to set bond despite his repeated requests. He sought release from confinement without bond obligations and had not pursued relief in the state appellate courts.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Louisiana was prosecuting Johnson in the Fourth Judicial District Court for Ouachita Parish under case number 25-CR-1914. Johnson filed the federal § 2241 petition on February 19, 2026, alleging that he had been incarcerated for eleven months without a complete arraignment, a speedy trial, or a bond hearing. He acknowledged that he had not sought relief from the Louisiana appellate courts. The magistrate judge recommended dismissal without prejudice because the claims were unexhausted and federal intervention would improperly disrupt the pending state criminal proceeding.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Amir-Sharif v. Commissioners of Dallas, Tex., 2007 WL 1138806, at *2 (N.D. Tex. Apr. 17, 2007)
- County of Riverside v. McLaughlin, 500 U.S. 44, 57 (1991)
- State v. Williams, 2025-00575, 420 So. 3d 674 (La. Oct. 14, 2025)
- Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Court of Kentucky, 410 U.S. 484 (1973)
- Brown v. Estelle, 530 F.2d 1280, 1283 (5th Cir. 1976)
- Dickerson v. State of Louisiana, 816 F.2d 220, 223-27 (5th Cir. 1987)
- Easterly v. Smith, 30 F.3d 1491 (5th Cir. 1994)
- Hartfield v. Osborne, 808 F.3d 1066, 1070 (5th Cir. 2015)
- Tooten v. Shevin, 493 F.2d 173, 177 (5th Cir. 1974)
- Rose v. Lundy, 455 U.S. 509 (1982)
- Minor v. Lucas, 697 F.2d 697 (5th Cir. 1983)
- Resendez v. McKaskle, 722 F.2d 227, 231 (5th Cir. 1984)
- Shute v. State of Tex., 117 F.3d 233, 237 (5th Cir. 1997)
- Younger v. Harris, 401 U.S. 37 (1971)
- Kolski v. Watkins, 544 F.2d 762, 766 (5th Cir. 1977)
- Douglass v. United Services Automobile Association, 79 F.3d 1415 (5th Cir. 1996)