

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, FORT WAYNE DIVISION

D’Andre Harris v. General Motors, LLC

Harris v. General Motors · No. 1:24-CV-497-HAB · Decided February 11, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana denied General Motors, LLC’s motion to dismiss D’Andre Harris’s amended Title VI employment-discrimination claim. The court held that Harris sufficiently alleged that General Motors received federal funds whose primary purpose was to provide employment and that he was discriminated against based on race. The opinion was entered on February 11, 2026.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, Fort Wayne Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Holly A. Brady
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, Fort Wayne Division
DECIDED	February 11, 2026
DOCKET	1:24-CV-497-HAB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) to dismiss the re-pleaded Title VI claim in Plaintiff’s amended complaint. The court denied the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a Rule 12(b)(6) motion, the court accepts the complaint’s factual allegations as true and views them in the light most favorable to the plaintiff. The complaint must provide fair notice, allege facts sufficient to raise a right to relief above the speculative level, and state a facially plausible claim.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown

TOPICS

- motions to dismiss
- civil rights
- employment discrimination
- pleadings
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

employment law

civil rights

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Harris's amended complaint plausibly alleged that General Motors was the recipient of federal financial assistance whose primary purpose was to provide employment, as required for a Title VI employment-discrimination claim.
2. Whether Harris's allegations that General Motors received specified federal funds, that the primary purpose of the funds was employment, and that General Motors discriminated against him because of race were sufficient to survive a Rule 12(b)(6) motion.

HOLDINGS

1. A Title VI employment-discrimination claim is sufficiently pleaded when the complaint alleges that the defendant received federal funds, that the primary purpose of the funds was to provide employment, and that the defendant discriminated against the plaintiff in employment on the basis of race. Harris's specific allegations concerning federal funding sources and amounts, together with his allegation that the funding's primary purpose was employment, were sufficient at the pleading stage.
2. The amended Title VI claim was facially plausible and stated a claim for relief; therefore, General Motors's motion to dismiss was denied.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Court finds the allegations in Harris’s complaint sufficient to support his Title VI claim.” (Section III)

“The Court will only dismiss a claim where a plaintiff has pled no facts in support of the theory of recovery that would entitle him or her to relief.” (Section III)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

General Motors hired Harris, an African-American man, in 2013 and promoted him through several supervisory and management positions. In January 2024, General Motors informed Harris that it was investigating a sexual-harassment complaint, and it terminated him on February 1, 2024, without further contact or information about the investigation. Harris exhausted his Title VII administrative remedies by filing an EEOC charge alleging race discrimination and then sued General Motors. In his amended complaint, Harris alleged that General Motors received specified federal grants or loans whose primary purpose was to provide employment and that he was an intended beneficiary of that funding.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Harris filed his original complaint on November 21, 2024, asserting claims under Title VII, Title VI, and 42 U.S.C. § 1981. The court previously dismissed the Title VII claim insofar as it was based on ancestry or national origin with prejudice and dismissed the Title VI claim without prejudice, granting leave to amend. Harris filed an amended complaint, and General Motors renewed its motion to dismiss Count III, the Title VI claim. The court denied the renewed motion.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Brokaw v. Mercer Cnty.*, 235 F.3d 1000, 1006 (7th Cir. 2000)
- *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007)
- *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- *Crow Dog v. City of Indianapolis*, 2005 WL 643363, at *5 (S.D. Ind. Mar. 18, 2005)
- *Ahern v. Bd. of Educ. of Chicago*, 133 F.3d 975, 976-78 (7th Cir. 1998)
- *Doe ex rel. Doe v. St. Joseph’s Hosp. of Fort Wayne*, 788 F.2d 411, 419 n.12 (7th Cir. 1986)
- *Brown v. Budz*, 398 F.3d 904, 914 (7th Cir. 2005)
- *Rogers v. Board of Education of Prince George’s County*, 859 F. Supp. 2d 742, 752 (D. Md. 2012)
- *Sims v. Unified Government of Wyandotte County*, 120 F. Supp. 2d 938, 956 (D. Kan. 2000)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA FORT WAYNE DIVISION D’ANDRE HARRIS, Plaintiff, v. CASE NO. 1:24-CV-497-HAB GENERAL MOTORS, LLC, Defendant. OPINION AND ORDER Plaintiff D’Andre Harris (“Harris”) filed his initial Complaint in this case against Defendant General Motors, LLC (“General Motors”) on November 21, 2024, alleging violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e, as amended (“Title VII”); Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d (“Title VI”), and 42 U.S.C. § 1981, as amended.

(ECF No. 1). General Motors filed a motion to dismiss Harris’s Title VI claim as well as his Title VII claim, to the extent it is based on ancestry or national origin, on January 24, 2025 (ECF No. 13). The Court granted the motion, dismissing Harris’s Title VII claim, to the extent based on ancestry or national origin, with prejudice and dismissing Harris’s Title VI claim without prejudice, granting Harris leave to replead his Title VI claim by filing an amended complaint.

(ECF No. 36). Harris filed his amended complaint on July 14, 2025. (ECF No. 39). General Motors now moves to dismiss Count III of Harris’s Amended Complaint—his re-pleaded Title VI claim. (ECF No. 41). The parties have fully briefed the motion (ECF Nos. 41, 43, 44), making it ripe for consideration.

For the reasons below, the motion will be DENIED. I. BACKGROUND In May 2013, General Motors hired Harris, an African-American man, as a line member. (ECF No. 39, ¶ 12). In 2015, he became a Supervisor, and was transferred to General Motors’ Fort Wayne Assembly Division in 2018. (Id. ¶¶ 13-14). Harris became a full-time Supervisor at General Motors’ Wentzville Assembly Division in 2020.

(Id. ¶ 15). And in 2022, Harris was promoted to Chassis/Final Business Manager at its Fort Wayne Assembly Division. (Id. ¶ 16). From 2013 until January 2024, Harris “had never been in trouble with [General Motors.]” (Id. ¶ 17). Then, in January 2024, Harris received an email discussing an investigation into a sexual harassment complaint that another General Motors employee made about him.

(Id. ¶¶ 19, 21). Harris briefly spoke with General Motors’ personnel and denied the allegations. (Id. ¶ 20). Without any further contact or information about the investigation, General Motors’ terminated Harris on February 1, 2024. (Id. ¶¶ 20, 28-30). From there, as required for a discrimination claim under Title VII, Harris took his grievances before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, alleging “discrimination based on race.” (Id. ¶ 10).

Once he “received his Dismissal and Notice of Rights[,]” he sued General Motors in this forum. (Id.). General Motors first answered the complaint and then filed a motion to dismiss Harris’s Title VI claim, as well as Harris’s Title VII claim, to the extent it was based on ancestry and/or national origin discrimination.¹ The Court granted the motion.

First, it agreed with General Motors and found that Harris had not satisfied the exhaustion requirement for his Title VII claim, to the extent premised on discrimination based on ancestry or national origin, as Harris’s EEOC charge ¹ The Court construed this motion as a motion for judgment on the pleadings pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(c). made no mention of such discrimination.

See ECF No. 36 at 6-9. For that reason, it dismissed Harris’s Title VII claim, with prejudice, to the extent that Harris asserted he was discriminated against based on his ancestry and/or national origin. (Id. at 9).

The Court also granted General Motors’ motion as to Harris’s Title VI claim, finding that Harris had failed to sufficiently allege a Title VI violation. (Id. at 9-15). However, the Court granted Harris leave to replead his Title VI claim, allowing him fourteen days to file an amended complaint. (Id. at 14-15). Harris timely filed an amended complaint, and General Motors responded with a renewed motion to dismiss Harris’s Title VI claim, which is the subject of this opinion.

II. LEGAL STANDARD Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) provides for the dismissal of a complaint, or any part of it, for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6). When analyzing a motion to dismiss a claim under Rule 12(b)(6), the Court must accept the complaint’s factual allegations as true and view them in the light most favorable to the plaintiff.

Brokaw v. Mercer Cnty., 235 F.3d 1000, 1006 (7th Cir. 2000). The allegations must “give the defendant fair notice of what the... claim is and the grounds upon which it rests,” and the “[f]actual

allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculation level.” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007) (internal citations and quotations omitted).

To be facially plausible, the complaint must allow “the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009) (citing *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 556). III. DISCUSSION As the Court explained in its prior opinion, a claim of employment discrimination under Title VI has three elements: “(1) [the defendant] is a recipient of federal funds; (2) the federal funds are used to provide employment; and (3) [the defendant] discriminated against [the plaintiff] in his employment on the basis of his [race].” *Crow Dog v. City of Indianapolis*, 2005 WL 643363, at *5 (S.D.

Ind. Mar. 18, 2005) (citing *Ahern v. Bd. of Educ. of Chicago*, 133 F.3d 975, 976-78 (7th Cir. 1998)). The Seventh Circuit emphasizes that the primary purpose of the federal aid at issue must be to provide employment. See *Doe ex rel. Doe v. St. Joseph’s Hosp. of Fort Wayne*, 788 F.2d 411, 419 n.12 (7th Cir. 1986). It is that element—that the primary objective of the federal funding is to provide employment—that the Court found Harris had failed to allege.

In his Amended Complaint, in addition to numerous minor changes to the allegations in the original complaint, Harris made the following substantive changes to the allegations regarding the federal funding at issue in his Title VI claim: Original Paragraph 32: Defendant is a recipient of funding in the form of grants including but not limited to grants from the Department of Energy in the amount of \$271.06 million, \$476.4 million from Department of Health and Human Services-Covid-19, \$58.95 million from Department of Homeland Security. \$2.62 million from Department of Transportation, \$1.25 million from Department of Commerce, \$150,000 from Environmental Protection Agency, and \$26.82 million from the Department of Defense in government funding.

Amended Paragraph 32: Defendant is a recipient of federal funding in the form of grants and/or loans provided by the by [sic] federal coronavirus laws including but not limited to the Cares Act for the purpose of employment of workers including but not limited to grants from the Department of Health and Human Services- Covid-19 in the amount of \$476.4 billion in government funding.

New Paragraph 33: The Defendant also received approximately \$1.4 billion in federal pandemic funding with the primary objective to keep workers employed. New Paragraph 37: Plaintiff was a person intended to be benefitted from the grants the Defendant received from the federal government. Harris’s response brief makes clear that the above-noted amendments are intended to remedy the deficiencies in his Title VI claim noted by the Court in its prior opinion.

See ECF No. 43 at 3-4. General Motors argues that these amendments are insufficient and that Harris’s amended Title VI claim still cannot withstand scrutiny. See ECF No. 41 at 4-5. Specifically, General Motors acknowledges that Harris has now alleged that the purpose of the federal aid was for employment, but takes issue with the fact that Harris “included no facts to

establish how he is aware of this information” and “provided no specifics as to how that money was utilized except to say it was to keep workers employed.” (ECF No. 41 at 5).

In response, Harris argues that with his amendments he has met his burden, as “[a]ll he must do is make allegations that might assert a cause of action and entitle him to relief.” (ECF No. 43 at 3 (quoting *Brown v. Budz*, 398 F.3d 904, 914 (7th Cir. 2005))).

The Court finds the allegations in Harris’s complaint sufficient to support his Title VI claim. This is not the situation that General Motors describes—where a plaintiff provides “mere conclusory statements.” Harris lists specific funding sources and amounts in addition to alleging that the funding was received for the primary purpose of providing employment.

General Motors has not provided any case law to support the argument that Harris’s failure to include facts regarding how he is aware of the purpose of the funding, or more detail as to how the money was utilized, is fatal to his claim.

The parties also do not provide the Court with any citations to Seventh Circuit cases in which a court found similar allegations to be either sufficient or insufficient to plead a Title VI claim. However, the Court notes that district courts in other circuits have found analogous allegations to be sufficient.

For example, in *Rogers v. Board of Education of Prince George’s County*, the court found a plaintiff’s allegations that Maryland’s public schools had received federal funding “for the express purpose of creating jobs and maintaining existing ones” to “suffice to state a claim that a primary purpose of the federal financial assistance was to provide employment.” 859 F. Supp. 2d 742, 752 (D.

Md. 2012). And in *Sims v. Unified Government of Wyandotte County*, the court similarly found sufficient a plaintiff’s allegation that federal funds “were provided for the purpose of facilitating employment,” adding that the plaintiff was “entitled to the benefit of discovery on the issue of whether the [defendant] is a recipient of federal financial assistance within the meaning of Title VI.” 120 F. Supp. 2d 938, 956 (D.

Kan. 2000). The Court finds these out-of-circuit opinions to be persuasive. The Court will only dismiss a claim where a plaintiff has pled no facts in support of the theory of recovery that would entitle him or her to relief. Harris has pled that (1) General Motors was the recipient of federal funds, see ECF No. 39 ¶¶ 32-33; (2) these funds were received for the primary purpose of employment, see *id.* 39 ¶¶ 32-33; and (3) General Motors discriminated against him in his employment on the basis of his race, see *id.* 39 ¶¶ 35, 47.

These allegations satisfy the Seventh Circuit’s pleading standard for Title VI claims. See *Crow Dog v. City of Indianapolis*, 2005 WL 643363, at *5 (S.D. Ind. Mar. 18, 2005) (citing *Ahern v. Bd.*

Of Educ. Of City of Chicago, 133 F.3d 975, 976-78 (7th Cir. 1998)). IV. CONCLUSION For the foregoing reasons, Defendants' Motion to Dismiss (ECF No. 41) is DENIED. SO ORDERED on February 11, 2026. s/ Holly A. Brady CHIEF JUDGE HOLLY A. BRADY UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT