

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Reymundo Jose Mendez, Jr. v. Warden, FCI-Mendota

No. 1:25-cv-00716-SKO (HC) · No. 1:25-cv-00716-SKO (HC) · Decided June 13, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California recommends dismissing without prejudice Reymundo Jose Mendez, Jr.’s 28 U.S.C. § 2241 petition because he failed to exhaust the Bureau of Prisons’ administrative-remedy process. The court also directed the Clerk to assign a district judge and set a 21-day deadline for objections to the Findings and Recommendation.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sheila K. Oberto, United States Magistrate Judge
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	June 13, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-00716-SKO (HC)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Federal prisoner petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241; magistrate judge issued findings and recommendations recommending dismissal without prejudice for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Preliminary review under Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases; a petition may be dismissed when it plainly appears from the petition and attached exhibits that the petitioner is not entitled to relief. Exhaustion determinations are reviewed under the court's discretion because the exhaustion requirement is judicially created and nonjurisdictional.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential findings and recommendations of a federal district court magistrate judge; not a final district court judgment in the provided document.
PARTIES	Reymundo Jose Mendez, Jr. v. Warden, FCI-Mendota

TOPICS

federal habeas corpus

exhaustion of remedies

post-conviction relief

remedies

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Federal habeas corpus

Post-conviction relief

Administrative law

Civil procedure

Remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the § 2241 petition should be dismissed because Petitioner failed to exhaust available Bureau of Prisons administrative remedies.
2. Whether the court should excuse the exhaustion requirement based on Petitioner's assertion that pursuing administrative remedies would be futile.

HOLDINGS

1. A federal prisoner challenging a circumstance of imprisonment must first exhaust available administrative remedies before seeking habeas relief under § 2241, although the requirement is judicially created rather than statutory and therefore is not jurisdictional.
2. Exhaustion should not be excused where the petitioner deliberately bypassed the administrative process and offered only a broad, unsupported assertion that the Bureau of Prisons acts arbitrarily.
3. The petition should be dismissed without prejudice for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Before filing a petition for writ of habeas corpus, a federal prisoner challenging any circumstance of imprisonment must first exhaust all administrative remedies.” (at 2)

“The requirement that federal prisoners exhaust administrative remedies before filing a habeas corpus petition was judicially created; it is not a statutory requirement.” (at 2)

“The exhaustion requirement should not be excused in this case because Petitioner has deliberately bypassed the administrative scheme, and permitting the petition to go forward would only encourage further deliberate bypass of the administrative process.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner is a federal prisoner incarcerated at the Federal Correctional Institution in Mendota, California. He was sentenced on November 18, 2024, to sixty months on an unstated conviction. His § 2241 petition asserted that the Bureau of Prisons was required to transfer him to a halfway house under the Sentencing Reform Act, but he conceded that he had not pursued the Bureau's administrative-remedy process.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Petitioner filed the § 2241 petition in the Sacramento Division on May 19, 2025. The matter was transferred to the Fresno Division on June 12, 2025. Upon preliminary review, the magistrate judge concluded that Petitioner had not exhausted available Bureau of Prisons administrative remedies and recommended dismissal without prejudice, subject to objections and review by an assigned district judge.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

No remand. The magistrate judge recommended dismissal without prejudice, directed assignment of a district judge, and provided a 21-day period for objections.

CASES CITED

- Herbst v. Cook, 260 F.3d 1039 (9th Cir. 2001)
- Martinez v. Roberts, 804 F.2d 570, 571 (9th Cir. 1986)
- Chua Han Mow v. United States, 730 F.2d 1308, 1313 (9th Cir. 1984)
- Ruviwat v. Smith, 701 F.2d 844, 845 (9th Cir. 1983)
- Brown v. Rison, 895 F.2d 533, 535 (9th Cir. 1990)
- Murillo v. Mathews, 588 F.2d 759, 762 n.8 (9th Cir. 1978)
- Laing v. Ashcroft, 370 F.3d 994, 1000 (9th Cir. 2004)
- Wilkerson v. Wheeler, 772 F.3d 834, 838-39 (9th Cir. 2014)

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA 10 11 REYMUNDO JOSE MENDEZ, JR., No. 1:25-cv-00716-SKO (HC) 12
Petitioner, ORDER TO ASSIGN DISTRICT JUDGE 13 v. FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS TO DISMISS PETITION 14 WARDEN, FCI-MENDOTA, [21-DAY
OBJECTION DEADLINE] 15 Respondent. 16 17 Petitioner is a federal prisoner proceeding pro
se and in forma pauperis with a petition for 18 writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241.

19 On May 19, 2025, Petitioner filed the instant habeas petition in the Sacramento Division 20 of
this Court. (Doc. 1.) On June 12, 2025, the petition was transferred to the Fresno Division. 21
Upon review of the petition, the Court finds that Petitioner has failed to exhaust administrative 22
remedies.

Accordingly, the Court will RECOMMEND the petition be DISMISSED without 23 prejudice. 24
DISCUSSION 25 A. Preliminary Review of Petition 26 Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section
2254 Cases allows a district court to dismiss a 27 petition if it “plainly appears from the petition
and any attached exhibits that the petitioner is not 28 entitled to relief in the district court....” Rule
4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases.

1 The Advisory Committee Notes to Rule 8 indicate that the court may dismiss a petition for writ
of 2 habeas corpus, either on its own motion under Rule 4, pursuant to the respondent’s motion to
3 dismiss, or after an answer to the petition has been filed. Herbst v. Cook, 260 F.3d 1039 (9th Cir.

4 2001). 5 B. Background 6 On November 18, 2024, Petitioner was sentenced to a term of 60 months on an unstated 7 conviction.

He is incarcerated at the Federal Correctional Institution in Mendota, California. In 8 his petition, he claims that the Bureau of Prisons (“BOP”) must transfer him to a halfway house 9 pursuant to the Sentencing Reform Act. 10 C. Exhaustion 11 Before filing a petition for writ of habeas corpus, a federal prisoner challenging any 12 circumstance of imprisonment must first exhaust all administrative remedies.

Martinez v. 13 Roberts, 804 F.2d 570, 571 (9th Cir. 1986); Chua Han Mow v. United States, 730 F.2d 1308, 14 1313 (9th Cir. 1984); Ruviwat v. Smith, 701 F.2d 844, 845 (9th Cir. 1983). The requirement that 15 federal prisoners exhaust administrative remedies before filing a habeas corpus petition was 16 judicially created; it is not a statutory requirement. Brown v. Rison, 895 F.2d 533, 535 (9th Cir.

17 1990). Thus, “because exhaustion is not required by statute, it is not jurisdictional.” Id. If 18 Petitioner has not properly exhausted his claims, the district court, in its discretion, may either 19 “excuse the faulty exhaustion and reach the merits or require the petitioner to exhaust his 20 administrative remedies before proceeding in court.” 21 The first step in seeking administrative remedies is a request for informal resolution.

28 22 C.F.R. § 542.13. When informal resolution procedures fail to achieve sufficient results, the BOP 23 makes available to inmates a formal three-level administrative remedy process: (1) a Request for 24 Administrative Remedy (“BP-9”) filed at the institution where the inmate is incarcerated; (2) a 25 Regional Administrative Remedy Appeal (“BP-10”) filed at the Regional Office for the 26 geographic region in which the inmate’s institution is located; and (3) a Central Office 27 Administrative Remedy Appeal (“BP-11”) filed with the Office of General Counsel.

28 C.F.R. § 28 542.10 et seq. 1 Petitioner concedes he has not attempted to exhaust administrative remedies, contending 2 to do so would be futile. The exhaustion requirement “is not lightly to be disregarded.” Murillo 3 v. Mathews, 588 F.2d 759, 762, n.8 (9th Cir. 1978) (citation omitted). A “key consideration” in 4 exercising such discretion is whether “relaxation of the requirement would encourage the 5 deliberate bypass of the administrative scheme[.]” Laing v. Ashcroft, 370 F.3d 994, 1000 (9th 6 Cir.

2004) (internal quotation marks omitted). The exhaustion requirement should not be excused 7 in this case because Petitioner has deliberately bypassed the administrative scheme, and 8 permitting the petition to go forward would only encourage further deliberate bypass of the 9 administrative process. Had Plaintiff properly sought administrative relief, the BOP would have 10 granted him relief or advised him of the reason for his placement.

Petitioner's broad assertion that 11 the BOP generally acts arbitrarily to ignore governing statutes is not a sufficient or founded 12 reason to bypass administrative review. 13 ORDER 14 Accordingly, the Clerk of Court is directed to assign a district judge to this case. 15 RECOMMENDATION 16 For the foregoing reasons, the Court RECOMMENDS that the petition be DISMISSED 17 without prejudice for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.

18 This Findings and Recommendation is submitted to the United States District Court Judge 19 assigned to the case, pursuant to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636 (b)(1)(B) and Rule 304 of the 20 Local Rules of Practice for the United States District Court, Eastern District of California. Within 21 twenty-one (21) days after being served with a copy of this Findings and Recommendation, a 22 party may file written objections with the Court and serve a copy on all parties.

Id. The document 23 should be captioned, "Objections to Magistrate Judge's Findings and Recommendation" and shall 24 not exceed fifteen (15) pages, except by leave of court with good cause shown. The Court will not 25 consider exhibits attached to the Objections.

To the extent a party wishes to refer to any 26 exhibit(s), the party should reference the exhibit in the record by its CM/ECF document and page 27 number, when possible, or otherwise reference the exhibit with specificity. Any pages filed in 28 excess of the fifteen (15) page limitation may be disregarded by the District Judge when 1 reviewing these Findings and Recommendations pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636 (b)(1)(C).

The 2 parties are advised that failure to file objections within the specified time may result in the waiver 3 of rights on appeal. *Wilkerson v. Wheeler*, 772 F.3d 834, 838-39 (9th Cir. 2014). This 4 recommendation is not an order that is immediately appealable to the Ninth Circuit Court of 5 Appeals. Any notice of appeal pursuant to Rule 4(a)(1), Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure, 6 should not be filed until entry of the District Court's judgment.

7 IT IS SO ORDERED. 8 9 Dated: June 13, 2025 /s/ Sheila K. Oberto. UNITED STATES
MAGISTRATE JUDGE 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28