

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MISSOURI, EASTERN DIVISION

Joseph Michael Devon Engel v. Missouri Department of Corrections,
et al.

Engel · No. 4:21-cv-00946-SEP · Decided January 13, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri denied Joseph Michael Devon Engel's post-judgment motion to reopen an action concerning alleged prison conditions and his request for appointed counsel. The Court characterized the motion as frivolous, ordered that future submissions in the closed matter be returned unfiled, and stated that an appeal would not be taken in good faith.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, Eastern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sarah E. Pitlyk
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri
DECIDED	January 13, 2026
DOCKET	4:21-cv-00946-SEP
DISPOSITION	denied
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed a post-judgment motion to reopen a closed prisoner civil-rights action and requested appointment of counsel and permission to proceed against the Missouri Department of Corrections and the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Joseph Michael Devon Engel v. Missouri Department of Corrections, MECC

TOPICS

- prisoners rights
- civil rights
- motion for reconsideration
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff's post-judgment motion to reopen the closed action should be granted.
2. Whether the Clerk should be directed to return any additional documents submitted by Plaintiff in the closed matter unfiled.
3. Whether an appeal from the order would be taken in good faith.

HOLDINGS

1. The court denied Plaintiff's motion to reopen the present action as frivolous.
2. The Clerk was directed to return any additional documents submitted by Plaintiff in the closed matter to him unfiled.
3. The court determined that an appeal from the order would not be taken in good faith.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"Plaintiff's motion is frivolous, and it is consistent with his prior pattern of abusive litigation before this Court."

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, a prisoner incarcerated at Jefferson City Correctional Center, alleged that he experienced unlawful conditions of confinement at the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center in July 2021. He sought to reopen the action, obtain appointed counsel, and pursue claims against the Missouri Department of Corrections and the facility. The court also noted Plaintiff's prior pattern of abusive litigation and his status under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g).

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

After the action was closed, Plaintiff filed a post-judgment motion to reopen concerning alleged unlawful conditions of confinement at the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center. The district court denied the motion as frivolous, directed the Clerk to return future documents in the closed matter unfiled, and stated that an appeal would not be taken in good faith.

DISPOSITION

denied

CASES CITED

- Engel v. Jefferson Cnty. Sheriff Dep't., No. 4:21-cv-000896-SEP, 2021 WL 4133791, at *3 (E.D. Mo. Sept. 10, 2021)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI EASTERN DIVISION JOSEPH MICHAEL DEVON ENGEL,) Plaintiff, Vv.)) No. 4:21-cv-00946-SEP MISSOURI DEPT. OF CORR., ET AL.,) Defendants. MEMORANDUM AND ORDER Before the Court is self-represented Plaintiff's post-judgment motion to reopen. Doc.

[10]. Plaintiff is a prisoner, currently incarcerated at Jefferson City Correctional Center, who is subject to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g) and has “knowingly and persistently engaged in litigation practices that amount[ed] to abuse of the judicial process.” *Engel v. Jefferson Cnty. Sheriff Dep’t.*, No. 4:21-cv-000896-SEP, 2021 WL 4133791, at *3 (E.D. Mo. Sept. 10, 2021).

In the instant motion, Plaintiff complains that he was subjected to unlawful conditions of confinement at the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center (MECC) in July of 2021, and he asks this Court to appoint counsel to represent him and let him proceed with his claims against the Missouri Department of Corrections and MECC. Plaintiff's motion is frivolous, and it is consistent with his prior pattern of abusive litigation before this Court.

The Court therefore denies the motion and directs the Clerk to return any future documents to Plaintiff unfiled. Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Plaintiff's motion to reopen the present action, Doc. [10], is DENIED. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, should Plaintiff submit any additional documents in this closed matter, the Clerk of Court shall return them to Plaintiff unfiled.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that an appeal of this Order would not be taken in good faith. Dated this 13th day of January 2026. SARAH E. PITLYK UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE