

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
MICHIGAN, SOUTHERN DIVISION

Kawaii Staffney v. Unknown Richmond

Staffney · No. 1:24-cv-1102 · Decided March 4, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan adopts a magistrate judge’s report and recommendation granting Defendant Fidler’s motion for summary judgment. The court holds that Plaintiff failed to properly exhaust administrative remedies for his claim that Fidler denied him medical care after an alleged taser incident. The court concludes that the written grievance did not provide sufficient notice of that claim and that Plaintiff’s objections identified no error in the report and recommendation.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Paul L. Maloney
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan, Southern Division
DECIDED	March 4, 2026
DOCKET	1:24-cv-1102
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff objected to a magistrate judge's report and recommendation recommending that Defendant Fidler's motion for summary judgment be granted. The district court reviewed the objections and adopted the report and recommendation in full.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The district court reviews de novo the portions of a magistrate judge's report and recommendation to which specific objections are made. Summary judgment is appropriate when there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law, with reasonable inferences drawn for the nonmovant.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Kawaii Staffney v. Unknown Richmond

TOPICS

summary judgment

prisoners rights

civil procedure

constitutional law

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

civil procedure

federal litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff properly exhausted administrative remedies for his claim that Defendant Fidler refused to take him for medical care.
2. Whether the magistrate judge's report and recommendation granting summary judgment to Defendant Fidler should be adopted after Plaintiff's objections.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff failed to properly exhaust administrative remedies because the written grievance did not mention that Fidler refused to take him for medical care, and generalized notice of Fidler's involvement in an incident was insufficient.
2. Summary judgment was properly granted to Defendant Fidler because Plaintiff failed to exhaust administrative remedies for the claim against him.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To serve those functions, prisoners must prove “proper exhaustion,” making “full use of the prison grievance process.”” (Section II)

“Giving notice that he was involved in an incident broadly is insufficient; it must give notice of the claims being asserted against him.” (Section II)

“Since Plaintiff has failed to identify any errors in the Magistrate Judge’s R&R, the R&R (ECF No. 24) is ADOPTED IN FULL.” (Section III)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that Defendant Richmond tased him, causing injury, and that Defendant Fidler refused to take him for medical attention. The relevant written grievance did not mention Fidler's alleged refusal to obtain medical care. Plaintiff argued that his conversation with Fidler and statements during an investigation provided sufficient notice, but the latter statements were not part of the record and the written grievance did not identify the specific medical-care claim.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Magistrate Judge Ray Kent recommended granting Defendant Fidler's motion for summary judgment. Plaintiff filed objections. The district court concluded that Plaintiff failed to exhaust administrative remedies as to the claim that Fidler denied him medical care, adopted the report and recommendation, and granted the motion for summary judgment.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- 806 F.2d 636, 637 (6th Cir. 1986) (per curiam)
- 465 F. App'x 448, 456 (6th Cir. 2012)
- 50 F.3d 373, 380 (6th Cir. 1995)
- 477 U.S. 242, 252 (1986)
- 148 F.4th 855, 861 (6th Cir. 2025)
- 548 U.S. 81, 93-95 (2006)
- No. 17-1919, 2018 WL 3854143, at *2 (6th Cir. Mar. 19, 2018)
- 851 F.3d 583, 596 (6th Cir. 2017)
- No. 2:19-cv-9, 2020 WL 5105035, at *3 (W.D. Mich. Aug. 31, 2020)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN SOUTHERN DIVISION KAWAII STAFFNEY, #955531,) Plaintiff,)) No. 1:24-cv-1102 v.)) Honorable Paul L. Maloney UNKNOWN RICHMOND,,) Defendants.)) ORDER ADOPTING REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION This matter comes before the Court on Magistrate Judge Kent's Report and Recommendation (R&R), (ECF No. 24), in which he recommended that Defendant Fidler's motion for summary judgment be granted, (ECF No. 15).

Plaintiff objected to the R&R. (ECF No. 25). The Court finds that Plaintiff failed to exhaust his administrative remedies as to claims against Defendant Fidler, so the Court adopts the R&R in full. I. After being served with a report and recommendation issued by a magistrate judge, a party has fourteen days to file written objections to the proposed findings and recommendations.

28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(b)(2). A district court judge reviews de novo the portions of the R&R to which objections have been filed. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(b)(3). Only those objections that are specific are entitled to a de novo review under the statute., 806 F.2d 636, 637 (6th Cir. 1986) (per curiam). An "objection does not oblige the district court to ignore the report and recommendation.", 465 F. App'x 448, 456 (6th Cir.

2012). Our Local Rules require any party objecting to a report and recommendation to "specifically identify the portions of the proposed findings, recommendations or report to which objections are made and the basis for such objections." W.D. Mich. LCivR 72.3(b);, 50 F.3d 373, 380 (6th Cir. 1995) (holding that "objections disput[ing] the correctness of the magistrate's recommendation but fail[ing] to specify the findings... believed [to be] in error" are too general).

Courts grant summary judgment on an issue when there is “no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 56(a). A genuine dispute of material fact exists if a reasonable factfinder could find in favor of the nonmovant., 477 U.S. 242, 252 (1986). Courts make all “reasonable inferences” in favor of the nonmovant when reviewing the record., 148 F.4th 855, 861 (6th Cir.

2025). II. Plaintiff alleges that Defendant Richmond and Defendant Fidler violated his Eighth Amendment rights. Specifically, he alleges that Defendant Richmond tased him, resulting in injury, and that Defendant Fidler refused to take him to receive medical attention for his injuries. There is one relevant written grievance here, and it contains no reference to the claim that Fidler refused to take Plaintiff to receive medical attention.

Plaintiff argues that because he spoke to Fidler to attempt to resolve the claim related to denial of health care, Fidler was adequately on notice and thus he exhausted administrative remedies. But the administrative exhaustion requirement exists to do more than provide notice in the broadest sense; it also serves to give prisons a chance to rectify problems and create an administrative record for any disputes that come to court., 548 U.S. 81, 93-95 (2006).

To serve those functions, prisoners must prove “proper exhaustion,” making “full use of the prison grievance process.” at 94. A conversation with Fidler might be the grievance process, but that does not mean it suffices to replace the rest of it.

The written grievances are especially important, as they build a record on which the Court can assess whether the defendants had “sufficient notice to respond to the ” later presented in a complaint., No. 17-1919, 2018 WL 3854143, at *2 (6th Cir. Mar. 19, 2018) (emphasis added). Plaintiff offers no argument that the written grievance relevant here could have given Fidler notice of the allegation that he refused to take Plaintiff to receive medical care.

Giving notice that he was involved in an incident broadly is insufficient; it must give notice of the claims being asserted against him., 851 F.3d 583, 596 (6th Cir. 2017) (finding that failure to give prison officials “a fair chance to remedy a prisoner’s complaints” by allowing generalized grievances would “effectively collapse the PLRA’s exhaustion requirement”).

Plaintiff argues that he made statements during the investigative process regarding Fidler. These statements are not part of the record. The Court can only evaluate the record before it. Plaintiff also does not argue that these statements somehow constitute proper administrative exhaustion or that they would have put Fidler on notice of the specific allegation related to denial of medical care.

Plaintiff argues that he could not have included the allegation against Fidler in the grievance because it would have been rejected for containing multiple unrelated issues. But the issues of

Richmond's alleged tasing and Fidler's alleged failure to take Plaintiff to receive medical attention after that tasing are related. No reasonable jury could conclude otherwise.

Additionally, Plaintiff could have filed separate grievances against Richmond and Fidler. Plaintiff's filing of a single grievance with no mention at all of the failure to provide health care claim thus is not "sufficient under the circumstances" to exhaust administrative remedies with regard to the health care claim., No. 2:19-cv-9, 2020 WL 5105035, at *3 (W.D.

Mich. Aug. 31, 2020). III. Magistrate Judge Kent correctly concluded that Plaintiff failed to exhaust his administrative remedies. Since Plaintiff has failed to identify any errors in the Magistrate Judge's R&R, the R&R (ECF No. 24) is ADOPTED IN FULL. Defendant's motion (ECF No. 15) is GRANTED. IT IS SO ORDERED. Date: March 4, 2026 /s/ Paul L. Maloney Paul L. Maloney United States District Judge