NONPRECEDENTIAL DISPOSITION
To be cited only in accordance with FED. R. APP. P. 32.1

United States Court of Appeals

For the Seventh Circuit
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Submitted October 16, 2023*
Decided October 20, 2023

Before

FRANK H. EASTERBROOK, *Circuit Judge*

AMY J. ST. EVE, *Circuit Judge*

THOMAS L. KIRSCH II, *Circuit Judge*

No. 22-3235

WAYNE PATTERSON, *Plaintiff-Appellant*,	Appeal from the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.
v.	No. 22-CV-1293
JOHN JASON CHAMBERS, et al., *Defendants-Appellees*.	Michael M. Mihm, *Judge*.

O R D E R

Litigants who want a ruling on the motions they file in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court of Illinois must request a hearing date. ILL. 11TH JUD. CIR. CT. R. 5(C). If no hearing is sought, the motion need not linger on the docket; after 90 days, the judge "may strike the motion without notice." *Id.* Here, after the circuit court dismissed

* We have agreed to decide the case without oral argument because the briefs and record adequately present the facts and legal arguments, and oral argument would not significantly aid the court. FED. R. APP. P. 34(a)(2)(C).

Wayne Patterson's state lawsuit, he filed a motion to reconsider—but did not request a hearing date. The trial judge, relying on Local Rule 5(C), struck the motion, leaving the judgment against Patterson intact. Patterson alleges he did not learn of this until it was too late to appeal or seek other state-court relief. So he turned to federal court, suing Circuit Judge John Jason Chambers and claiming that Local Rule 5(C) violated his rights to due process and equal protection. But the district court dismissed the action, concluding, among other things, that judicial immunity barred Patterson's suit against Judge Chambers and that Patterson had not stated a claim for relief on any remaining theory. Patterson's complaint also mentioned two unnamed state-court employees, but the district court dismissed them from the suit because Patterson did not say what they had done. We affirm.

The details of Patterson's state-court complaint do not matter for this appeal. His federal complaint cited 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 2000d and sought damages, and injunctions prohibiting the use of Local Rule 5(C) and to reopen his state case.

On Judge Chambers's motion, the district court dismissed the complaint. The court held that challenges to Judge Chambers's actions, all of which took place in his judicial capacity, were barred by judicial immunity. Further, the court reasoned, Patterson alleged no plausible basis to conclude that the local rule was unconstitutional and could not be used in future cases. And to the extent that Patterson sought review of the dismissal of the state lawsuit and the order striking his motion to reconsider, the district court held that it lacked jurisdiction to do so under the *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine. Finally, the court concluded that Patterson stated no claim against the unnamed state employees because his complaint did not attribute any specific wrongdoing to them.

On appeal, Patterson argues that judicial immunity does not bar his claims against Judge Chambers. We disagree. The doctrine of absolute judicial immunity confers complete immunity from suit for acts performed in the judge's judicial capacity. *Dawson v. Newman*, 419 F.3d 656, 660 (7th Cir. 2005). Applying a local rule and striking a motion are acts performed in the judge's judicial capacity. Similarly, Judge Chambers's alleged failure to provide notice of his order striking Patterson's motion is an act entitled to absolute immunity. *See id.* at 661–62 (concluding that a judge's failure to send notice of an order is a judicial duty subject to absolute judicial immunity).

Next, Patterson asserts that Local Rule 5(C) is unconstitutional, and that state judges cannot apply it to make him monitor the docket and seek a hearing date on his motions in (unspecified) future cases. In his federal complaint, Patterson asked the

court to enjoin "any further use or implementation" of Local Rule 5(C). The district court ruled that Patterson failed to state a claim for relief because he did not identify any plausible ground to conclude that Local Rule 5(C) is unconstitutional. We uphold the dismissal of this request for injunctive relief on another ground: lack of standing.

Although neither the parties nor the district court addressed standing, we have an independent obligation to inspect, and remain within, jurisdictional boundaries. *Gadelhak v. AT&T Servs., Inc.*, 950 F.3d 458, 461 (7th Cir. 2020) ("If a plaintiff lacks standing, a federal court lacks jurisdiction."). Plaintiffs must demonstrate standing separately for each requested form of relief. *TransUnion LLC v. Ramirez*, 141 S. Ct. 2190, 2210 (2021). To have standing to seek prospective injunctive relief, Patterson must show a real and immediate threat of future injury. *See City of Los Angeles v. Lyons*, 461 U.S. 95, 105 (1983). "[P]ast injury alone is insufficient," as is a threat of injury that is solely conjectural or hypothetical. *Simic v. City of Chicago*, 851 F.3d 734, 738 (7th Cir. 2017).

Here, Patterson has not alleged that he has any suit pending in the Circuit Court of Illinois, let alone that a judge would apply Local Rule 5(C) to strike his motions in any future case. *See Sierakowski v. Ryan*, 223 F.3d 444–45 (7th Cir. 2000) (holding that plaintiff lacked standing to challenge defendant's enforcement of state-law because prospects of future injury were purely speculative). Absent a plausible allegation of a real and immediate future injury, Patterson lacks standing to seek injunctive relief.

And to the extent that Patterson seeks a federal order reopening his state case, the district court had no ability to provide such relief. Because lower federal courts (unlike the Supreme Court) lack appellate jurisdiction over state-court judgments, they cannot review claims "by state-court losers complaining of injuries caused by state-court judgments rendered before the district court proceedings commenced and inviting district court review and rejection of those judgments." *Exxon Mobil Corp. v. Saudi Basic Indus. Corp.*, 544 U.S. 280, 284 (2005). Here, the district court could not order Judge Chambers to reopen Patterson's state case because doing so would require the district court to review and reject a state court's judgment.

Finally, the district court was correct to dismiss the unnamed defendants. Patterson's complaint did not identify their role in the dispute, and on appeal Patterson provides no further detail that would warrant a remand on this point.

We have considered Patterson's remaining arguments; none merits discussion. We end by making a slight modification to the district court's judgment, which did not

specify whether the dismissal of each claim is with or without prejudice. Dismissals on jurisdictional grounds are without prejudice allowing a plaintiff to raise the claims in a proper tribunal that has jurisdiction, if any. *Flynn v. FCA US LLC*, 39 F.4th 946, 954 (7th Cir. 2022). Given Patterson's lack of Article III standing to pursue injunctive relief against future applications of Local Rule 5(C), and given the *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine's limits on reviewing state-court decisions, there is no federal jurisdiction over Patterson's claims seeking injunctive relief or to reopen his state case. We therefore MODIFY the judgment to reflect a dismissal without prejudice as to those claims; all other claims in Patterson's complaint are dismissed with prejudice. As modified, the judgment is AFFIRMED.