

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COURT OF APPEALS

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ERIC J. NORDMAN,

Plaintiff-Appellant,

v

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN and SUPREME  
COURT OF MICHIGAN,

Defendants-Appellees.

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UNPUBLISHED

October 8, 1999

No. 209342

Ingham Circuit Court

LC No. 97-086838 NO

Before: Murphy, P.J., and Gage and Wilder, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Plaintiff appeals as of right from an order granting defendants summary disposition pursuant to MCR 2.116(C)(7). Plaintiff's complaint sought \$10 million in damages based on defendants' allegedly discriminatory investigation of plaintiff's application for admission to the State Bar of Michigan. The trial court determined that defendants were absolutely immune from liability. We affirm.

Plaintiff contends that while the various individuals conducting his character and fitness investigation may have been immune from liability in committing alleged discriminatory acts, defendants, as governmental entities, were not. The Michigan Supreme Court has the power to regulate the investigation and examination of state bar applicants. MCL 600.904; MSA 27A.904. This investigative power is discharged in part by the Board of Law Examiners. MCL 600.925; MSA 27A.925. As an agent of the Board of Law Examiners, the State Bar of Michigan's Character and Fitness Committee conducts character and fitness investigations of each bar applicant. Thus, the Board of Law Examiners and the Character and Fitness Committee are designated and empowered to discharge the statutorily defined duties of the Michigan Supreme Court. *McCready v Michigan State Bar*, 881 F Supp 300, 303 (WD Mich, 1995); *Scullion v State Bd of Law Examiners*, 102 Mich App 711, 715; 302 NW2d 290 (1981).

It is well established that judges have absolute immunity from civil liability for any normal and routine judicial act. *Stump v Sparkman*, 435 US 349, 356-357; 98 S Ct 1099; 55 L Ed 2d 331 (1978). Likewise, we find that the activities of the Board of Law Examiners and the Character and Fitness Committee in conducting plaintiff's character and fitness investigation were quasi-judicial in

nature; these entities merely discharged those statutorily defined duties of the Michigan Supreme Court necessary for the investigation of plaintiff, an applicant for admission to the state bar. *Sparks v Character & Fitness Committee of Kentucky*, 859 F2d 428, 430-431, 433-434 (CA 6, 1988); *McCready, supra* at 303-304. Because defendants' actions involved the execution of judicial functions, defendants' individual members and the entities themselves have absolute immunity from civil liability in this matter. *Sparks, supra*.

We therefore conclude that, in the absence of any argument by plaintiff that defendants exceeded the scope of their judicial authority, the trial court properly granted defendants summary disposition pursuant to MCR 2.116(C)(7). In light of this conclusion, we need not address the other issues plaintiff raises on appeal.

Affirmed.

/s/ William B. Murphy

/s/ Hilda R. Gage

/s/ Kurtis T. Wilder