

[DO NOT PUBLISH]

In the
United States Court of Appeals
For the Eleventh Circuit

No. 22-10909

BRYAN RHODE,

Plaintiff-Appellant,

versus

CSX TRANSPORTATION, INC.,

Defendant-Appellee.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Middle District of Florida
D.C. Docket No. 3:20-cv-00480-MMH-MCR

Before WILSON, GRANT, and BRASHER, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM:

Bryan Rhode is a former executive-level employee at CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSX). After CSX denied Rhode's claim for severance pay and benefits under the company's Executive Severance Plan (the Plan), Rhode brought this action in the Middle District of Florida, alleging violations of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), 29 U.S.C. § 1132. Adopting the Magistrate Judge's report and recommendation, the district court concluded that (1) the Plan Administrator had a reasonable basis for her decision to deny benefits, (2) Rhode received a full and fair review of his claim, and (3) Rhode failed to establish that any conflict of interest tainted the Plan Administrator's decision so as to render the decision arbitrary and capricious. The district court granted summary judgment in favor of CSX.

On appeal, Rhode argues that the Plan Administrator's denial of his claim based on her determination that he voluntarily resigned constituted an abuse of discretion. Rhode contends that he did not voluntarily resign—rather, he was involuntarily terminated. Second, Rhode argues that the Plan Administrator did not engage in a full and fair review of the decision to deny his claim because she failed to review his emails, files, and calendar entries or interview his colleagues as requested to evaluate whether he in fact intended to resign from CSX. Finally, Rhode argues that the district court failed to properly consider the Plan Administrator's conflicts of interest in its analysis.

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Opinion of the Court

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After careful consideration of the record and the parties' briefs, and with the benefit of oral argument, we find no reversible error in the district court's judgment. Accordingly, we affirm the district court's grant of summary judgment in favor of CSX.

AFFIRMED.