

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

BEVERLY DOLLEN, <i>et al.</i> ,)	
)	
<i>Plaintiffs</i> ,)	
)	
v.)	Civil Action No. 24-2552 (UNA)
)	
LORA DYER, <i>et al.</i> ,)	
)	
<i>Defendants</i> .)	

MEMORANDUM OPINION

This matter is before the Court on consideration of Plaintiffs’ application to proceed *in forma pauperis* (ECF No. 2) and *pro se* Complaint (ECF No. 1). The Court GRANTS the application and, for the reasons discussed below, DISMISSES the Complaint and this civil action without prejudice for lack of subject-matter jurisdiction.

Beverly Dolen’s three minor children have been removed from her custody, and it appears that Defendants, among whom are agents of Child Protective Services of West Virginia, the children’s guardian ad litem, the children’s biological father, and a judge, played some role in the children’s removal. Plaintiffs demand the children’s return. But the Court lacks jurisdiction. *See Ankenbrandt v. Richards*, 504 U.S. 689, 703 (1992) (concluding “that the domestic relations exception . . . divests the federal courts of power to issue divorce, alimony, and child custody decrees”); *Bennett v. Bennett*, 682 F.2d 1039, 1042 (D.C. Cir. 1982) (explaining that domestic relationship exception divests federal court of jurisdiction over “grant[ing] a divorce, determin[ing] alimony or support obligations, or resolv[ing] parental conflicts over the custody of their children”). Nor does this Court have jurisdiction to review, revise, or overturn any ruling of a West Virginia court. *See, e.g., United States v. Choi*, 818 F. Supp. 2d 79, 85 (D.D.C. 2011) (district courts “generally lack[] appellate jurisdiction over other judicial bodies, and cannot

exercise appellate mandamus over other courts”) (citing *Lewis v. Green*, 629 F. Supp. 546, 553 (D.D.C. 1986)). Accordingly, the Court lacks subject-matter jurisdiction and dismisses the Complaint.

An Order is issued separately.

DATE: November 21, 2024

ANA C. REYES
United States District Judge