

NONPRECEDENTIAL DISPOSITION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 February 10, 2026*

Decided February 11, 2026

Before

FRANK H. EASTERBROOK, *Circuit Judge*

DAVID F. HAMILTON, *Circuit Judge*

DORIS L. PRYOR, *Circuit Judge*

No. 25-1402

CHARIOT CAMPBELL,
Plaintiff-Appellant,

Appeal from the United States District
Court for the Central District of Illinois.

v.

No. 4:22-cv-04013-SLD

CITY OF GALESBURG, ILLINOIS,
et al.,
Defendants-Appellees.

Sara Darrow,
Chief Judge.

ORDER

Chariot Campbell sued the City of Galesburg, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI), and employees

* 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).

of these organizations, among others, for constitutional violations related to her child-custody cases. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The district court dismissed the lawsuit. We affirm.

In January 2022, Campbell filed a lawsuit alleging that several entities and employees of those entities violated her constitutional rights. She sued the City of Galesburg and four of its police officers for ignoring her complaints about crimes committed against her, pointing a gun at her head, and filing false reports that led to a DCFS investigation. Campbell also sued DCFS, her caseworker, and the caseworker's supervisor for ignoring her complaints about domestic violence, failing to return her calls, and writing a false report. And she sued LSSI and four of its caseworkers—who had been assigned to support Campbell with assessments for domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health—for failing to assist her and blocking some of her visits with her children.

The district court granted motions to dismiss filed by DCFS and LSSI. The court explained that DCFS and its employees, acting in their official capacity, were protected by sovereign immunity. In their personal capacities, the court determined, the DCFS employees were protected by qualified immunity. The court also concluded that, even if LSSI and its employees had engaged in state action, Campbell had failed to state a claim against them for violating her constitutional rights.

Campbell filed an amended complaint, which named several new defendants and purported to bring claims on behalf of her children and her mother. The complaint largely restated and expanded on the allegations in Campbell's original complaint: The defendants wrongfully removed her children and falsified information about her, and LSSI and DCFS failed to provide Campbell with a case plan.

The district court dismissed the amended complaint. It concluded that Campbell could not litigate an action *pro se* on behalf of her children or her mother. The court also dismissed six of the individual defendants because Campbell did not serve them. The court dismissed the claims against LSSI and its employees because Campbell failed to allege sufficiently that they were state actors; it dismissed the claim against DCFS based on sovereign immunity; and it dismissed the claim against the City of Galesburg because Campbell did not allege that an official policy or custom caused any constitutional violation, *see Monell v. Dep't of Soc. Servs.*, 436 U.S. 658, 694 (1978).

Campbell responded by filing another amended complaint, which the court construed as a motion for leave to file a second amended complaint. In the proposed amended complaint, Campbell raised many of the same allegations and asked the

district court to intervene in ongoing child-custody proceedings in state court. She later sought to add an additional claim that multiple defendants had committed manslaughter and reckless homicide related to her mother's death.

The district court denied Campbell's motion and dismissed the action against all defendants. The court reiterated that Campbell could not represent her children and her mother, and it concluded that Campbell's allegations either repeated previously dismissed claims or were frivolous.

Campbell appeals, but her arguments are difficult to parse. She appears to contend that the district court should have allowed her to add her children and her mother as plaintiffs. But the court correctly concluded that Campbell, as a pro se litigant, could not bring claims on behalf of her mother or children. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1654; *Georgakis v. Ill. State Univ.*, 722 F.3d 1075, 1077 (7th Cir. 2013) ("A nonlawyer can't handle a case on behalf of anyone except himself."); *Elustra v. Mineo*, 595 F.3d 699, 705 (7th Cir. 2010) (non-attorney parent may not bring suit based on § 1983 or state tort law on behalf of minor child).

Campbell also challenges the district court's denial of her requests for counsel, but we see no error. The court properly dismissed the first motion because Campbell did not show that she tried to find counsel on her own or that she could not do so. *Thomas v. Anderson*, 912 F.3d 971, 978 (7th Cir. 2018). And the court properly dismissed the second motion because Campbell already had shown that she could argue the relevant issues and gather evidence to support her claims. *See Pruitt v. Mote*, 503 F.3d 647, 655 (7th Cir. 2007) (en banc).

Lastly, Campbell mentions several other errors that she believes the district court committed, including some related to docket management. For example, she argues that the court erred by sealing certain documents and granting the defendants' motions to extend deadlines. She also asserts that the court should have directly intervened on her behalf in state court. But these arguments are all perfunctory and undeveloped, so they are waived. *Crespo v. Colvin*, 824 F.3d 667, 674 (7th Cir. 2016).

AFFIRMED