

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

MELICHسيا BOSS,

Plaintiff,

v.

ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN,

Defendant.

ORDER

02-cv-678-bbc

This civil case was closed on November 28, 2003 after I granted summary judgment in favor of defendant Rock County, Wisconsin. Now plaintiff has filed a document titled Petition Concerning Removal of Case and Address Information from Online Records. Plaintiff requests that her full name, street and city address be removed from the online record of this case on the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access website. Plaintiff states that an unknown person is making harassing phone calls to her place of employment. She was informed by a private investigator she hired that her name was obtained from her civil case filed in the United States District Court for Western District of Wisconsin and her former address was obtained from the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access website. I will construe

plaintiff's request as a motion to seal this case.

In her motion, plaintiff requests that this court seal or remove her address from the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access website. To be clear, the United States courts' online access system is not connected in any way to the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access system. For that reason, this court does not have the authority (or the ability) to remove addresses or seal cases on the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access system. The online system for the United States court system is called PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) and is maintained by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts; the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access is operated by the state of Wisconsin. Plaintiff should direct her request to the specific clerk's office where her Wisconsin state court cases were filed.

To the extent that plaintiff requests that her case be sealed on PACER, the online court access system for the United States court system, her request will be denied. As unfortunate as it is that plaintiff believes that she could be in danger, the general rule is that materials should not be sealed "unless a statute or privilege justifies nondisclosure." United States v. Foster, 564 F.3d 852, 853 (7th Cir. 2009). This rule applies with special force to judicial opinions, which are presumptively public. Id. Further complicating things is that plaintiff failed to ask for the record to be protected from the public until now, several years after the orders were entered. Although the court's orders in this case were not published, they are accessible through electronic legal databases. It is unclear whether the electronic

content providers would even honor this court's request to withdraw those orders from the database; I am unaware of any instances in which opinions have been removed from these databases except in the rare instance in which an opinion has been vacated by a court.

One final note. Plaintiff's address is neither visible nor available under this case number on PACER the online court access system for the United States court system. No street or city is listed on the docket sheet for that case and the only visible identifier is her name. Indeed, I have taken the liberty of redacting any identifier information from the exhibits of her motion to seal.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that plaintiff Melichsia Boss's motion to seal this case, dkt. #52, is DENIED.

Entered this 23d day of August, 2011.

BY THE COURT:

/s/

BARBARA B. CRABB

District Judge