

S.D.N.Y. – N.Y.C.
22-cv-4260
Swain, C.J.

United States Court of Appeals
FOR THE
SECOND CIRCUIT

At a stated term of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, held at the Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse, 40 Foley Square, in the City of New York, on the 6th day of July, two thousand twenty-three.

Present:

Raymond J. Lohier, Jr.,
Michael H. Park,
William J. Nardini,
Circuit Judges.

Rita R. Smith,

Plaintiff-Appellant,

v.

23-310

Jay Jaffe, Mount Sinai Hospital, et al.,

Defendants-Appellees,

Mount Sinai Hospital, St. Luke,

Defendant.

Appellant, pro se, moves for leave to proceed in forma pauperis and to vacate the district court judgment. Upon due consideration, it is hereby ORDERED that the motion is DENIED and the appeal is DISMISSED because it “lacks an arguable basis either in law or in fact.” *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989); *see* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e).

FOR THE COURT:

Catherine O’Hagan Wolfe, Clerk of Court

Catherine O'Hagan Wolfe


UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

RITA R. SMITH,

Plaintiff,

-against-

MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL; ANN
McNICHOLAS; DEVIN SULLIVAN;
JEFFREY SILBERSTEIN; JAY JAFFE,

Defendant.

22-CV-4260 (LTS)

ORDER

LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN, United States District Judge:

Plaintiff filed this action *pro se* and *in forma pauperis*. On October 17, 2022, the Court dismissed the complaint for lack of subject matter jurisdiction. (ECF 13, 14.) On November 16, 2022, and December 8, 2022, Plaintiff submitted to the court letters with attachments, seeking reconsideration of the order of dismissal and appeal instructions. (ECF 15-17.) The Court liberally construes these submissions as a motion to alter or amend judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e), a motion for reconsideration under Local Civil Rule 6.3, and a motion for relief from a judgment or order under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 60(b). *See Triestman v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons*, 470 F.3d 471, 474 (2d Cir. 2006); *see also Tracy v. Freshwater*, 623 F.3d 90, 101 (2d Cir. 2010) (The solicitude afforded to *pro se* litigants takes a variety of forms, including liberal construction of papers, “relaxation of the limitations on the amendment of pleadings,” leniency in the enforcement of other procedural rules, and “deliberate, continuing efforts to ensure that a *pro se* litigant understands what is required of him”) (citations omitted). After reviewing the arguments in Plaintiff’s submission, the Court denies the motions.

DISCUSSION

A. Motion to Alter or Amend the Judgment under Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e)

A party who moves to alter or amend a judgment under Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e) must demonstrate that the Court overlooked “controlling law or factual matters” that had been previously put before it. *R.F.M.A.S., Inc. v. Mimi So*, 640 F. Supp. 2d 506, 509 (S.D.N.Y. 2009). “Such motions must be narrowly construed and strictly applied in order to discourage litigants from making repetitive arguments on issues that have been thoroughly considered by the court.” *Range Road Music, Inc. v. Music Sales Corp.*, 90 F. Supp. 2d 390, 391-92 (S.D.N.Y. 2000); *see also SimplexGrinnell LP v. Integrated Sys. & Power, Inc.*, 642 F. Supp. 2d 206 (S.D.N.Y. 2009) (“A motion for reconsideration is not an invitation to parties to ‘treat the court’s initial decision as the opening of a dialogue in which that party may then use such a motion to advance new theories or adduce new evidence in response to the court’s ruling.’”) (internal quotation and citations omitted).

Plaintiff alleged in her original pleading that Defendants falsely accused her of pushing a colleague, and thereafter unlawfully fired her. (ECF 2.) By order dated July 26, 2022, the Court directed Plaintiff to file an amended complaint setting forth facts showing that the Court had subject matter jurisdiction of her claims. (ECF 7.) On September 12, 2022, Plaintiff filed an amended complaint that was substantially similar to the original one. (ECF 10.) On October 17, 2022, the Court dismissed the amended complaint for lack of subject matter jurisdiction, and declined to grant Plaintiff another opportunity to amend her complaint. (ECF 13.) Attached to Plaintiff’s recent letters to the Court are photographs of Plaintiff and documents indicating that she has been applying for other jobs. (ECF 15.)

Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate that the Court overlooked any controlling decisions or factual matters with respect to the dismissed action. The Court therefore denies Plaintiff's motion under Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e).

B. Motion for Reconsideration under Local Civil Rule 6.3

The standards governing Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e) and Local Civil Rule 6.3 are the same. *R.F.M.A.S., Inc.*, 640 F. Supp. 2d at 509 (discussion in the context of both Local Civil Rule 6.3 and Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e)). Thus, a party seeking reconsideration of any order under Local Civil Rule 6.3 must demonstrate that the Court overlooked "controlling law or factual matters" that had been previously put before it. *R.F.M.A.S., Inc.*, 640 F. Supp. 2d at 509.

Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate that the Court overlooked any controlling decisions or factual matters with respect to the dismissed action. The Court therefore denies Plaintiff's motion under Local Civil Rule 6.3.

C. Motion for Reconsideration under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b)

Under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b), a party may seek relief from a district court's order or judgment for the following reasons:

- (1) mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect; (2) newly discovered evidence that, with reasonable diligence, could not have been discovered in time to move for a new trial under Rule 59(b); (3) fraud (whether previously called intrinsic or extrinsic), misrepresentation, or other misconduct of an opposing party; (4) the judgment is void; (5) the judgment has been satisfied, released, or discharged; it is based on an earlier judgment that has been reversed or vacated; or applying it prospectively is no longer equitable; or (6) any other reason justifying relief.

Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b).

The Court has considered Plaintiff's arguments, and even under a liberal interpretation of his motion, Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate that any of the grounds listed in the first five clauses of Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b) apply. Therefore, the motion under any of these clauses is denied.

To the extent that Plaintiff seeks relief under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b)(6), the motion is also denied. “[A] Rule 60(b)(6) motion must be based upon some reason other than those stated in clauses (1)-(5).” *United Airlines, Inc. v. Brien*, 588 F.3d 158, 175 (2d Cir. 2009) (quoting *Smith v. Sec'y of HHS*, 776 F.2d 1330, 1333 (6th Cir. 1985)). *Id.* A Rule 60(b)(6) motion must show both that the motion was filed within a “reasonable time” and that “extraordinary circumstances” [exist] to warrant relief.” *Old Republic Ins. Co. v. Pac. Fin. Servs. of America, Inc.*, 301 F.3d 54, 59 (2d Cir. 2002) (per curiam) (citation omitted).

Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances exist to warrant relief under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b)(6). *See Ackermann v. United States*, 340 U.S. 193, 199-202 (1950).

CONCLUSION

Plaintiff’s motions for reconsideration are denied. This action is closed.

The Clerk of Court is directed to mail appeal instructions to Plaintiff.

The Clerk of Court will only accept for filing documents that are directed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this Order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore IFP status is denied for the purpose of an appeal. *See Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: February 6, 2023
New York, New York

/s/ Laura Taylor Swain

LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN
Chief United States District Judge