

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, SOUTH BEND DIVISION

Terrance Collier v. Buzzard, McGillem, M Contrell, Thornberry,
Farrell, and Molanski

Collier v. Buzzard · No. 3:26-CV-359-TLS-JEM · Decided March 20, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana dismissed Terrance Collier’s prisoner complaint for failure to state a claim under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The court held that the alleged segregation placement and denial of visitation did not establish a protected liberty interest, granted leave to amend by April 22, 2026, and required submission of a trust account ledger for in forma pauperis status.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, South Bend Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Theresa L. Springmann
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, South Bend Division
DECIDED	March 20, 2026
DOCKET	3:26-CV-359-TLS-JEM
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Screening of a pro se prisoner civil-rights complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, with leave to amend.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The complaint was reviewed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A to determine whether it was frivolous or malicious, failed to state a claim, or sought monetary relief from an immune defendant.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown

TOPICS

- prisoners rights
- due process
- civil rights
- civil procedure
- pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Collier's allegations of placement in segregation and denial of visitation after he was found not guilty of a disciplinary charge stated a due-process claim under the Fourteenth Amendment.
2. Whether the complaint should be dismissed at screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A or whether Collier should be given leave to amend.
3. Whether Collier was required to submit his prisoner trust-account ledger to proceed in forma pauperis.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to state a due-process claim because the Constitution does not create a liberty interest in avoiding transfer within a correctional facility or remaining in the general prison population absent restrictive conditions that impose an atypical and significant hardship in relation to the ordinary incidents of prison life.
2. Because Collier might be able to state a claim consistent with the events alleged, the court granted him leave to file an amended complaint rather than immediately dismissing the action.
3. Collier was required to file his prisoner trust-account ledger if he wished to proceed in forma pauperis.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“An inmate is entitled to due process protections only when the more restrictive conditions pose an “atypical and significant hardship on the inmate in relation to the ordinary incidents of prison life.””

“After Sandin, it is clear that the touchstone of the inquiry into the existence of a protected, state-created liberty interest in avoiding restrictive conditions of confinement is not the language of regulations regarding those conditions but the nature of those conditions themselves in relation to the ordinary incidents of prison life.”

“The usual standard in civil cases is to allow defective pleadings to be corrected, especially in early stages, at least where amendment would not be futile.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Collier, a prisoner, alleged that he was placed in segregation and denied visitation even though he was found not guilty of a prison disciplinary charge. The opinion does not identify the duration of the segregation or describe conditions amounting to an atypical and significant hardship. Collier also submitted an in forma pauperis motion declaring that he had attached a six-month prisoner trust-account statement, but he did not attach the ledger.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Terrance Collier, proceeding without a lawyer, filed a prisoner civil-rights complaint alleging that he was placed in segregation and denied visitation after being found not guilty of a prison disciplinary charge. The court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A and concluded that it failed to state a claim, but granted Collier until April 22, 2026, to file an amended complaint. The court also required him to submit his prisoner trust-

account ledger if he wished to proceed in forma pauperis and cautioned that failure to comply would result in denial of leave to proceed in forma pauperis and dismissal.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)
- Sandin v. Conner, 515 U.S. 472 (1995)
- Wilkinson v. Austin, 545 U.S. 209, 223 (2005)
- Townsend v. Fuchs, 522 F.3d 765, 772 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Lekas v. Briley, 405 F.3d 602, 608-09 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Marion v. Columbia Corr. Inst., 559 F.3d 693, 698-99 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Abu-Shawish v. United States, 898 F.3d 726, 738 (7th Cir. 2018)