

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Forrest C. Taylor v. J. Leatherman, et al.

Taylor v. Leatherman · No. 2:25-cv-1100 CSK P · Decided October 22, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California addresses plaintiff Forrest C. Taylor’s filings in a 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action. The court strikes a duplicative filing, denies the request to add defendant C. Pierce through supplemental pleadings, and explains that any due process claims against Pierce must be pursued separately because they are improperly joined. The court grants Taylor thirty days to file a second amended complaint or proceed on the previously elected First and Eighth Amendment claims.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Chi Soo Kim
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	October 22, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-1100 CSK P
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A state prisoner proceeding pro se under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 sought to add defendant C. Pierce and pursue additional claims after the court screened his first amended complaint and permitted amendment or election to proceed on specified First and Eighth Amendment claims.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; nonprecedential
PARTIES	Forrest C. Taylor v. J. Leatherman, et al.

TOPICS

- joinder
- motion to amend
- section 1983
- first amendment
- due process

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- civil rights
- constitutional law
- prisoner civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiff could add C. Pierce through a supplemental pleading without alleging facts showing that Pierce violated plaintiff's constitutional rights.
2. Whether proposed due process claims against C. Pierce could be joined with plaintiff's existing First and Eighth Amendment claims against other defendants.
3. Whether plaintiff should be granted leave to file a second amended complaint re-alleging the existing claims and, if supported by specific facts, claims against C. Pierce.

HOLDINGS

1. The request to add C. Pierce was denied because plaintiff provided no facts demonstrating that Pierce violated plaintiff's First or Eighth Amendment rights.
2. Any due process claim against C. Pierce arising from the disciplinary hearing could not be joined with plaintiff's First and Eighth Amendment claims against the other defendants because the claims did not arise from the same transaction or occurrence and would not present common questions of law or fact.
3. Plaintiff was granted thirty days to file a second amended complaint re-alleging the existing First and Eighth Amendment claims and including claims against C. Pierce only if he could allege specific facts showing that Pierce violated his First or Eighth Amendment rights.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Unrelated claims against unrelated defendants belong in different suits” (at 2)

“any right to relief is asserted against them jointly, severally, or in the alternative with respect to or arising out of the same transaction, occurrence, or series of transactions or occurrences” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff is a state prisoner pursuing a § 1983 action based on alleged First and Eighth Amendment violations arising from prison events. After the court screened his first amended complaint, plaintiff elected to proceed on specified claims but also sought to add C. Pierce, who allegedly heard a prison disciplinary proceeding. The court found that plaintiff had not alleged facts showing Pierce violated his First or Eighth Amendment rights and stated that any due process claims concerning the disciplinary hearing would involve different legal and factual questions from the existing claims.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court screened plaintiff's first amended complaint on September 30, 2025, finding potentially cognizable Eighth Amendment claims against D. Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, and A. Konrad, and a First Amendment claim against J. Leatherman. Plaintiff elected to proceed on those claims and filed a document seeking to add C. Pierce through a supplemental pleading. The court struck a duplicative filing, denied the request to add Pierce because plaintiff alleged no facts showing a constitutional violation, and granted thirty days to file a second amended complaint consistent with the court's order.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- George v. Smith, 507 F.3d 605, 607 (7th Cir. 2007)

OPINION

Leatherman

PER CURIAM.

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8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10

11 FORREST C. TAYLOR, No. 2:25-cv-1100 CSK P

12 Plaintiff, 13 v. ORDER 14 J. LEATHERMAN, et al., 15 Defendants. 16 17 Plaintiff is a state
prisoner proceeding pro se in an action brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. 18 On September 30,
2025, the Court screened plaintiff's first amended complaint, and granted 19 plaintiff thirty days to
amend his pleading or to elect to proceed on his potentially cognizable 20 Eighth Amendment
claims against defendants D. Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, and A. 21 Konrad; and a First
Amendment claim against defendant J. Leatherman. (ECF No. 24.) That 22 same day, plaintiff
signed a second amended complaint, without benefit of the Court's screening 23 order. (ECF No.
26.) Then, on October 14, 2025, after plaintiff received the screening order, 24 plaintiff elected to
proceed with his First and Eighth Amendment claims, as proposed in the 25 screening order. (ECF
No. 27.) With his election form, plaintiff filed a document styled 26 "Supplemental Pleadings," in
which he claimed he had re-written his first amended complaint and 27 sent it to the Court on
October 2, 2025, because he was unsure whether the Court had received his 28 amended
complaint. (ECF No. 28.) Plaintiff asked that the Court permit plaintiff to add 1 defendant C.
Pierce as a supplemental pleading and dismiss the remaining defendants against 2 whom the Court
found plaintiff did not state a cognizable claim. (Id. at 1.) 3 Considering plaintiff's statement that
he re-filed a handwritten copy of his first amended 4 complaint, which he styled "Amended
Complaint," not "Second Amended Complaint," the Court 5 directs the Clerk to edit the docket
entry for this filing and strike the filing as duplicative. As for 6 adding defendant C. Pierce as a
"supplemental pleading," plaintiff's request is denied. Plaintiff 7 provided no facts demonstrating
that C. Pierce violated plaintiff's rights. (ECF No. 28.) In the
8 September 30, 2025 screening order, the Court found that plaintiff's first amended complaint
9 failed to state a cognizable claim against defendant C. Pierce because plaintiff included no facts
10 showing that C. Pierce was deliberately indifferent to an excessive risk to plaintiff in violation
of 11 the Eighth Amendment, or that the actions of C. Pierce were based on plaintiff's protected 12

conduct in violation of the First Amendment. (ECF No. 24 at 6.) Rather, plaintiff alleged only 13 that defendant C. Pierce heard the prison disciplinary. (Id.) Thus, the Court cannot determine 14 whether plaintiff has additional facts demonstrating that defendant C. Pierce violated plaintiff's 15 First or Eighth Amendment rights. 16 Further, if plaintiff intended to amend to include facts showing that defendant C. Pierce 17 violated plaintiff's due process rights during the disciplinary hearing, such due process claims are 18 not properly joined with plaintiff's First and Eighth Amendment claims against defendants D. 19 Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, and A. Konrad. Rule 20(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil 20 Procedure provides that all persons may be joined in one action as defendants if "any right to 21 relief is asserted against them jointly, severally, or in the alternative with respect to or arising out 22 of the same transaction, occurrence, or series of transactions or occurrences" and "any question of 23 law or fact common to all defendants will arise in the action." Fed. R. Civ. P. 20(a)(2); see also 24 *George v. Smith*, 507 F.3d 605, 607 (7th Cir. 2007) ("Unrelated claims against unrelated 25 defendants belong in different suits"). Plaintiff's putative due process claims will not involve the 26 same questions of law or fact common to plaintiff's First and Eighth Amendment claims against 27 defendants D. Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, and A. Konrad. Thus, any claim that C. 28 Pierce violated plaintiff's due process rights must be pursued in a separate civil rights action. 1 Pursuant to plaintiff's October 14, 2025 election, this action proceeds on plaintiff's first 2 || amended complaint (ECF No. 18) against defendants D. Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, 3 || and A. Konrad for violations of the Eighth Amendment; and against defendant J. Leatherman for 4 | violation of the First Amendment. (ECF No. 27.) In an abundance of caution, plaintiff is granted 5 || thirty days to file a second amended complaint, re-alleging his claims against defendants D. 6 || Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, and A. Konrad for violations of the Eighth Amendment; 7 || and against defendant J. Leatherman for violation of the First Amendment, and including 8 | plaintiffs First or Eighth Amendment claims against C. Pierce, if plaintiff can allege specific 9 || facts demonstrating that C. Pierce violated plaintiff's First or Eighth Amendment rights. 10 If plaintiff fails to file a second amended complaint within thirty days, this action will 11 || proceed solely on plaintiffs claims against defendants D. Leatherman, R. McLeod, D. Heinkel, 12 | and A. Konrad for violations of the Eighth Amendment; and against defendant J. Leatherman for 13 | violation of the First Amendment, as set forth in the September 30, 2025 screening order, and as 14 || elected by plaintiff on October 14, 2025. If plaintiff wishes to avoid further delay, he may file a 15 || statement declining to file a second amended complaint. 16 Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that: 17 1. The Clerk of the Court is directed to edit ECF No. 26 to read "copy of first amended 18 || complaint," and to strike the filing as duplicative of ECF No. 18. 19 2. Plaintiff is granted thirty days from the date of this order to file a second amended 20 || complaint as set forth above. If plaintiff fails to file a second amended complaint, this action will 21 || proceed as plaintiff elected on October 14, 2025. (ECF No. 27.) 22 3. The Clerk of the Court is directed to send plaintiff a copy of his first amended 23 || complaint (ECF No. 18). 24 25 || Dated: October 22,

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CHI SOO KIM

27 UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

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