

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
VIRGINIA, ROANOKE DIVISION

Jeremy Cordero Crawley v. Rick White, et al.

Crawley · No. 7:24-cv-00040 · Decided May 4, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia dismissed Jeremy Cordero Crawley’s 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1). The court held that allegations concerning inadequate cell cleaning and the denial of cleaning supplies did not plausibly establish an objectively sufficiently serious Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement violation. The court also found that Crawley’s allegations of exposure to infectious disease, COVID-19 risk, emotional distress, and mental anguish were insufficiently specific or serious.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia, Roanoke Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Robert S. Ballou
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia, Roanoke Division
DECIDED	May 4, 2026
DOCKET	7:24-cv-00040
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 reviewed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A; the court dismissed the complaint without prejudice for failure to state a claim.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1), accepting well-pleaded allegations as true for purposes of determining whether the complaint plausibly states a claim; factual allegations must raise the right to relief above the speculative level.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential district-court memorandum opinion
PARTIES	Jeremy Cordero Crawley v. Rick White, et al.

TOPICS

prisoners rights

cruel and unusual punishment

section 1983

pleadings

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

prisoner litigation

constitutional law

federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Crawley's allegations that prison officials failed to clean his cell and provide cleaning materials plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement claim.
2. Whether the complaint should be dismissed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1) for failure to state a claim.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to state an Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement claim because Crawley did not allege facts showing that the condition of his cell was sufficiently extreme, that he suffered a serious or significant physical or emotional injury, or that he faced a substantial risk of serious harm.
2. The court dismissed the action without prejudice because the complaint failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To state an Eighth Amendment conditions of confinement claim, prisoners must satisfy a two-part test.”
(Opinion text)

“His assertion that he is at risk of exposure to unnamed diseases is “entirely speculative” and is therefore “not sufficiently serious to rise to the level of an Eighth Amendment violation.”” (Opinion text)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Jeremy Cordero Crawley, a Virginia inmate housed at Red Onion State Prison, alleged that prison officials failed to comply with an internal policy requiring cells to be cleaned twice weekly. He also alleged that officials did not provide requested cleaning supplies. Crawley asserted concern about infectious diseases, particularly COVID-19, and alleged emotional distress and mental anguish, but did not identify a physical injury, a specific infectious disease other than COVID-19, disease spread at the prison, or a heightened personal susceptibility to COVID-19.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Crawley filed a § 1983 complaint alleging that prison officials failed to clean his cell twice weekly under an internal policy and failed to provide cleaning materials. Upon statutory screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court determined that the allegations did not plausibly establish an objectively sufficiently serious deprivation under the Eighth Amendment and dismissed the action without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Doe v. Rosa, 795 F.3d 429, 436 (4th Cir. 2015)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007)
- Williams v. Benjamin, 77 F.3d 756, 761 (4th Cir. 1996)
- Hammock v. Watts, 146 F.4th 349, 360 (4th Cir. 2025)
- Rish v. Johnson, 131 F.3d 1092, 1096 (4th Cir. 1997)
- Shakka v. Smith, 71 F.3d 162, 166 (4th Cir. 1995)
- Helling v. McKinney, 509 U.S. 25, 33 (1993)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 834, 837 (1994)
- Knight v. Woody, No. 3:10-cv-00351, 2012 WL 92526, at *3 (E.D. Va. Jan. 11, 2012)
- Hudson v. McMillian, 503 U.S. 1, 9 (1992)
- Mathis v. Burke, No. 7:22-cv-00223, 2022 WL 2383962, at *4 (W.D. Va. July 1, 2022)
- Alston v. Department of Corrections, No. 7:07-cv-00575, 2007 WL 4410770, at *3 (W.D. Va. Dec. 14, 2007)
- Allen v. Sater, No. 7:21-cv-00230, 2022 WL 2806469, at *9 (W.D. Va. July 18, 2022)
- Watson v. Kanode, No. 7:21-cv-00119, 2023 WL 6447318, at *7 (W.D. Va. Sept. 29, 2023)
- Morris v. Western Regional Jail, No. 3:17-cv-01148, 2017 WL 4080698, at *11 (S.D. W.Va. Aug. 22, 2017)
- Morris v. Western Regional Jail, 2017 WL 4078129 (S.D. W.Va. Sept. 14, 2017)

OPINION

Crawley

PER CURIAM.

"—ATROANOKE, VA

FILED

May 04, 2026

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT LAURA A, AUSTIN, CLERK

FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA By: /s/ M. Poff

ROANOKE DIVISION DEPUTY CLERK

JEREMY CORDERO CRAWLEY,)

Plaintiff,)) V.) Civil Action No. 7:24-cv-00040) RICK WHITE, et al.,) By: Robert S. Ballou

Defendants.) United States District Judge

MEMORANDUM OPINION

Plaintiff Jeremy Cordero Crawley, a Virginia inmate proceeding pro se, has filed a civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Following review pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, I will dismiss the Complaint for failing to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. At all relevant times, Crawley was incarcerated at the Red Onion State Prison in Pound, Virginia. He alleges that

prison officials failed to comply with an internal policy requiring cells to be cleaned twice per week. He further alleges that, on several occasions, he requested cleaning materials from prison officials but was not given the materials. Crawley claims he is concerned “for his health and [the] risk of infectious disease[s],” particularly Covid-19. Dkt. No. 1, at 2. “Section 1983 imposes liability on state actors who cause the ‘deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution.’” *Doe v. Rosa*, 795 F.3d 429, 436 (4th Cir. 2015). However, the court must dismiss any action filed by a prisoner against a governmental entity or officer if the court determines the claims are frivolous, malicious, or fail to state a claim on which relief may be granted. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1). The plaintiffs “[f]actual allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculative level,” to one that is “plausible on its face,” rather than merely “conceivable.” *Be// Atl. Corp v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007).

Crawley’s claims arise under the Eighth Amendment. It is well-established that the Eighth Amendment “protects inmates from inhumane treatment and conditions while imprisoned.” *Williams v. Benjamin*, 77 F.3d 756, 761 (4th Cir. 1996). To state an Eighth Amendment conditions of confinement claim, prisoners must satisfy a two-part test. *Hammock v. Watts*, 146 F.4th 349, 360 (4th Cir. 2025). “First, they must show ‘deprivation of a basic human need’ that is ‘objectively sufficiently serious.’” *Id.* (quoting *Rish v. Johnson*, 131 F.3d 1092, 1096 (4th Cir. 1997)). This requires showing “a serious or significant physical or emotional injury resulting from the challenged conditions, or a substantial risk of serious harm resulting from the prisoner’s unwilling exposure to the challenged conditions.” *Id.* (quoting *Shakka v. Smith*, 71 F.3d 162, 166 (4th Cir. 1995)) (internal quotation marks omitted); see also *Helling v. McKinney*, 509 U.S. 25, 33 (1993) (“[A] condition of confinement that is sure or very likely to cause serious illness and needless suffering the next week or month or year” violates the Eighth Amendment even if “the complaining inmate shows no serious current symptoms.”). Second, a prisoner “must establish that the defendant had a sufficiently culpable state of mind, which requires either actual knowledge of an excessive risk to the prisoner’s safety or proof that prison officials were aware of facts from which an inference could be drawn that a substantial risk of serious harm exists and that the inference was actually drawn.” *Hammock*, 146 F.4th at 360 (quoting *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 834, 837 (1994)) (internal quotation marks omitted). Even if Crawley could satisfy the second step of the analysis, he has not proffered sufficient facts to meet the first step. As an initial matter, Crawley does not adequately “describe the condition of his [cell]” apart from claiming that it has not been cleaned. See *Knight v. Woody*, No. 3:10-cv-00351, 2012 WL 92526, at *3 (E.D. Va. Jan. 11, 2012) (describing a similar situation). Without more, I cannot say that the condition of which Crawley complains is sufficiently “extreme[] [as] required to make out” an Eighth Amendment claim. *Hudson v. McMillian*, 503 U.S. 1, 9 (1992). Moreover, Crawley has failed to show a serious or significant physical or emotional injury or a substantial risk of serious harm resulting from the condition. For one, Crawley does not identify any physical injury whatsoever.

Rather, he claims that the defendants' failure to clean Crawley's cell or provide him with cleaning supplies placed him at risk of exposure to infectious diseases such as Covid-19. Although "the risk of exposure to serious infectious disease can satisfy the first element of an Eighth Amendment conditions claim," *Mathis v. Burke*, No. 7:22-cv-00223, 2022 WL 2383962, at *4 (W.D. Va. July 1, 2022), Crawley has not pled sufficient facts to support such a finding in this case. Apart from Covid-19, Crawley does not identify any infectious disease to which he might be exposed or show that such diseases have been or are spreading throughout Red Onion. His assertion that he is at risk of exposure to unnamed diseases is "entirely speculative" and is therefore "not sufficiently serious to rise to the level of an Eighth Amendment violation." See *Alston v. Dep't of Corr.*, No. 7:07-cv-00575, 2007 WL 4410770, at *3 (W.D. Va. Dec. 14, 2007). As to Covid-19, Crawley "has not alleged that he suffers from a preexisting health condition or is of an age that makes him more susceptible to acquire Covid-19 or to suffer a more severe case of Covid-19." See *Allen v. Sater*, No. 7:21-cv-00230, 2022 WL 2806469, at *9 (W.D. Va. July 18, 2022); see also *Watson v. Kanode*, No. 7:21-cv-00119, 2023 WL 6447318, at *7 (W.D. Va. Sept. 29, 2023) ("Even assuming that Watson faced the risk of exposure to COVID-19 while housed in the quarantine unit, this allegation, standing alone, does not rise to the level of an Eighth Amendment violation."). Crawley has accordingly failed to show that the defendants' alleged inaction is "sure or very likely to cause serious illness and needless suffering[.]" *Helling*, 509 U.S. at 33. And as noted above, it is Crawley's burden to plead sufficient facts to state a plausible claim for relief. *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555, 570. As to psychological injury, Crawley merely claims that he suffered "emotional distress" and "mental anguish." Dkt. No. 1, at 4. These conclusory allegations fall short of showing a significant, serious psychological injury to satisfy the first step of a conditions of confinement claim. See *Morris v. W. Reg'l Jail*, No. 3:17-cv-01148, 2017 WL 4080698, at *11 (S.D. W.Va. Aug. 22, 2017) (finding that a plaintiff's "conclusory allegations that he . . . suffered mental anguish fail[ed] to show harm of constitutional magnitude."), report and recommendation adopted, 2017 WL 4078129 (S.D. W.Va. Sept. 14, 2017). For these reasons, I will dismiss this action without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1) for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. An appropriate order accompanies this memorandum opinion. Enter: May 3, 2026 //s/ Robert S. Ballou
Robert S. Ballou
United States District Judge