

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Taylor v. Gordan

Taylor · No. 2:24-cv-0403 CKD P · Decided February 25, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California screens a state prisoner’s amended 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint concerning opened legal mail, threatened disciplinary proceedings, and confiscated food. Magistrate Judge Carolyn K. Delaney recommends dismissal for failure to state a claim and closure of the case, finding that a further opportunity to amend would be futile.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Carolyn K. Delaney
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	February 25, 2025
DOCKET	2:24-cv-0403 CKD P
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. After the original complaint was dismissed with leave to amend, plaintiff filed an amended complaint, which the magistrate judge recommended dismissing under the prisoner-screening statute.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A; the court must dismiss claims that are frivolous or malicious, fail to state a claim, or seek monetary relief from an immune defendant.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Arthur Taylor v. Gordan, et al.

TOPICS

- prisoners rights
- section 1983
- cruel and unusual punishment
- pleadings
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the amended prisoner complaint stated a cognizable claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether the allegations concerning prison conditions and conduct by prison officials stated an Eighth Amendment claim.
3. Whether plaintiff should be granted another opportunity to amend after the original complaint had already been dismissed with leave to amend.

HOLDINGS

1. The amended complaint failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted and should be dismissed under the prisoner-screening statute.
2. The allegations did not approach a violation of the Eighth Amendment because the alleged de minimis harms were not constitutionally actionable.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Eighth Amendment affords plaintiff the right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment, but nothing he alleges approaches a violation of the Eighth Amendment.” (at 2)

“The Constitution “does not mandate comfortable prisons.”” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff is a state prisoner proceeding pro se and alleged events at the California Medical Facility. He alleged a single instance in which outgoing legal mail was opened, threats of prisoner disciplinary proceedings, and confiscation and disposal of food following a search. He also made allegations the court characterized as vague or incomprehensible.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court previously dismissed plaintiff's complaint with leave to amend on September 19, 2024. Plaintiff filed an amended complaint alleging, among other things, that outgoing legal mail was opened, he was threatened with disciplinary proceedings, and food was confiscated and discarded after a search. The magistrate judge found that the amended complaint failed to state a claim and recommended dismissal and closure of the case, subject to objections and review by an assigned district judge.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Rhodes v. Chapman, 452 U.S. 337, 349 (1981)

- McKune v. Lile, 536 U.S. 24, 41 (2002)
- Martinez v. Ylst, 951 F.2d 1153 (9th Cir. 1991)

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