

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

Allan Seager v. State of New Mexico, et al.

No. 24-cv-0194-SMD-KK · No. No. 24-cv-0194-SMD-KK · Decided November 24, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of New Mexico dismisses Allan Seager’s amended prisoner civil rights complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e) and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b) (6). The court concludes that the named defendants are not subject to liability under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, the alleged false-arrest, malicious-prosecution, and search-and-seizure claims do not establish a cognizable constitutional violation or are barred by Heck v. Humphrey, and the claims are untimely. The dismissal is without prejudice, and Seager is granted thirty days to file a single amended complaint.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of New Mexico
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sarah M. Davenport
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of New Mexico
DECIDED	November 24, 2025
DOCKET	No. 24-cv-0194-SMD-KK
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Sua sponte initial review of an amended prisoner civil-rights complaint filed in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e) and Rule 12(b)(6).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e), the court must dismiss an in forma pauperis complaint that is frivolous, malicious, or fails to state a claim. The court applied the Rule 12(b)(6) plausibility standard, accepting well-pleaded factual allegations as true and construing the pro se pleading liberally.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Nonprecedential district-court memorandum opinion and order
PARTIES	Allan Seager v. State of New Mexico, Moriarty Police Department, Judge Matthew Reynolds

TOPICS

section 1983

prisoners rights

motions to dismiss

statute of limitations

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

constitutional law

civil procedure

prisoner litigation

post-conviction relief

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the State of New Mexico, the Moriarty Police Department, and the state judge are proper defendants subject to liability under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether Seager adequately pleaded viable § 1983 claims for malicious prosecution, false arrest, or illegal search and seizure.
3. Whether Heck v. Humphrey bars Seager's damages claims because success would necessarily imply the invalidity of his conviction.
4. Whether the § 1983 claims are barred by the applicable statute of limitations.
5. Whether Seager should be granted leave to amend after dismissal on initial review.

HOLDINGS

1. The claims against the State of New Mexico and the Moriarty Police Department fail because neither is a suable person under § 1983, and the claims against Judge Reynolds are barred by judicial immunity because his alleged conduct occurred in his judicial capacity and within his jurisdiction.
2. Seager failed to state a § 1983 malicious-prosecution claim because the underlying criminal action did not terminate in his favor; he remains convicted and imprisoned for one count of criminal sexual penetration.
3. Seager failed to state viable false-arrest or illegal-search-and-seizure claims because the alleged civilian was not a state actor, the arrest was made pursuant to a signed warrant, probable cause was not adequately negated, and post-process seizure allegations were properly analyzed under the malicious-prosecution framework.
4. Heck v. Humphrey independently bars Seager's false-arrest and illegal-search-and-seizure damages claims to the extent success would necessarily imply that his state conviction is invalid.
5. Seager's § 1983 claims were barred by New Mexico's three-year personal-injury statute of limitations because the challenged arrests, searches, and related conduct occurred in 2009, while the action was filed in 2024.
6. Despite the substantial defects in the complaint, the court granted Seager leave to file one amended complaint within thirty days because he was proceeding pro se and no defendant had been served or appeared.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Judges are immune from suit based on actions taken in their judicial capacity.” (5)

“Heck holds that the Federal Court must dismiss a § 1983 damages claim that, if resolved in the plaintiff’s favor, would necessarily imply the invalidity of his conviction.” (7)

“Plaintiff may file a single, amended complaint within thirty (30) days of entry of this ruling.” (10)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Seager was convicted in 2011 of two counts of criminal sexual penetration of a child under thirteen, although the New Mexico Court of Appeals later reversed one count and the state court reduced his consecutive sentence to eighteen years. He alleged that police and a civilian impersonating an officer framed him, planted a hard drive, unlawfully arrested him, searched his home, and fabricated evidence after he testified against a police officer. He sued the State of New Mexico, the Moriarty Police Department, and the state judge who presided over his criminal case, seeking damages under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. He remains convicted and imprisoned for one count of criminal sexual penetration.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Seager filed an amended § 1983 complaint seeking \$20 million in damages for alleged false arrest, malicious prosecution, and illegal search and seizure arising from his New Mexico criminal case. The court previously granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis and determined that the matter was ready for mandatory initial review. The court dismissed the amended complaint without prejudice for failure to state a cognizable claim but granted Seager thirty days to file a single amended complaint.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Mitchell v. Dowling, 672 Fed. App'x 792, 794 (10th Cir. 2016)
- Seager v. Wrigley, No. 15-cv-0747 MCA-SMV
- Hall v. Bellmon, 935 F.2d 1106, 1110 (10th Cir. 1991)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Garrett v. Selby Connor Maddux & Janer, 425 F.3d 836, 840 (10th Cir. 2005)
- McLaughlin v. Board of Trustees, 215 F.3d 1168, 1172 (10th Cir. 2000)
- Trask v. Franco, 446 F.3d 1036, 1046 (10th Cir. 1998)
- Fogarty v. Gallegos, 523 F.3d 1147, 1162 (10th Cir. 2008)
- Robbins v. Oklahoma, 519 F.3d 1242, 1249-50 (10th Cir. 2008)
- Will v. Michigan Department of State Police, 491 U.S. 58, 64 (1989)
- Moore v. Diggins, 633 Fed. App'x 672, 677 (10th Cir. 2015)
- Martinez v. Winner, 771 F.2d 424, 444 (10th Cir. 1985)
- Mohammad v. Albuquerque Police Department, 699 Fed. App'x 838, 839 (10th Cir. 2017)

- Jenkins v. Wood, 81 F.3d 988, 993-94 (10th Cir. 1996)
- Mireles v. Waco, 502 U.S. 9, 11 (1991)
- Pierson v. Ray, 386 U.S. 547, 554 (1967)
- Snell v. Tunnell, 920 F.2d 673, 686 (10th Cir. 1990)
- Montoya v. Vigil, 898 F.3d 1056, 1066 (10th Cir. 2018)
- Thompson v. Clark, 596 U.S. 36, 49 (2022)
- Turney v. O'Toole, 898 F.2d 1470, 1473 (10th Cir. 1990)
- Price v. Tulsa County Court, No. 25-5116, 2025 WL 3043445, at *1 (10th Cir. Oct. 31, 2025)
- Myers v. Koopman, 738 F.3d 1190, 1195 (10th Cir. 2013)
- Heck v. Humphrey, 512 U.S. 477, 487 & n.7 (1994)
- Laurino v. Tate, 220 F.3d 1213, 1217 (10th Cir. 2000)
- Jackson v. Loftis, 189 Fed. App'x 775, 779 n.1 (10th Cir. 2006)
- Varnell v. Dora Consolidated School District, 756 F.3d 1208, 1212 (10th Cir. 2014)
- McCarty v. Gilchrist, 646 F.3d 1281, 1289 (10th Cir. 2011)
- Beck v. City of Muskogee Police Department, 195 F.3d 553, 558 (10th Cir. 1999)
- Wallace v. Kato, 549 U.S. 384, 397 (2007)
- Wilson v. Reid, 781 Fed. App'x 789, 791 (10th Cir. 2019)
- Bradley v. Val-Mejias, 379 F.3d 892, 901 (10th Cir. 2004)