

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
OKLAHOMA

Ricardo Ray Anguiano v. Ashly Ketcher, et al.

Anguiano · No. 26-CV-166-JFH-JAR · Decided June 22, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma screened Ricardo Ray Anguiano’s 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint as a pretrial detainee and found that it failed to state a plausible claim for relief. The court dismissed the complaint without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1), granting leave to file an amended complaint within twenty-one days.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma
WRITING FOR THE COURT	John F. Heil III
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma
DECIDED	June 22, 2026
DOCKET	26-CV-166-JFH-JAR
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Preliminary screening of a self-represented pretrial detainee's complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court screens the complaint and dismisses claims that are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim, or seek monetary relief from an immune defendant. The court evaluates whether the specific allegations plausibly support a legal claim for relief and liberally construes a self-represented pleading, without relieving the plaintiff of the obligation to allege sufficient supporting facts.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Ricardo Ray Anguiano v. Ashly Ketcher, Ralph Tucker, other unknown defendants

TOPICS

- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- pleadings
- civil procedure
- due process

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

prisoner litigation

constitutional law

pleading and screening

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated a plausible Fourteenth Amendment claim based on the alleged forced exposure of detainees' bodies during laundry procedures.
2. Whether the complaint stated a plausible § 1983 claim based on allegedly inadequate blankets, towels, cleaning supplies, and running water when it failed to allege the personal involvement of any defendant.
3. Whether the complaint should be dismissed without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1) and whether leave to amend should be granted.

HOLDINGS

1. A prisoner civil-rights complaint must be dismissed at screening when its factual allegations fail to plausibly support a cognizable claim for relief.
2. The complaint failed to state a plausible Fourteenth Amendment claim because it did not allege a qualifying physical or sexual injury and did not plausibly allege that the exposure was unrelated to a legitimate governmental objective or excessive in relation to that objective.
3. A § 1983 claim fails when the complaint does not allege each defendant's personal involvement in the asserted constitutional deprivation.
4. A self-represented plaintiff whose complaint is dismissed for failure to state a claim should be permitted an opportunity to amend when the identified deficiencies may be curable.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“In determining whether dismissal is appropriate, a court must “look to the specific allegations in the complaint to determine whether they plausibly support a legal claim for relief.”” (Order)

“While the Court must liberally construe a complaint drafted by a self-represented plaintiff, the rule of liberal construction “does not relieve the plaintiff of the burden of alleging sufficient facts on which a recognized legal claim could be based.”” (Order)

“Individual liability under § 1983 must be based on personal involvement in the alleged constitutional violation.” (Order)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Anguiano, a pretrial detainee at the Cherokee County Detention Center, alleged that detention-center personnel required detainees to remove clothing and wrap themselves in blankets while laundry was performed, allegedly threatening lockdown for noncompliance. He also alleged that detainees were denied clean blankets and towels for more than a month, lacked cleaning supplies, and had no running water in their cells. The complaint did not specifically allege a physical injury from the first incident or identify any defendant's personal involvement in the second.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Anguiano filed a pro se § 1983 complaint against detention-center personnel and unnamed individuals. On preliminary screening, the court concluded that the complaint failed to state a plausible claim for relief. The court dismissed the complaint without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1), while granting twenty-one days to file an amended complaint curing the identified deficiencies.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Alvarado v. KOB TV, LLC, 493 F.3d 1210, 1215 n.2 (10th Cir. 2007)
- Hall v. Bellmon, 935 F.2d 1106, 1110 (10th Cir. 1991)
- Milledge v. McCall, 43 F. App'x 196, 197-99 (10th Cir. 2002)
- Griffith v. El Paso Cnty., Colo., 129 F.4th 790, 824 (10th Cir. 2025)
- Hudson v. Palmer, 468 U.S. 517, 527 (1984)
- Foote v. Spiegel, 118 F.3d 1416, 1423 (10th Cir. 1997)
- Robbins v. Oklahoma, 519 F.3d 1242, 1250 (10th Cir. 2008)
- Estate of Booker v. Gomez, 745 F.3d 405, 435 (10th Cir. 2014)
- Galbraith v. Garfield Cnty. Jail, No. CIV-26-301-J, 2026 WL 1256441, at *2 (W.D. Okla. May 7, 2026)

OPINION

Anguiano

PER CURIAM.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

RICARDO RAY ANGUIANO,

Plaintiff, v. Case No. 26-CV-166-JFH-JAR ASHLY KETCHER, et al., Defendants.

ORDER

Plaintiff Ricardo Ray Anguiano (“Plaintiff”), a self-represented pretrial detainee, brings this action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging violations of his constitutional rights. Dkt. No. 1. This matter is before the Court for preliminary screening of his Complaint. For the following reasons, the Court finds Plaintiff has failed to state a plausible claim for relief. District courts must screen civil complaints filed by prisoners seeking redress from a governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). A court must identify any cognizable claim and dismiss any claim which is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b). In determining whether dismissal is appropriate, a court must “look to the specific

allegations in the complaint to determine whether they plausibly support a legal claim for relief.” *Alvarado v. KOB TV, LLC*, 493 F.3d 1210, 1215 n.2 (10th Cir. 2007). While the Court must liberally construe a complaint drafted by a self-represented plaintiff, the rule of liberal construction “does not relieve the plaintiff of the burden of alleging sufficient facts on which a recognized legal claim could be based.” *Hall v. Bellmon*, 935 F.2d 1106, 1110 (10th Cir. 1991). Plaintiff is a pretrial detainee confined at the Cherokee County Detention Center (“CCDC”) in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Dkt. No. 1, at 2. In his Complaint, Plaintiff raises two claims for relief and names as defendants CCDC “Supervisor” Ashly Ketcher and CCDC “Jailer” Ralph Tucker, as well as “others” whose names are unknown to him. *Id.* at 1. As his requested relief, Plaintiff states that he “want[s] to sue the county jail for [\$]150,000.”¹ *Id.* at 7. Plaintiff first alleges: “I was told by Ashly Ketcher and Ralph Tucker to remove our oranges and wrap our blankets around us so they could do laundry. If we didn’t we would have been put on lock down.” Dkt. No. 1 at 5. Plaintiff does not specifically allege an injury in relation to this claim. Insofar as Plaintiff’s claim is predicated on a mental or emotional injury, the claim is precluded by section 1997e(e) of the Prison Litigation Reform Act, which provides that “[n]o Federal civil action may be brought by a prisoner confined in a jail, prison, or other correctional facility, for mental or emotional injury suffered while in custody without a prior showing of physical injury or the commission of a sexual act (as defined in section 2246 of title 18).” 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(e); see *Milledge v. McCall*, 43 F. App’x 196, 197-99 (10th Cir. 2002). Further, while a pretrial detainee “can state a Fourteenth Amendment claim by alleging facts supporting the inference that ‘the exposure of [his] body was ‘not rationally related to a legitimate governmental objective or was excessive in relation to that purpose,’” Plaintiff has not done so here. *Griffith v. El Paso Cnty., Colo.*, 129 F.4th 790, 824 (10th Cir. 2025) (alteration and internal quotation marks omitted). The alleged actions of Defendants Ketcher and Tucker relate to the penological interest of maintaining a sanitary environment, see *Hudson v. Palmer*, 468 U.S. 517, 1 Plaintiff did not name the Cherokee County Detention Center as a defendant in this action. Regardless, a detention facility is not a proper defendant in a § 1983 action. See, e.g., *Galbraith v. Garfield Cnty. Jail*, No. CIV-26-301-J, 2026 WL 1256441, at *2 (W.D. Okla. May 7, 2026) (explaining that “a detention center in Oklahoma, as a subdivision of the county in which it is located, has no separate legal identity under Oklahoma law” and therefore “cannot be sued”). 527 (1984), and Plaintiff has not plausibly alleged excessive exposure of his body in relation to that purpose. As his second claim for relief, Plaintiff alleges: “When we ask for clean blankets and towels we was [sic] denied for over a month and a toilet brush and spray bottle to clean that we never rec[e]ived and there[’]s no running water in our cells.” Dkt. No. 1 at 5. Plaintiff, however, has not alleged the personal involvement of any defendant in relation to this claim. “Individual liability under § 1983 must be based on personal involvement in the alleged constitutional violation.” *Foote v. Spiegel*, 118 F.3d 1416, 1423 (10th Cir. 1997). Thus, in the context of § 1983 cases, it is “particularly important . . . that the complaint make clear exactly who is alleged to have done what to whom, to provide each individual with fair notice as to the basis of

the claims against him or her.” *Robbins v. Oklahoma*, 519 F.3d 1242, 1250 (10th Cir. 2008) (emphases in original); see also *Estate of Booker v. Gomez*, 745 F.3d 405, 435 (10th Cir. 2014) (explaining that supervisory liability requires “an ‘affirmative link’ between the supervisor and the constitutional violation” (internal quotation marks omitted)). Because Plaintiff’s allegations fail to address what actions each defendant personally took in the alleged deprivation, this claim likewise fails. For these reasons, the Court finds Plaintiff has failed to state a plausible claim for relief and his Complaint is subject to dismissal. However, because Plaintiff appears without counsel, the Court will permit him to file an amended complaint to the extent he can cure the noted deficiencies. See *Hall*, 935 F.2d at 1109-10. If Plaintiff chooses to amend his pleading, he must do so on the court-approved form, within twenty-one (21) days of this Order. Failure to submit an amended complaint by that date will result in the dismissal of this action without prejudice and without further notice. IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Complaint [Dkt. No. 1] is DISMISSED without prejudice, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1), for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. Plaintiff may file an amended complaint on the Court’s approved form within twenty- one (21) days of this Order. Dated this 22nd day of June, 2026.

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JOHN F. HEIL I

CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE