

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
NEW YORK

Lorenzo Beaman v. State of New York, et al.

Beaman · No. 9:25-CV-1402 (ECC/MJK) · Decided January 22, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of New York dismissed Lorenzo Beaman’s pro se 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action arising from an alleged inmate assault at Greene Correctional Facility. The court held that the claims were untimely and barred by the Eleventh Amendment, and dismissed the action with prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of New York
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Elizabeth C. Coombe
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of New York
DECIDED	January 22, 2026
DOCKET	9:25-CV-1402 (ECC/MJK)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se plaintiff filed an amended complaint after the court previously dismissed his Section 1983 claims without prejudice during screening. The district court sua sponte reviewed the amended complaint and dismissed the action with prejudice.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court conducted sua sponte review for frivolousness, subject matter jurisdiction, and sufficiency of the amended complaint, including review under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court decision; generally nonprecedential.

TOPICS

- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- eleventh amendment immunity
- statute of limitations
- subject matter jurisdiction

PRACTICE AREAS

- Civil rights
- Federal civil procedure
- Prisoner litigation
- Constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court could sua sponte dismiss a fee-paying pro se plaintiff's amended complaint as frivolous or for lack of subject matter jurisdiction.
2. Whether plaintiff's Section 1983 claims against the State of New York and Greene Correctional Facility were barred by the Eleventh Amendment.
3. Whether the Section 1983 claims, based on an alleged assault occurring on December 21, 2017, were untimely.
4. Whether plaintiff's supplemental submissions established any basis for tolling the limitations period or avoiding the Eleventh Amendment bar.

HOLDINGS

1. A district court may sua sponte dismiss a fee-paying pro se complaint when it is frivolous, presents no arguably meritorious issue, or cannot proceed because a dispositive jurisdictional or limitations defense is apparent from the pleading.
2. Plaintiff's Section 1983 claims against the State of New York and Greene Correctional Facility were barred by the Eleventh Amendment and could not proceed in federal court.
3. The Section 1983 claims were untimely because they were based on an alleged injury occurring on December 21, 2017, and plaintiff failed to establish a basis for tolling the limitations period by more than four years.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Court, however, also has the inherent authority to ensure that plaintiff has standing to pursue his claims, that subject matter jurisdiction exists, and that a case is not frivolous.” (Section II.B)

“Accordingly, and for the reasons set forth in the October 2025 Order, plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims are dismissed as untimely, and for lack of subject matter jurisdiction.” (Section II.B)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that he was assaulted by a fellow inmate at Greene Correctional Facility on December 21, 2017. He asserted Section 1983 claims against the State of New York and Greene Correctional Facility, construed as Eighth Amendment failure-to-protect claims. Plaintiff was not incarcerated when he commenced the federal action, and his amended complaint remained materially identical to the original pleading.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff initially filed the action in the Southern District of New York, which transferred it to the Northern District of New York. The court screened the original complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b), dismissed the Section 1983 claims without prejudice as barred by the Eleventh Amendment and untimely, and allowed plaintiff an opportunity to amend. Plaintiff's amended complaint was materially identical to the original complaint, and the court dismissed the action with prejudice, directed the Clerk to terminate the defendants, and closed the case.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Rolle v. Berkowitz, No. 03-CV-7120, 2004 WL 287678, at *1 (S.D.N.Y. Feb. 11, 2004)
- Pillay v. INS, 45 F.3d 14, 17 (2d Cir. 1995)
- Cummings v. Giuliani, No. 00-CV-6634, 2000 WL 1597868, at *2-3 (S.D.N.Y. Oct. 24, 2000)
- Cook v. Sullivan Cnty. Fam. Ct. of New York State Unified Ct. Sys., No. 24-CV-03874, 2024 WL 3106248, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. June 20, 2024)
- Fitzgerald v. First E. Seventh St. Tenants Corp., 221 F.3d 362, 364 (2d Cir. 2000)
- Muller v. Costello, No. 94-CV-842, 1996 WL 191977, at *2 (N.D.N.Y. Apr. 16, 1996)
- U.S. v. Hayes, 115 S. Ct. 2431, 2435 (1995)
- Atl. Healthcare Benefits Trust v. Googins, 2 F.3d 1, 4 (2d Cir. 1993)
- Close v. New York, 125 F.3d 31, 38-39 (2d Cir. 1997)
- Collins v. Unified Ct. Sys. of New York, No. 91-CV-349, 1991 WL 111218, at *1 (N.D.N.Y. June 17, 1991), aff'd sub nom. Collins v. Unified Ct. Sys. NY, 962 F.2d 3 (2d Cir. 1992)
- Livingston v. Adirondack Beverage Co., 141 F.3d 434, 437 (2d Cir. 1998)
- Islam v. Melisa, No. 18-CV-2535, 2020 WL 1452463, at *12 (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 24, 2020)
- Castro v. United Sec. Inc., No. 10-CV-6152, 2011 WL 4916402, at *3 (S.D.N.Y. Oct. 17, 2011)
- Pino v. Ryan, 49 F.3d 51, 54 (2d Cir. 1995)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK LORENZO BEAMAN, Plaintiff, 9:25-CV-1402 v. (ECC/MJK) STATE OF NEW YORK, et al., Defendants. APPEARANCES: LORENZO BEAMAN Plaintiff, pro se 28 Oakland Place Brooklyn, NY 11226 ELIZABETH C. COOMBE United States District Judge DECISION and ORDER I. INTRODUCTION Plaintiff Lorenzo Beaman commenced this action by filing a pro se civil rights complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 ("Section 1983"), and paying the required filing fee in full.

Dkt. No. 1 ("Compl.").¹ By Decision and Order entered on October 31, 2025, the Court reviewed the complaint in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b) and dismissed plaintiff's Section 1983 claims without prejudice as barred by the Eleventh Amendment, and for failure 1 Plaintiff commenced this action in the Southern District of New York. By Order entered on September 30, 2025, the Honorable Edgardo Ramos of the Southern District of New York directed that this case be transferred to the Northern District of New York.

Dkt. No. 3. Thereafter, this case was transferred to this District. Dkt. No. 4. to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. Dkt. No. 5 ("October 2025 Order"). In light of plaintiff's pro se status, he was afforded an opportunity to submit an amended complaint. *Id.* at 12-14. Presently before the Court is plaintiff's amended complaint and supplemental supporting documents.

Dkt. No. 6 ("Am. Compl."); Dkt. No. 7 ("Supplemental Submission"). II. SUFFICIENCY OF THE AMENDED COMPLAINT A. The Complaint and October 2025 Order In his complaint, plaintiff asserted claims against the State of New York and Greene Correctional Facility based on allegations that he was assaulted by a fellow inmate while incarcerated at Greene Correctional Facility on December 21, 2017.

See Compl. at 3-4 The complaint was construed to assert Eighth Amendment failure-to-protect claims against the named defendants. See October 2025 Order at 4. After reviewing the allegations in the complaint for sufficiency, the Court dismissed plaintiff's Section 1983 claims as barred by the Eleventh Amendment, and untimely. See October 2025 Order at 5-14. B. Review of the Amended Complaint The Court previously relied on 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b) for its screening of the complaint because the pleading asserts allegations of wrongdoing that occurred during plaintiff's incarceration.

See Compl. at 2-6; Dkt. No. 1-1 at 35-40.2 The Court, however, also has the inherent authority to ensure that plaintiff has standing to pursue his claims, that subject matter jurisdiction exists, and that a case is not frivolous. See *Rolle v. Berkowitz*, No. 03-CV- 7120, 2004 WL 287678, at *1 (S.D.N.Y. Feb. 11, 2004) ("[C]ourts within the Second Circuit 2 Plaintiff was not incarcerated when he commenced this action. have not hesitated to dismiss sua sponte claims brought by fee-paying pro se plaintiffs when it is clear such claims 'presen[t] no arguably meritorious issue for [the courts'] consideration.'" (quoting *Pillay v. INS*, 45 F.3d 14, 17 (2d Cir.1995) (holding appellate court has authority to sua sponte dismiss a frivolous appeal brought by a fee-paying pro se plaintiff))); *Cummings v. Giuliani*, No. 00-CV-6634, 2000 WL 1597868, at * 2-3 (S.D.N.Y.

Oct. 24, 2000) (dismissing sua sponte fee-paying pro-se plaintiff's §§ 1981, 1983 and 1985 claims that were clearly time- barred) (citing *Pillay*); *Cook v. Sullivan Cnty. Fam. Ct. of New York State Unified Ct. Sys.*, No. 24-CV-03874, 2024 WL 3106248, at *2 (S.D.N.Y. June 20, 2024) (same); see also *Fitzgerald v. First E. Seventh St. Tenants Corp.*, 221 F.3d 362, 364 (2d Cir.

2000) ("[D]istrict courts may dismiss a frivolous complaint sua sponte even when the plaintiff has paid the required filing fee."); *Muller v. Costello*, No. 94-CV-842, 1996 WL 191977, at *2 (N.D.N.Y. Apr. 16, 1996) ("Federal courts are under an independent obligation to examine their own subject matter jurisdiction." (citing *U.S. v. Hayes*, 115 S. Ct. 2431, 2435 (1995))); *Atl.*

Healthcare Benefits Trust v. Googins, 2 F.3d 1, 4 (2d Cir. 1993) ("Although the parties do not address the Eleventh Amendment in their briefs, we raise it sua sponte because it affects our

subject matter jurisdiction.”); *Close v. New York*, 125 F.3d 31, 38-39 (2d Cir. 1997) (“[U]nless New York waived its immunity, the district court lacked subject matter jurisdiction.”).

The amended complaint is identical to the original complaint, with the exception of a caption change. Compare Compl. with Am. Compl. Indeed, even the signature date on both pleadings is the same. Moreover, while plaintiff has filed additional documentation with his amended complaint related to his state court action and communications with the state court and his former attorney, see Dkt.

Nos. 6-1, 6-2, 7, none of these filings present a basis for tolling the applicable limitations period by more than four years, or finding that the Eleventh Amendment’s jurisdictional bar is inapplicable to plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims against the State of New York and Greene Correctional Facility.

Accordingly, and for the reasons set forth in the October 2025 Order, plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims are dismissed as untimely, and for lack of subject matter jurisdiction. See, e.g., *Collins v. Unified Ct. Sys. of New York*, No. 91-CV-349, 1991 WL 111218, at *1 (N.D.N.Y. June 17, 1991) (“The complaint is frivolous; the court has seen essentially the same allegations made in the prior two suits; additionally, much of the complaint is barred by virtue of the applicable limitations period (three years), or by the 11th Amendment or by the doctrine of absolute judicial immunity.”), *aff’d sub nom.*

Collins v. Unified Ct. Sys. NY, 962 F.2d 3 (2d Cir. 1992); *Livingston v. Adirondack Beverage Co.*, 141 F.3d 434, 437 (2d Cir. 1998) (action frivolous where “factual contentions are clearly baseless,” as when “the claim is based on an indisputably meritless legal theory,” e.g., where “a dispositive defense clearly exists on the face of the complaint”); *Cummings v. Giuliani*, No. 00-CV-6634, 2000 WL 1597868, at *2-3 (S.D.N.Y.

Oct. 24, 2000) (dismissing sua sponte fee-paying pro se plaintiff’s claims that were clearly time-barred); *Islam v. Melisa*, No. 18-CV-2535, 2020 WL 1452463, at *12 (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 24, 2020) (“The Court construes Islam as naming Dr. Melisa Jn. Pierre as a defendant in this action and dismisses Islam’s claims against her as frivolous because they are clearly time-barred,... having been brought over four years after Islam last interacted with Dr. Melisa[.]”); *Castro v. United Sec. Inc.*, No. 10-CV-6152, 2011 WL 4916402, at *3 (S.D.N.Y.

Oct. 17, 2011) (“[C]ourts within the Second Circuit consistently have held that lack of legal knowledge or legal assistance is not an extraordinary circumstance warranting equitable tolling.” (citation omitted)); *Pino v. Ryan*, 49 F.3d 51, 54 (2d Cir. 1995) (finding sua sponte dismissal of section 1983 claim based on statute of limitations “especially appropriate where... the injuries complained of [by the pro se plaintiff] occurred more than five years before the filing of the Complaint”). *Ill.*

CONCLUSION WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED that this action alleging federal claims under Section 1983 is DISMISSED with prejudice. The Clerk is directed to terminate the defendants and close this case; and it is further ORDERED that the Clerk serve a copy of this Decision and Order on plaintiff. IT IS SO ORDERED. Dated: January 22, 2026 i A Syracuse, NY
Elizabeth C. Coombe U.S. District Judge

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