

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA

William R. Grimes v. Clay County Jail Officer No. 1181

Grimes · No. 2:25-cv-00165-JPH-MJD · Decided January 26, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana directs Plaintiff William R. Grimes to file an amended complaint identifying the previously unnamed Clay County Jail officer and correcting deficiencies identified in the Court’s screening order. The Court sets a February 23, 2026 deadline and warns that failure to comply will result in dismissal without prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana
WRITING FOR THE COURT	James Patrick Hanlon
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana
DECIDED	January 26, 2026
DOCKET	2:25-cv-00165-JPH-MJD
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The plaintiff filed a 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action concerning conditions of confinement. After screening dismissed claims against an unnamed jail officer, the court permitted limited discovery directed to the Clay County Sheriff to identify the officer and allowed amendment of the complaint. The court issued an order directing the plaintiff to file an amended complaint by February 23, 2026.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; precedential status not stated

TOPICS

- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- pleadings
- civil procedure
- discovery dispute

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil rights
- prisoner litigation
- federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the plaintiff should receive additional time to file an amended complaint after failing to meet the previously established deadline.
2. Whether failure to file the amended complaint by the new deadline should result in dismissal without prejudice.

HOLDINGS

1. The court directed the plaintiff to file an amended complaint correcting the deficiencies identified in the screening order by February 23, 2026.
2. If the plaintiff fails to file the required amended complaint by February 23, 2026, the action will be dismissed without prejudice without further warning or an opportunity to show cause.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Mr. Grimes shall have until February 23, 2026 to file an amended complaint that corrects the deficiencies identified in the Court's screening order.”

“Failure to do so in the time provided will result in the dismissal of this action without prejudice for the reasons specified in the Court's screening order without further warning or opportunity to show cause.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

William R. Grimes is incarcerated at Indiana State Prison and sued under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging unconstitutional conditions of confinement at the Clay County Jail. Because he could not identify the unnamed officer, the court permitted limited discovery directed to the Clay County Sheriff. The Sheriff appeared, but Grimes did not file an amended complaint by the deadline previously established by the court.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court screened the complaint on July 23, 2025, dismissed claims against an unnamed Clay County Jail officer, added the Clay County Sheriff as an interested party, and authorized limited discovery to identify the officer. After the plaintiff reported difficulty serving discovery, the court reissued process and directed the Sheriff to respond. The Sheriff appeared on October 8, 2025, but the plaintiff did not meet the resulting deadline to amend. The court granted one additional deadline and warned that failure to amend would result in dismissal without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Billman v. Ind. Dep't of Corr., 56 F.3d 785, 790 (7th Cir. 1995)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA TERRE HAUTE
DIVISION WILLIAM R. GRIMES,)) Plaintiff,)) v.) No. 2:25-cv-00165-JPH-MJD) CLAY
COUNTY JAIL OFFICER NO. 1181,)) Defendant.))) BRISON SWEARINGEN,)) Interested
Party.) ORDER DIRECTING FURTHER PROCEEDINGS Plaintiff William Grimes is a prisoner
currently incarcerated at Indiana State Prison.

He filed this civil action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging that the defendants subjected him to unconstitutional conditions of confinement while he was incarcerated at Clay County Jail. Dkt. 1. The Court issued a screening order on July 23, 2025, dismissing Mr. Grimes's claims against an unnamed Clay County Jail officer. Dkt. 19.

In doing so, the Court added the Sheriff of Clay County Jail as an "interested party" and instructed Mr. Grimes to serve limited discovery to the Sheriff to learn the name of the officer. *Id.*; see *Billman v. Ind. Dep't of Corr.*, 56 F.3d 785, 790 (7th Cir.1995) ("because [the plaintiff] is a prisoner he may not be in a position to identify the proper defendants, or all of them, in his complaint... [w]e think it is the duty of the district court to assist him, within reason, to make the necessary investigation.")).

Mr. Grimes then notified the Court that he was unable to serve discovery on the Sheriff and amend his complaint. See dkts. 24, 26. On September 9, 2025, the Court reissued process to the Sheriff and directed the Sheriff to respond to Mr. Grimes's discovery request. Dkt. 27.

In doing so, the Court stated that "[o]nce the Sheriff appears in this case, he shall have twenty-eight days to respond to Mr. Grimes's discovery request. If Mr. Grimes wishes to serve any further discovery on the Sheriff, he shall have fourteen days after the Sheriff appears to do so. Mr. Grimes will have 60 days after the Sheriff appears to file an amended complaint."

Id. The Sheriff appeared in this action by counsel on October 8, 2025. Dkt. 30. The deadline to file an amended complaint has since passed and Mr. Grimes has not done so or otherwise responded. Mr. Grimes shall have until February 23, 2026 to file an amended complaint that corrects the deficiencies identified in the Court's screening order. Failure to do so in the time provided will result in the dismissal of this action without prejudice for the reasons specified in the Court's screening order without further warning or opportunity to show cause.

SO ORDERED. Date: 1/26/2026 Sjamu Pataich Hanbore James Patrick Hanlon United States District Judge Southern District of Indiana Distribution: WILLIAM R. GRIMES 249489 INDIANA STATE PRISON INDIANA STATE PRISON Inmate Mail/Parcels One Park Row MICHIGAN CITY, IN 46360 Liberty L. Roberts CHURCH CHURCH HITTLE & ANTRIM (Noblesville) lroberts@cchalaw.com

