

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, SOUTH BEND DIVISION

Clayton v. Ballard, et al.

Cause No. 3:24-CV-922-JD · No. 3:24-CV-922-JD · Decided April 15, 2026

SUMMARY

This Opinion and Order addresses David Clayton’s claims under the Eighth Amendment concerning mental-health treatment while incarcerated at Miami Correctional Facility. Clayton seeks injunctive relief against the warden and damages from two medical defendants for alleged deliberate indifference, while the defendants move for summary judgment and Clayton renews his motion for a preliminary injunction. The opinion sets out the summary-judgment and deliberate-indifference standards and reviews Clayton’s extensive mental-health treatment history, housing status, and monitoring.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, South Bend Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jon E. DeGuilio
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, South Bend Division
DECIDED	April 15, 2026
DOCKET	3:24-CV-922-JD
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 alleging constitutionally inadequate mental-health treatment in violation of the Eighth Amendment. The warden moved for summary judgment on the official-capacity claim for injunctive relief, and Dr. Ballard and Dr. Verdon moved for summary judgment on the individual-capacity damages claims. Clayton also renewed his motion for a preliminary injunction.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is proper when there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. The court construes facts and reasonable inferences in favor of the nonmovant, but the nonmovant must identify evidence supporting the

	claim rather than relying on allegations, denials, speculation, or conjecture.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished federal district court opinion; persuasive value only
PARTIES	David Clayton v. Ballard, et al.

TOPICS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the warden was entitled to summary judgment on Clayton's Eighth Amendment claim seeking injunctive relief based on allegedly inadequate mental-health treatment and restrictive housing.
2. Whether Dr. Ballard was entitled to summary judgment on Clayton's individual-capacity damages claim because she did not provide constitutionally inadequate treatment or have personal involvement in any constitutional violation.
3. Whether Dr. Verdon was entitled to summary judgment because she was not personally involved in Clayton's mental-health care and her response to the reported metal ingestion was not deliberately indifferent.
4. Whether Clayton was entitled to renewed preliminary injunctive relief requiring transfer from restrictive housing to a mental-health facility.

HOLDINGS

1. The warden was entitled to summary judgment because the undisputed evidence showed that Clayton received regular and constitutionally adequate mental-health treatment, and no reasonable jury could find that the treatment was plainly inappropriate or violated professional standards.
2. Dr. Ballard was entitled to summary judgment because she saw Clayton only once before suit, provided treatment that was not plainly inappropriate, and there was no evidence she was personally involved in any other allegedly unconstitutional treatment.
3. Dr. Verdon was entitled to summary judgment because she had no clinical involvement in Clayton's care, and her decision not to take additional action after learning he was receiving medical and mental-health treatment was not plainly inappropriate.
4. Clayton was not entitled to renewed injunctive relief requiring his transfer from restrictive housing because the undisputed record showed that he was receiving constitutionally adequate mental-health care and he was not entitled to dictate the manner in which that care was provided.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A medical professional’s treatment decisions will be accorded deference unless no minimally competent professional would have so responded under those circumstances.”

“The Constitution is not a medical code that mandates specific medical treatment.”

“Because Clayton has received constitutionally adequate care in the restrictive housing unit, he is not entitled to his immediate release.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Clayton, an Indiana prisoner, had a history of restrictive-housing placements, mental-health evaluations, suicidal or homicidal thoughts, and medication changes. The undisputed medical records showed that mental-health staff regularly evaluated him, provided individual and group therapy, monitored him in restrictive housing, and changed medications in response to reported symptoms and side effects. Dr. Ballard saw Clayton once before he filed suit and found his mental status stable; Dr. Verdon had no clinical involvement in his care and only received a report concerning an alleged ingestion of metal. Clayton continued to receive mental-health monitoring and treatment, including while housed under the facility’s Danger Exception.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Clayton proceeded pro se against the warden for injunctive relief and against Dr. Ballard and Dr. Verdon for damages based on alleged deliberate indifference to his mental-health needs. After discovery, the defendants moved for summary judgment, and Clayton renewed his request for injunctive relief. The court granted both summary-judgment motions, denied the renewed injunction motion, directed entry of judgment for defendants, and closed the case.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc., 477 U.S. 242, 248 (1986)
- Ogden v. Atterholt, 606 F.3d 355, 358 (7th Cir. 2010)
- Goodman v. National Security Agency, Inc., 621 F.3d 651, 654 (7th Cir. 2010)
- Trade Finance Partners, LLC v. AAR Corp., 573 F.3d 401, 407 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 104 (1976)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 834 (1994)
- Jackson v. Kotter, 541 F.3d 688, 697-98 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Pierson v. Hartley, 391 F.3d 898, 902 (7th Cir. 2004)
- Forbes v. Edgar, 112 F.3d 262, 267 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Hayes v. Snyder, 546 F.3d 516, 524 (7th Cir. 2008)
- Ciarpaglini v. Saini, 352 F.3d 328, 331 (7th Cir. 2003)
- Wolf-Lillie v. Sonquist, 699 F.2d 864, 869 (7th Cir. 1983)

- *Burks v. Raemisch*, 555 F.3d 592, 596 (7th Cir. 2009)
- *Chavez v. Illinois State Police*, 251 F.3d 612, 651 (7th Cir. 2001)
- *Thomas v. Martija*, 991 F.3d 763, 772 (7th Cir. 2021)
- *Snipes v. DeTella*, 95 F.3d 586, 592 (7th Cir. 1996)
- *Langston v. Peters*, 100 F.3d 1235, 1240-41 (7th Cir. 1996)
- *Williams v. Liefer*, 491 F.3d 710, 714-15 (7th Cir. 2007)
- *Bell v. Wolfish*, 441 U.S. 520, 547-48 (1979)

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