

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Stephens v. United States Corp., et al.

Stephens · No. 25-cv-0582-AGS-DDL · Decided July 30, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of California granted Timothy Stephens’s motion to proceed in forma pauperis. After screening the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the court dismissed it without prejudice and granted leave to amend because the allegations did not state a claim and the requested relief likely exceeded the court’s jurisdiction.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Andrew G. Schopler
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of California
DECIDED	July 30, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-0582-AGS-DDL
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved to proceed in forma pauperis. The court granted the motion, screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), and dismissed the complaint without prejudice with leave to amend.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The complaint was screened under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B) and was subject to dismissal if frivolous or if it failed to state a claim.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished and nonprecedential district court order

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- pleadings
- motions to dismiss
- civil rights
- constitutional law

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- civil rights
- constitutional law
- remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Stephens should be permitted to proceed in forma pauperis based on his financial circumstances.
2. Whether the complaint stated a claim under the mandatory screening standard of 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).
3. Whether the requested remedy of televised military tribunals was within the district court's jurisdiction.

HOLDINGS

1. A plaintiff whose disability income hardly exceeds monthly expenses may proceed without prepaying the court-filing fee; complete destitution is not required.
2. The complaint was dismissed because its conclusory allegations did not state a claim under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).
3. The requested remedy of televised military tribunals likely exceeded the district court's jurisdiction.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Now the Court must screen the complaint and dismiss it if it is “frivolous” or “fails to state a claim.”” (at 1)

“Stephens’s IFP request is GRANTED, but his complaint is DISMISSED without prejudice and with leave to amend.” (at 1)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Stephens alleged that he was antagonized by Freemasons with government assistance, verbally attacked and terrorized after becoming a psychic, and deprived of various constitutional amendments. He requested televised military tribunals but provided no supporting factual allegations establishing a viable claim.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Stephens filed a civil complaint and an application to proceed without prepaying filing fees. The district court granted in forma pauperis status, determined during mandatory screening that the complaint failed to state a claim and that the requested remedy likely exceeded the court's jurisdiction, and dismissed with leave to amend.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

No remand. Any amended complaint was due by September 10, 2025.

CASES CITED

- Rodriguez v. Cook, 169 F.3d 1176, 1177 (9th Cir. 1999)
- Blount v. Saul, No. 21-CV-0679-BLM, 2021 WL 1561453, at *1 (S.D. Cal. Apr. 21, 2021)

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