

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS, ROCK ISLAND DIVISION

Edgar Diaz v. Tyrone Baker, et al.

Case No. 25-4173 · No. 25-4173 · Decided April 22, 2026

SUMMARY

The court conducted a merit review under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A of Edgar Diaz’s prisoner civil-rights complaint. It allowed First Amendment retaliation claims against Cox, Swing, and Little and a Fourteenth Amendment procedural due process claim against Phillips, Stuart, and Range, while dismissing claims against Baker, Garza, and Nurse and unrelated claims arising from Pontiac Correctional Center. The court granted Diaz’s motion for status and directed service on the remaining defendants.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, Rock Island Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sara Darrow
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, Rock Island Division
DECIDED	April 22, 2026
DOCKET	25-4173
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Merit review of a pro se incarcerated plaintiff's complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court screens a prisoner's complaint and dismisses claims that are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seek monetary relief from an immune defendant. At screening, factual allegations are accepted as true and liberally construed in the plaintiff's favor, but conclusory statements and labels are insufficient; the allegations must state a plausible claim for relief.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential district court order

TOPICS

prisoners rights

section 1983

first amendment

procedural due process

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

constitutional litigation

federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff plausibly stated a First Amendment retaliation claim against Cox, Swing, and Little.
2. Whether Plaintiff plausibly stated a Fourteenth Amendment procedural due process claim against Phillips, Stuart, and Range.
3. Whether Plaintiff stated a claim against Garza or Baker based on the alleged grievance-related conduct and lack of personal involvement.
4. Whether claims arising from Pontiac Correctional Center were improperly joined with the other claims.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff stated a First Amendment retaliation claim against Cox, Swing, and Little in their individual capacities.
2. Plaintiff stated a Fourteenth Amendment procedural due process claim against Phillips, Stuart, and Range in their individual capacities.
3. Plaintiff failed to state a claim against Baker or Garza based on the allegations presented.
4. Plaintiff could not proceed in this action on claims arising from Pontiac Correctional Center that were unrelated to the claims otherwise stated against the named defendants.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Unrelated claims against different defendants belong in different suits.”

“The plaintiff’s failure to notify the court of a change in mailing address or phone number will result in dismissal of this lawsuit, with prejudice.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that prison officials retaliated against him after he wrote grievances and refused to sign a witness statement concerning contraband trafficking. He alleged that officials issued disciplinary reports, denied him the opportunity to present a written statement, request witnesses, or offer other evidence at a disciplinary hearing, and imposed segregation, contact-visit restrictions, and a disciplinary transfer. He also alleged that Garza refused to accept a grievance and that Baker lacked personal involvement in the alleged deprivations.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. On merit review, the court allowed First Amendment retaliation claims against Cox, Swing, and Little and Fourteenth Amendment procedural due process claims against Phillips, Stuart, and Range to proceed in their individual capacities. The court dismissed

additional claims without prejudice, terminated Baker, Garza, and Nurse as defendants, granted Plaintiff's motion for status, and directed service on the surviving defendants.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Turley v. Rednour, 729 F.3d 645, 649 (7th Cir. 2013)
- Alexander v. U.S., 721 F.3d 418, 422 (7th Cir. 2013)
- George v. Smith, 507 F.3d 605, 609 (7th Cir. 2007)
- George v. Smith, 507 F.3d 605, 607 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Owens v. Godinez, 860 F.3d 434, 436 (7th Cir. 2017)