

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF  
FLORIDA, JACKSONVILLE DIVISION

Dravian Dravius Darvin Byrd v. Department of Corrections

Byrd v. Department of Corrections · No. 3:25-cv-1416-JEP-PDB · Decided November 21, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida dismissed without prejudice an inmate’s 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action against the Florida Department of Corrections. The court held that the FDC is not a “person” subject to monetary liability under § 1983 and directed the Clerk to close the case while allowing the plaintiff to file a new action against an appropriate defendant.

CASE DETAILS

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COURT                 | United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Jacksonville Division                                                                                                                                     |
| WRITING FOR THE COURT | Jordan E. Pratt                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| JURISDICTION          | United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Jacksonville Division                                                                                                                                     |
| DECIDED               | November 21, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| DOCKET                | 3:25-cv-1416-JEP-PDB                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| DISPOSITION           | dismissed                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| PROCEDURAL POSTURE    | Pro se prisoner civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983; transferred from the Northern District of Florida and dismissed without prejudice during mandatory PLRA screening.                                             |
| STANDARD OF REVIEW    | The court applied the Rule 12(b)(6) plausibility standard in conducting PLRA screening, accepting well-pleaded factual allegations as true, liberally construing the pro se complaint, and disregarding legal conclusions. |
| PRECEDENTIAL VALUE    | unpublished                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| PARTIES               | Dravian Dravius Darvin Byrd v. Department of Corrections                                                                                                                                                                   |

TOPICS

- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- motions to dismiss
- civil procedure

## PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

constitutional law

federal civil procedure

## QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated a plausible claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the Florida Department of Corrections.
2. Whether the Florida Department of Corrections is a person subject to monetary liability under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
3. Whether dismissal under the Prison Litigation Reform Act should be without prejudice.

## HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to state a plausible claim for relief because it sought damages from the Florida Department of Corrections, an entity that is not a person subject to monetary liability under § 1983.
2. The court was required to dismiss the complaint because it failed to state a claim on which relief could be granted and the damages claim against the Florida Department of Corrections was frivolous.
3. Dismissal was without prejudice, permitting Plaintiff to initiate a new action asserting plausible claims against a proper person defendant.

## KEY QUOTATIONS

*“To survive a motion to dismiss, a complaint must contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to ‘state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.’” (2)*

*“The state of Florida, including a state agency such as the FDC, is not a person subject to monetary liability under § 1983.” (2)*

*“Because a claim for damages against the FDC is “frivolous,” see Gardner, 444 F. App’x at 355, this case will be dismissed without prejudice subject to Plaintiff’s right to initiate a new case if he wants to proceed on any plausible claim(s) against a “person.”” (3)*

## FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, an inmate in the custody of the Florida Department of Corrections, alleged that a corrections officer ignored his statement that he was having suicidal thoughts, struck him in the stomach and face, and threatened him. He sought damages under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. He named only the Florida Department of Corrections as a defendant and did not name the alleged corrections officer.

## PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a pro se § 1983 complaint and an application to proceed in forma pauperis in the Northern District of Florida. The Northern District transferred the action to the Middle District because the alleged incident occurred at the Reception and Medical Center in Lake Butler, Florida. After screening under the PLRA, the court dismissed the complaint without prejudice because Plaintiff named only the Florida Department of Corrections, which is not a person subject to monetary liability under § 1983.

## DISPOSITION

dismissed

## CASES CITED

- Mitchell v. Farcass, 112 F.3d 1483, 1490 (11th Cir. 1997)
- Alba v. Montford, 517 F.3d 1249, 1252 (11th Cir. 2008)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007)
- Roe v. Aware Woman Center for Choice, Inc., 253 F.3d 678, 683 (11th Cir. 2001)
- In re Plywood Antitrust Litigation, 655 F.2d 627, 641 (5th Cir. Unit A Sept. 8, 1981)
- Gardner v. Riska, 444 F. App'x 353, 355 (11th Cir. 2011)
- Will v. Michigan Department of State Police, 491 U.S. 58, 71 (1989)
- McNamara v. GEICO, 30 F.4th 1055, 1061 (11th Cir. 2022)

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