

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

Deleon Harland v. Lisa Schuerman, Erin Wenger, and Nurse Brenda

Harland · No. 25-CV-1622-JPS · Decided April 1, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin grants Deleon Harland leave to proceed without prepaying the filing fee and screens his 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint. The court allows Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference and Wisconsin negligence claims to proceed against Lisa Schuerman, Erin Wenger, and Nurse Brenda based on alleged delays in providing medication for high blood pressure. The order also addresses service, exhaustion-related motions, responsive pleadings, and collection of the remaining filing fee.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	J.P. Stadtmueller
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	April 1, 2026
DOCKET	25-CV-1622-JPS
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed a pro se 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint as a prisoner and moved for leave to proceed without prepaying the filing fee. The district court granted the fee motion and screened the complaint under the Prison Litigation Reform Act, allowing constitutional and state-law claims to proceed.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	At PLRA screening, the court applies the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) standard, accepts well-pleaded factual allegations as true, and determines whether the complaint states a plausible claim for relief.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Deleon Harland v. Lisa Schuerman, Erin Wenger, Nurse Brenda

TOPICS

section 1983

prisoners rights

cruel and unusual punishment

negligence

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

constitutional torts

medical negligence

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged that Schuerman, Wenger, and Nurse Brenda were deliberately indifferent to Harland's serious medical needs in violation of the Eighth Amendment.
2. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged a Wisconsin negligence claim against the defendants.
3. Whether Harland should be allowed to proceed without prepaying the remainder of the filing fee under the Prison Litigation Reform Act.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint sufficiently alleged an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Schuerman, Wenger, and Nurse Brenda based on the alleged knowing failure to provide Harland's necessary blood-pressure medication.
2. The complaint sufficiently alleged a Wisconsin negligence claim against Schuerman, Wenger, and Nurse Brenda, and the court exercised supplemental jurisdiction over that claim.
3. Harland's motion for leave to proceed without prepaying the filing fee was granted, subject to payment of the remaining fee through deductions from his prison trust account.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A claim has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows a court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” (Section 2.1)

“The Court finds that Plaintiff may proceed against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda on an Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference claim for their indifference to Plaintiff’s serious medical needs.” (Section 2.3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Harland, an inmate at Waupun Correctional Institution, had been diagnosed with high blood pressure and prescribed medication. He alleged that his medication expired on October 23, 2024, that he notified the defendants on October 25 that he was not receiving it, and that the defendants knowingly failed to renew or provide it. He further alleged that he became dizzy on October 29 and fractured his finger in a fall.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Harland filed a complaint alleging that prison personnel failed to provide prescribed high-blood-pressure medication, causing dizziness and a fractured finger. He paid the ordered initial partial filing fee. The district court granted leave to proceed without prepaying the remainder of the filing fee, found the complaint sufficient

at the screening stage, authorized service, and directed defendants to raise exhaustion-related challenges by summary judgment.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Cesal v. Moats*, 851 F.3d 714, 720 (7th Cir. 2017)
- *Booker-El v. Superintendent, Ind. State Prison*, 668 F.3d 896, 899 (7th Cir. 2012)
- *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 556, 570 (2007)
- *D.S. v. E. Porter Cnty. Sch. Corp.*, 799 F.3d 793, 798 (7th Cir. 2015)
- *Buchanan–Moore v. County of Milwaukee*, 570 F.3d 824, 827 (7th Cir. 2009)
- *Perez v. Fenoglio*, 792 F.3d 768, 776 (7th Cir. 2015)
- *Greeno v. Daley*, 414 F.3d 645, 652 (7th Cir. 2005)
- *Lewis v. McLean*, 864 F.3d 556, 562–63 (7th Cir. 2017)
- *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 834 (1994)
- *Arnett v. Webster*, 658 F.3d 742, 753 (7th Cir. 2011)
- *McGowan v. Hulick*, 612 F.3d 636, 640 (7th Cir. 2010)
- *Paul v. Skemp*, 625 N.W.2d 860, 865 (Wis. 2001)
- *Harris v. Meisner*, No. 20-2650, 2021 WL 5563942, at *2 (7th Cir. Nov. 29, 2021)
- *Runnion ex rel. Runnion v. Girl Scouts of Greater Chi. & Nw. Ind.*, 786 F.3d 510, 524 (7th Cir. 2015)

OPINION

Harland

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

DELEON HARLAND,

Plaintiff, Case No. 25-CV-1622-JPS v.

ORDER

LISA SCHUERMAN, ERIN

WENGER, and NURSE BRENDA,

Defendants. Plaintiff Deleon Harland (“Plaintiff”), an inmate confined at Waupun Correctional Institution (“WCI”), filed a pro se complaint under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 alleging that Defendants violated his constitutional rights. ECF No. 1. This Order resolves Plaintiff’s motion for leave to proceed without prepaying the filing fee and screens his complaint.

1. MOTION FOR LEAVE TO PROCEED WITHOUT PREPAYING THE FILING FEE

The Prison Litigation Reform Act (“PLRA”) applies to this case because Plaintiff was a prisoner when he filed his complaint. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(h). The PLRA allows the Court to give a prisoner plaintiff the ability to proceed with his case without prepaying the civil case filing fee. *Id.* § 1915(a)(2). When funds exist, the prisoner must pay an initial partial filing fee. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1). He must then pay the balance of the \$350 filing fee over time, through deductions from his prisoner account. *Id.* On December 2, 2025, the Court ordered Plaintiff to pay an initial partial filing fee of \$55.02. ECF No. 6. Plaintiff paid that fee on January 5, 2026. The Court will grant Plaintiff’s motion for leave to proceed without prepaying the filing fee, ECF No. 2. Plaintiff must pay the remainder of the filing fee over time in the manner explained at the end of this Order.

2. SCREENING THE COMPLAINT

2.1 Federal Screening Standard Under the PLRA, the Court must screen complaints brought by prisoners seeking relief from a governmental entity or an officer or employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). The Court must dismiss a complaint if the prisoner raises claims that are legally “frivolous or malicious,” that fail to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or that seek monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b). In determining whether the complaint states a claim, the Court applies the same standard that applies to dismissals under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6). See *Cesal v. Moats*, 851 F.3d 714, 720 (7th Cir. 2017) (citing *Booker-El v. Superintendent, Ind. State Prison*, 668 F.3d 896, 899 (7th Cir. 2012)). A complaint must include “a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a)(2). The complaint must contain enough facts, accepted as true, to “state a claim for relief that is plausible on its face.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678

(2009) (quoting *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)). “A claim has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows a court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Id.* (citing *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 556). To state a claim for relief under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege that someone deprived him of a right secured by the Constitution or the laws of the United States and that whoever deprived him of this right was acting under the color of state law. *D.S. v. E. Porter Cnty. Sch. Corp.*, 799 F.3d 793, 798 (7th Cir. 2015) (citing *Buchanan–Moore v. County of Milwaukee*, 570 F.3d 824, 827 (7th Cir. 2009)). The Court construes pro se complaints liberally and holds them to a less stringent standard than pleadings drafted by lawyers. *Cesal*, 851 F.3d at 720 (citing *Perez v. Fenoglio*, 792 F.3d 768, 776 (7th Cir. 2015)). 2.2 Plaintiff’s Allegations Plaintiff brings this case against Defendants Lisa Schuerman (“Schuerman”), Erin Wenger (“Wenger”) and Nurse Brenda (“Brenda”). ECF No. 1 at 1. On Plaintiff was diagnosed with high blood pressure and prescribed medication as the course of treatment. *Id.* at 2. On October 25, 2024, Plaintiff informed Defendants that he was not receiving his high blood pressure medication

in the restricted housing unit (“RHU”). Id. Schuerman was supposed to renew Plaintiff’s medication prior to it expiring on October 23, 2024. Id. at 3. Schuerman knew about Plaintiff’s medication expiring, and she was deliberately indifferent to Plaintiff’s need for medication. Id. As a result of Defendants’ actions, Plaintiff became dizzy on October 29, 2024, and he fractured his finger when he fell. Id. Security and medical personnel were aware of Plaintiff’s need for medication from October 25, 2025 through October 29, 2025. Id.

2.3 Analysis The Court finds that Plaintiff may proceed against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda on an Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference claim for their indifference to Plaintiff’s serious medical needs. The Eighth Amendment secures an inmate’s right to medical care. Prison officials violate this right when they “display deliberate indifference to serious medical needs of prisoners.” *Greeno v. Daley*, 414 F.3d 645, 652 (7th Cir. 2005) (internal quotation omitted). Deliberate indifference claims contain both an objective and a subjective component: the inmate “must first establish that his medical condition is objectively, ‘sufficiently serious,’; and second, that prison officials acted with a ‘sufficiently culpable state of mind,’ i.e., that they both knew of and disregarded an excessive risk to inmate health.” *Lewis v. McLean*, 864 F.3d 556, 562–63 (7th Cir. 2017) (quoting *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 834 (1994) (internal citations omitted)). “A delay in treating non-life-threatening but painful conditions may constitute deliberate indifference if the delay exacerbated the injury or unnecessarily prolonged an inmate’s pain.” *Arnett v. Webster*, 658 F.3d 742, 753 (7th Cir. 2011) (citing *McGowan v. Hulick*, 612 F.3d 636, 640 (7th Cir. 2010)). The length of delay that is tolerable “‘depends on the seriousness of the condition and the ease of providing treatment.’” Id. (quoting *McGowan*, 612 F.3d at 640). At the screening stage, the Court finds that Plaintiff’s allegations are sufficient to proceed against these defendants. Plaintiff alleges delayed treatment for his high blood pressure and that Defendants knowingly failed to provide his necessary medication. As such, the Court finds that Plaintiff may proceed against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda on an Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference claim for their indifference to Plaintiff’s serious medical needs. The Court will also allow Plaintiff to proceed against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda on a state law claim for negligence. At this early stage, the Court will exercise its supplemental jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a). To sustain a claim for negligence, Plaintiff must allege “(1) a breach of (2) a duty owed (3) that results in (4) an injury or injuries, or damages.” *Paul v. Skemp*, 625 N.W.2d 860, 865 (Wis. 2001). As such, the Court will allow Plaintiff to proceed on a state law claim against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda for negligence.

3. CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, the Court finds that Plaintiff may proceed on the following claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b): Claim One: Eighth Amendment claim against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda for their deliberate indifference to Plaintiff’s serious medical needs. Claim Two: State law negligence claim against Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda for their failure to adequately treat Plaintiff’s medical condition. The Court has enclosed with this Order guides prepared by court staff to address common questions that arise in cases filed by prisoners. These

guides are entitled, “Answers to Prisoner Litigants’ Common Questions” and “Answers to Pro Se Litigants’ Common Questions.” They contain information that Plaintiff may find useful in prosecuting his case. Defendants should take note that, within forty-five (45) days of service of this Order, they are to file a summary judgment motion that raises all exhaustion-related challenges. The Court will issue a scheduling order at a later date that embodies other relevant deadlines. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that Plaintiff’s motion for leave to proceed without prepaying the filing fee, ECF No. 2, be and the same is hereby GRANTED; IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that under an informal service agreement between the Wisconsin Department of Justice and this Court, a copy of the complaint and this Order have been electronically transmitted to the Wisconsin Department of Justice for service on Defendants Schuerman, Wenger, and Brenda; IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that under the informal service agreement, Defendants shall file a responsive pleading to the complaint within sixty (60) days; IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Defendants raise any exhaustion- related challenges by filing a motion for summary judgment within forty- five (45) days of service; IT IS FURTHER ORDERED if Defendants contemplate a motion to dismiss, the parties must meet and confer before the motion is filed. Defendants should take care to explain the reasons why they intend to move to dismiss the complaint, and Plaintiff should strongly consider filing an amended complaint. The Court expects this exercise in efficiency will obviate the need to file most motions to dismiss. Indeed, when the Court grants a motion to dismiss, it typically grants leave to amend unless it is “certain from the face of the complaint that any amendment would be futile or otherwise unwarranted.” *Harris v. Meisner*, No. 20-2650, 2021 WL 5563942, at *2 (7th Cir. Nov. 29, 2021) (quoting *Runnion ex rel. Runnion v. Girl Scouts of Greater Chi. & Nw. Ind.*, 786 F.3d 510, 524 (7th Cir. 2015)). Therefore, it is in both parties’ interest to discuss the matter prior to motion submissions. Briefs in support of, or opposition to, motions to dismiss should cite no more than ten (10) cases per claim. No string citations will be accepted. If Defendants file a motion to dismiss, Plaintiff is hereby warned that he must file a response, in accordance with Civil Local Rule 7 (E.D. Wis.), or he may be deemed to have waived any argument against dismissal and face dismissal of this matter with prejudice; IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the agency having custody of Plaintiff shall collect from his institution trust account the \$294.98 balance of the filing fee by collecting monthly payments from Plaintiff’s prison trust account in an amount equal to 20% of the preceding month’s income credited to Plaintiff’s trust account and forwarding payments to the Clerk of Court each time the amount in the account exceeds \$10 in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). The payments shall be clearly identified by the case name and number assigned to this case. If Plaintiff is transferred to another county, state, or federal institution, the transferring institution shall forward a copy of this Order along with his remaining balance to the receiving institution; IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of this Order be sent to the officer in charge of the agency where Plaintiff is confined; and IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk’s Office mail Plaintiff a copy of the guides entitled “Answers to Prisoner Litigants’ Common Questions” and “Answers to Pro Se

Litigants' Common Questions," along with this Order. Dated at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, this 1st day of April 2026. ee PR J.P. Stat weller U.S. District Judge Page 7 of 8 Plaintiffs who are inmates at Prisoner E-Filing Program institutions shall submit all correspondence and case filings to institution staff, who will scan and e-mail documents to the Court. Prisoner E-Filing is mandatory for all inmates at Columbia Correctional Institution, Dodge Correctional Institution, Green Bay Correctional Institution, Oshkosh Correctional Institution, Waupun Correctional Institution, and Wisconsin Secure Program Facility. Plaintiffs who are inmates at all other prison facilities, or who have been released from custody, will be required to submit all correspondence and legal material to: Office of the Clerk United States District Court Eastern District of Wisconsin 362 United States Courthouse 517 E. Wisconsin Avenue Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

DO NOT MAIL ANYTHING DIRECTLY TO THE COURT'S

CHAMBERS. If mail is received directly to the Court's chambers, IT

WILL BE RETURNED TO SENDER AND WILL NOT BE FILED IN

THE CASE. Plaintiff is further advised that failure to timely file any brief, motion, response, or reply may result in the dismissal of this action for failure to prosecute. In addition, the parties must notify the Clerk of Court of any change of address. IF PLAINTIFF FAILS TO PROVIDE AN UPDATED

ADDRESS TO THE COURT AND MAIL IS RETURNED TO THE

COURT AS UNDELIVERABLE, THE COURT WILL DISMISS THIS ACTION WITHOUT PREJUDICE.