

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

Griffin v. Grande, et al.

Griffin v. Grande, No. 3:25-cv-00274 (SFR) (D. Conn. June 1, 2026) · No. 3:25-cv-00274 (SFR) · Decided June 1, 2026

SUMMARY

In this initial review order under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court permits Chazantine Griffin to proceed with damages claims under the Eighth Amendment concerning unsanitary prison showers and inadequate treatment for an MRSA infection. The court also permits First Amendment retaliation claims against two defendants. Official-capacity claims and requests for injunctive and declaratory relief, along with other claims, are dismissed without prejudice and with leave to amend.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sarah F. Russell
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
DECIDED	June 1, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-cv-00274 (SFR)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Initial review of a pro se incarcerated plaintiff's amended complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court must dismiss any portion of a prisoner complaint that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant. Well-pleaded allegations are accepted as true and are liberally construed for a pro se litigant, but the complaint must contain sufficient factual matter to state a facially plausible claim.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- section 1983
- prisoners rights
- cruel and unusual punishment
- first amendment

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the amended complaint plausibly alleged an Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement claim based on unsanitary and dangerous prison showers.
2. Whether the amended complaint plausibly alleged Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference to serious medical needs based on the defendants' treatment of Griffin's MRSA infection.
3. Whether the amended complaint plausibly alleged First Amendment retaliation claims based on inadequate medical care and a disciplinary ticket issued after protected complaints.
4. Whether Griffin could pursue official-capacity damages claims and prospective injunctive or declaratory relief after his transfer from Corrigan Correctional Institution.

HOLDINGS

1. At the initial-review stage, allegations that prison showers were contaminated with mold, sewage, bodily fluids, mildew, and feces, lacked nonslip mats, and remained unremedied after notice plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Peau, Dougherty, and Oles in their individual capacities.
2. At the initial-review stage, allegations that Grande, Barnes, Mayernik, Valletta, West, Bertocki, Andexler, Prabhakar, Rader, and Sanchez knew of Griffin's serious MRSA infection and failed to provide adequate testing or effective treatment plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment damages claim against them in their individual capacities.
3. The amended complaint plausibly alleged First Amendment retaliation claims against Grande and Barnes in their individual capacities for damages.
4. Official-capacity damages claims were barred by state sovereign immunity, and Griffin's requests for declaratory and injunctive relief were dismissed without prejudice as moot or unsupported by allegations of an ongoing violation after his transfer from Corrigan Correctional Institution.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“When asserting claims of deliberate indifference to safety or medical needs, a plaintiff must allege facts to suggest that the defendants acted not merely carelessly or negligently, but with a subjectively reckless state of mind akin to criminal recklessness.” (III.A)

“All other claims, including official capacity claims, are DISMISSED without prejudice and with leave to amend.” (IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Griffin alleged that from January through April 2024 the showers at Corrigan Correctional Institution were contaminated with mold, sewage, foul water, bodily fluids, mildew, and feces, lacked nonslip mats, and caused him to fall. He further alleged that he contracted MRSA and that multiple medical defendants failed to provide adequate testing or effective treatment despite repeated reports of worsening infection. Griffin also alleged that

defendants Grande and Barnes retaliated against him for filing a prior lawsuit and grievances. By the time of the order, Griffin had been transferred to MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

After granting Griffin leave to proceed in forma pauperis, the court conducted initial review of the original complaint, dismissed it without prejudice because the allegations were misjoined and insufficiently organized to determine defendants' personal involvement, and granted leave to amend. Griffin filed an amended complaint. On initial review, the court allowed specified Eighth Amendment and First Amendment damages claims to proceed to service, while dismissing other claims, including official-capacity claims and requests for declaratory or injunctive relief, without prejudice and with leave to amend.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Giraldo v. Kessler, 694 F.3d 161, 164 (2d Cir. 2012)
- Spavone v. N.Y. State Dep't of Corrs., 719 F.3d 127, 138 (2d Cir. 2013)
- Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 104 (1976)
- Rhodes v. Chapman, 452 U.S. 337, 347 (1981)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 832, 834 (1994)
- Hathaway v. Coughlin, 37 F.3d 63, 66 (2d Cir. 1994)
- Salahuddin v. Goord, 467 F.3d 263, 272, 279-80 (2d Cir. 2006)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Tracy v. Freshwater, 623 F.3d 90, 101 (2d Cir. 2010)
- Triestman v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons, 470 F.3d 471, 474 (2d Cir. 2006) (per curiam)
- Morgan v. Dzurenda, 956 F.3d 84, 89 (2d Cir. 2020)
- Darnell v. Pineiro, 849 F.3d 17, 30-31 (2d Cir. 2017)
- Darby v. Greenman, Darby v. Greenman, 14 F.4th 124, 128 (2d Cir. 2021)
- Washington v. Artus, 708 F. App'x 705, 708 (2d Cir. 2017) (summary order)
- Suarez v. Morton, 170 F.4th 33, 60 (2d Cir. 2026)
- Phelps v. Kapnolas, 308 F.3d 180, 186 (2d Cir. 2002)
- Chance v. Armstrong, 143 F.3d 698, 703 (2d Cir. 1998)
- Brandon v. Kinter, 938 F.3d 21, 40 (2d Cir. 2019)
- Gill v. Pidlypchak, 389 F.3d 379, 380 (2d Cir. 2004)
- Walker v. Senecal, 130 F.4th 291, 298-99 (2d Cir. 2025)
- Tripathy v. Brotz, No. 6:22-CV-06469-FPG, 2023 WL 4032831, at *7 (W.D.N.Y. June 15, 2023), aff'd sub nom. Tripathy v. McKoy, 103 F.4th 106 (2d Cir. 2024)

- Gayle v. Gonyea, 313 F.3d 677, 682 (2d Cir. 2002)
- Kentucky v. Graham, 473 U.S. 159, 169 (1985)
- Va. Office for Prot. & Advocacy v. Stewart, 563 U.S. 247, 254-55 (2011)
- Ex parte Young, 209 U.S. 123 (1908)

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