

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

Romeo Elijah Martinez v. Angel Quiros, et al.

No. 3:25-CV-520 (VDO) (D. Conn. Jan. 27, 2026) · No. 3:25-CV-520 (VDO) · Decided January 27, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Connecticut conducted an initial review of Romeo Elijah Martinez’s amended 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint alleging Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference to medical needs. The court allowed the claims against three medical defendants to proceed in their individual capacities, while dismissing without prejudice the official-capacity claims and the individual-capacity claims against the DOC Commissioner, deputy warden, and warden for lack of personal involvement. The court also issued service, discovery, and dispositive-motion deadlines.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Vernon D. Oliver
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
DECIDED	January 27, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-CV-520 (VDO)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Initial review of an amended pro se prisoner complaint filed in forma pauperis under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court reviewed the prisoner complaint and was required to dismiss claims that were frivolous, malicious, failed to state a claim, or sought monetary relief from an immune defendant. For plausibility, the court accepted well-pleaded factual allegations as true, drew reasonable inferences in the plaintiff’s favor, and determined whether the allegations stated a plausible entitlement to relief, while disregarding conclusory allegations and legal conclusions.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	district court opinion; precedential status not stated
PARTIES	Romeo Elijah Martinez v. Angel Quiros, Moore, Robert Martin, Elina Morozov, Mariya Zea, Cheryl Spano Lonis

TOPICS

prisoners rights

section 1983

civil rights

constitutional law

pleadings

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

constitutional law

prisoner litigation

federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the amended complaint plausibly alleged Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference to serious medical needs against Morozov, Zea, and Spano Lonis.
2. Whether the amended complaint alleged the personal involvement of Quiros, Moore, and Martin sufficient to support individual-capacity damages claims under § 1983.
3. Whether official-capacity claims seeking only monetary damages were barred by the Eleventh Amendment.

HOLDINGS

1. At the initial-review stage, the allegations that Morozov, Zea, and Spano Lonis inadequately treated or delayed treatment for serious medical conditions and prolonged pain plausibly alleged deliberate indifference to serious medical needs.
2. The amended complaint failed to allege the personal involvement of Quiros, Moore, and Martin because vague assertions that they knew about Martinez's medical problems and did nothing were insufficient.
3. The official-capacity claims against all defendants were dismissed because the Eleventh Amendment bars monetary damages against state officials in their official capacities.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To state a claim for deliberate indifference to a serious medical need, Plaintiff must satisfy an objective and subjective requirement.” (III.A)

“A plaintiff seeking monetary damages from a defendant must allege facts that establish the personal involvement of that defendant in the alleged constitutional violation.” (III.A.2)

“The Eleventh Amendment bars a federal court from holding Department of Correction employees liable in their official capacity for money damages.” (III.B)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Martinez, a sentenced inmate at Osborn Correctional Institution, alleged that medical providers ignored or inadequately treated his diabetes, pain, spinal and orthopedic conditions, and other medical complaints. He alleged that he fell from his top bunk multiple times after requests for a bottom-bunk pass, medication, a cane, and other treatment were denied or delayed. He further alleged that supervisory officials knew of his complaints but did not act, although he provided few details about when, where, or how he notified them.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Martinez originally filed claims for deliberate indifference to medical needs. The court dismissed the original complaint on initial review because it did not allege how specific defendants were personally involved, but granted leave to amend. After Martinez filed an amended complaint, the court allowed Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claims to proceed against three medical defendants in their individual capacities, dismissed the official-capacity claims against all defendants, and dismissed the individual-capacity claims against the commissioner, deputy warden, and warden without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Giraldo v. Kessler, 694 F.3d 161, 164 (2d Cir. 2012)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Faber v. Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 648 F.3d 98, 104 (2d Cir. 2011)
- Matheson v. Deutsche Bank National Trust Co., 706 F. App'x 24, 26 (2d Cir. 2017)
- Triestman v. Federal Bureau of Prisons, 470 F.3d 471, 474-75 (2d Cir. 2006) (per curiam)
- Wynder v. McMahon, 360 F.3d 73, 79 n.11 (2d Cir. 2004)
- Spavone v. New York State Department of Correctional Services, 719 F.3d 127, 138 (2d Cir. 2013)
- Hathaway v. Coughlin, 99 F.3d 550, 553 (2d Cir. 1996)
- Chance v. Armstrong, 143 F.3d 698, 702 (2d Cir. 1998)
- El-Hanafi v. United States, No. 13-CV-2072, 2015 WL 72804, at *15 (S.D.N.Y. Jan. 6, 2015)
- Salahuddin v. Goord, 467 F.3d 263, 279-80 (2d Cir. 2006)
- Kravitz v. Purcell, 87 F.4th 111, 119, 122 (2d Cir. 2023)
- Burns v. Lupis, No. 3:23-CV-23 (KAD), 2024 WL 1435631, at *4 (D. Conn. Apr. 3, 2024)
- Wright v. Smith, 21 F.3d 496, 501 (2d Cir. 1994)
- Tangreti v. Bachmann, 983 F.3d 609, 620 (2d Cir. 2020)
- Muniz v. Cook, No. 3:20-CV-1533 (MPS), 2021 WL 5919818, at *6 (D. Conn. Dec. 15, 2021)
- Rooks v. Santiago, No. 3:20-CV-299 (MPS), 2021 WL 2206600, at *3 (D. Conn. June 1, 2021)
- Kelly v. New York State Unified Court System, No. 21-1633, 2022 WL 1210665, at *1 (2d Cir. 2022)
- Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy v. Stewart, 563 U.S. 247, 254 (2011)
- Ex parte Young, 209 U.S. 123 (1908)
- Silva v. Farrish, 47 F.4th 78, 84 (2d Cir. 2022)
- Kentucky v. Graham, 473 U.S. 159, 169 (1985)