

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
OHIO, EASTERN DIVISION

Jessie Adams v. Sergio Jimenez

Adams · No. 2:26-cv-96 · Decided February 26, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio grants Jessie Adams leave to proceed in forma pauperis. Following screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), the magistrate judge recommends dismissal because the complaint's allegations concerning ex parte communications, conspiracy, and due process violations lack sufficient factual content to state a plausible claim under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a).

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Chelsey M. Vascura
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
DECIDED	February 26, 2026
DOCKET	2:26-cv-96
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff sought leave to proceed in forma pauperis and filed a pro se civil complaint. The magistrate judge granted in forma pauperis status, screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), and recommended dismissal for failure to state a claim.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), the court must dismiss an in forma pauperis action that is frivolous, malicious, or fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. Failure-to-state-a-claim screening applies the Rule 12(b)(6) plausibility standard, while pro se pleadings are held to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown

TOPICS

pleadings

motions to dismiss

civil procedure

due process

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

constitutional law

civil rights

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated a plausible claim for relief under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a) and 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).
2. Whether the plaintiff should be permitted to proceed in forma pauperis.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to state a claim because its conclusory allegations of ex parte communications, conspiracy, and due process violations did not provide sufficient factual content or context to permit a reasonable inference of liability.
2. Plaintiff's request to proceed in forma pauperis was granted.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To state a claim upon which relief may be granted, a plaintiff must satisfy the basic federal pleading requirements set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a).”

“Thus, Rule 8(a) “imposes legal and factual demands on the authors of complaints.””

“Instead, to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, “a complaint must contain sufficient factual matter to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.””

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged only that, upon information and belief, Defendant engaged in ex parte communications, conspired with others in violation of due process, and that federal jurisdiction was based on federal law. The complaint did not identify how the communications were improper, the subject of the alleged conspiracy, the manner in which due process was violated, or any resulting injury. The court concluded that these allegations lacked sufficient factual content to support a reasonable inference that Defendant violated Plaintiff's rights.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Jessie Adams submitted a complaint and a request to proceed in forma pauperis. The court granted the request and conducted the statutory initial screening. The magistrate judge issued an Order and Report and Recommendation recommending that the complaint be dismissed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), subject to objections and de novo review by the district judge.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992)
- Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 324 (1989)
- Hill v. Lappin, 630 F.3d 468, 470-71 (6th Cir. 2010)
- 16630 Southfield Ltd., P'Ship v. Flagstar Bank, F.S.B., 727 F.3d 502, 503-04 (6th Cir. 2013)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Garrett v. Belmont Cty. Sheriff's Dep't, 374 F. App'x 612, 614 (6th Cir. 2010)
- Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972)
- Frengler v. Gen. Motors, 482 F. App'x 975, 976-77 (6th Cir. 2012)
- Wells v. Brown, 891 F.2d 591, 594 (6th Cir. 1989)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007)
- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140 (1985)
- United States v. Walters, 638 F.2d 947 (6th Cir. 1981)

OPINION

Adams

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

EASTERN DIVISION

JESSIE ADAMS,

Plaintiff, v. Civil Action 2:26-cv-96 Chief Judge Sarah D. Morrison Magistrate Judge Chelsey M. Vascura

SERGIO JIMENEZ,

Defendant.

ORDER and REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Plaintiff, Jessie Adams, a California resident proceeding without the assistance of counsel, has submitted a request to file a civil action in forma pauperis. (ECF No. 1.) The Court GRANTS Plaintiff's request to proceed in forma pauperis. All judicial officers who render services in this action shall do so as if the costs had been prepaid. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a). This matter is also before the Court for the initial screen of Plaintiff's Complaint (ECF No. 1-1) under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e) (2) to identify cognizable claims and to recommend dismissal of Plaintiff's Complaint, or any portion of it, which is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e) (2). Having performed the initial screen, for the reasons below, the undersigned RECOMMENDS that the Court DISMISS this action under § 1915(e)(2)(B) for failure to state a claim on which relief can be granted.

I. STANDARD OF REVIEW

Congress enacted 28 U.S.C. § 1915, the federal in forma pauperis statute, seeking to “lower judicial access barriers to the indigent.” *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992). In doing so, however, “Congress recognized that ‘a litigant whose filing fees and court costs are assumed by the public, unlike a paying litigant, lacks an economic incentive to refrain from filing frivolous, malicious, or repetitive lawsuits.’” *Id.* at 31 (quoting *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 324 (1989)). To address this concern, Congress included subsection (e):

(2) Notwithstanding any filing fee, or any portion thereof, that may have been paid, the court shall dismiss the case at any time if the court determines that— * * * (B) the action or appeal— (i) is frivolous or malicious; [or] (ii) fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(i) & (ii); *Denton*, 504 U.S. at 31. Thus, § 1915(e) requires sua sponte dismissal of an action upon the Court’s determination that the action is frivolous or malicious, or upon determination that the action fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. To state a claim upon which relief may be granted, a plaintiff must satisfy the basic federal pleading requirements set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a). See also *Hill v. Lappin*, 630 F.3d 468, 470–71 (6th Cir. 2010) (applying Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) standards to review under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915A and 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii)). Under Rule 8(a)(2), a complaint must contain a “short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a)(2). Thus, Rule 8(a) “imposes legal and factual demands on the authors of complaints.” *16630 Southfield Ltd., P’Ship v. Flagstar Bank, F.S.B.*, 727 F.3d 502, 503 (6th Cir. 2013). Although this pleading standard does not require “detailed factual allegations, a pleading that offers labels and conclusions or a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action” is insufficient. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009) (cleaned up). A complaint will not “suffice if it tenders naked assertion devoid of further factual enhancement.” *Id.* (cleaned up). Instead, to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, “a complaint must contain sufficient factual matter to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” *Id.* (cleaned up). Facial plausibility is established “when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Id.* “The plausibility of an inference depends on a host of considerations, including common sense and the strength of competing explanations for the defendant’s conduct.” *Flagstar Bank*, 727 F.3d at 504 (citations omitted). Further, the Court holds pro se complaints “to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.” *Garrett v. Belmont Cty. Sheriff’s Dep’t*, 374 F. App’x 612, 614 (6th Cir. 2010) (quoting *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972)). This lenient treatment, however, has limits; “courts should not have to guess at the nature of the claim asserted.” *Frengler v. Gen. Motors*, 482 F. App’x 975, 976–77 (6th Cir. 2012) (quoting *Wells v. Brown*, 891 F.2d 591, 594 (6th Cir. 1989)).

II. ANALYSIS

Plaintiff’s allegations in their entirety are as follows: “1. Upon information and belief, Defendant had ex parte communication with certain individuals, 2. Defendant conspired with others in

violation of due process, 3. The Basis for federal court jurisdiction is federal law.” (Compl., ECF No. 1-1.) Plaintiff does not specify how any alleged ex parte communications were improper, the subject of any alleged conspiracy, how her due process rights were violated, or how she was injured in any way as a result of Defendant’s actions. The undersigned concludes that Plaintiff’s Complaint provides insufficient factual content or context from which the Court could reasonably infer that Defendant violated Plaintiff’s rights. Thus, Plaintiff has failed to satisfy the basic federal pleading requirements set forth in Rule 8(a). *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007). For these reasons, it is RECOMMENDED that Plaintiff’s Complaint be DISMISSED pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted.

III. DISPOSITION

For these reasons, Plaintiff’s motion for leave to proceed in forma pauperis (ECF No. 1) is GRANTED. The undersigned RECOMMENDS that Plaintiff’s Complaint be DISMISSED under § 1915(e)(2)(B) for failure to state a claim on which relief can be granted.

PROCEDURE ON OBJECTIONS

If any party objects to this Report and Recommendation, that party may, within fourteen (14) days of the date of this Report, file and serve on all parties written objections to those specific proposed findings or recommendations to which objection is made, together with supporting authority for the objection(s). A District Judge of this Court shall make a de novo determination of those portions of the Report or specified proposed findings or recommendations to which objection is made. Upon proper objections, a District Judge of this Court may accept, reject, or modify, in whole or in part, the findings or recommendations made herein, may receive further evidence or may recommit this matter to the Magistrate Judge with instructions. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1). The parties are specifically advised that failure to object to the Report and Recommendation will result in a waiver of the right to have the District Judge review the Report and Recommendation de novo, and also operates as a waiver of the right to appeal the decision of the District Court adopting the Report and Recommendation. See *Thomas v. Arn*, 474 U.S. 140 (1985); *United States v. Walters*, 638 F.2d 947 (6th Cir. 1981).

IT IS SO ORDERED. /s/ Chelsey M. Vascura

CHELSEY M. VASCURA

UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE