

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Lorenzo Lee Wriden v. R. Arias, S. Verno, J. Rayes, J. Velasquez, A. Lara, D. Rivera, H. Verduzco, J. Price, C. Marciel, J. Raygoza, C. Ponce, H. Rodriguez, O. Valdez, J. Torres, M. Ruelas, M. Marquez, J. Martinez, J. Ferrel, E. Salazar, A. Gray, E. Hernandez, C. Lopez, B. Villalobos, B. Thorpe

Case No. 3:24-cv-1240 JLS (LR) · No. 3:24-cv-1240 JLS (LR) · Decided February 5, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of California dismisses Lorenzo Lee Wriden’s Second Amended Complaint for failure to state a claim under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B) and 1915A(b). The court analyzes claims involving alleged Eighth Amendment violations, First Amendment retaliation, conspiracy, due process, and equal protection arising from events at Calipatria State Prison. The dismissal addresses multiple counts and defendants, including allegations concerning COVID-19 policies, disciplinary reports, grievances, and prison job assignments.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Janis L. Sammartino
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of California
DECIDED	February 5, 2026
DOCKET	3:24-cv-1240 JLS (LR)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Screening of a prisoner’s second amended complaint filed under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 while proceeding in forma pauperis.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B) and 1915A(b), the court must dismiss a prisoner’s in forma pauperis complaint that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks damages from an immune defendant. The failure-to-state-a-claim standard under § 1915(e)(2)(B) (ii) is the same as the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) standard, requiring sufficient factual matter to state a facially plausible claim.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished federal district court screening order; persuasive but not precedential beyond the case.
PARTIES	Lorenzo Lee Wriden v. R. Arias, S. Verno, J. Rayes, J. Velasquez, A. Lara, D. Rivera, H. Verduzco, J. Price, C. Marciel, J. Raygoza, C. Ponce, H. Rodriguez, O. Valdez, J. Torres, M. Ruelas, M. Marquez, J. Martinez, J. Ferrel, E. Salazar, A. Gray, E. Hernandez, C. Lopez, B. Villalobos, B. Thorpe

TOPICS

prisoners rights

section 1983

motions to dismiss

first amendment

due process

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

constitutional law

prisoner litigation

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the second amended complaint stated a plausible claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether Plaintiff plausibly alleged Eighth Amendment violations based on prison conditions, loss of a prison job or educational opportunities, or other alleged conduct.
3. Whether Plaintiff plausibly alleged First Amendment retaliation based on prison grievances, staff-misconduct complaints, or communications with internal affairs.
4. Whether the alleged disciplinary charges and proceedings deprived Plaintiff of a protected liberty or property interest without due process.
5. Whether Plaintiff plausibly alleged an Equal Protection Clause violation or a § 1983 conspiracy.

HOLDINGS

1. The second amended complaint failed to state a claim because its allegations did not plausibly connect the named defendants to violations of rights secured by the Constitution or federal law.
2. Plaintiff failed to state an Eighth Amendment claim because he did not plausibly allege an objectively serious deprivation, deliberate indifference, or cruel and unusual punishment.
3. Plaintiff failed to state First Amendment retaliation claims because he generally did not allege facts showing defendants knew of his protected conduct, acted because of that conduct, lacked a legitimate penological purpose, or chilled his First Amendment activity.
4. Plaintiff failed to state due process claims because he did not plausibly allege deprivation of a protected liberty or property interest, and false disciplinary charges or dissatisfaction with prison grievance procedures do not independently establish a constitutional violation.
5. Plaintiff failed to state Equal Protection Clause claims because he did not allege membership in a protected class or intentional disparate treatment of similarly situated prisoners without a rational basis.

6. Plaintiff failed to state a conspiracy claim because he did not allege specific facts showing an agreement or meeting of the minds and did not establish an underlying constitutional violation.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“For the reasons discussed below, the Court DISMISSES the SAC for failure to state a claim.” (Opinion at 1)

“The Court DISMISSES Plaintiff’s Second Amended Complaint (ECF No. 9) WITHOUT LEAVE TO AMEND for failing to state a claim upon which relief may be granted” (Opinion at 68-69)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, an inmate at Calipatria State Prison, alleged twenty-one counts against prison staff based on events occurring between 2020 and 2024. The claims principally concerned allegedly false rule-violation reports, prison grievances, alleged retaliation, disciplinary proceedings, prison employment and educational opportunities, prison conditions, and access to legal materials. The court found that the allegations were largely conclusory and did not plausibly establish the elements of the asserted constitutional claims.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court granted Plaintiff leave to proceed in forma pauperis and dismissed his original complaint for failure to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 and for failure to state a claim. The court dismissed the first amended complaint for failure to state a claim, then screened the second amended complaint and dismissed it in its entirety without leave to amend.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Lopez v. Smith, 203 F.3d 1122, 1126-27 (9th Cir. 2000)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 676-78, 686-87 (2009)
- Tsao v. Desert Palace, Inc., 698 F.3d 1128, 1138 (9th Cir. 2012)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 834, 841 (1994)
- Rhodes v. Robinson, 408 F.3d 559, 567-69 (9th Cir. 2005)
- Pratt v. Rowland, 65 F.3d 802, 806-08 (9th Cir. 1995)
- Huskey v. City of San Jose, 204 F.3d 893, 899 (9th Cir. 2000)
- Sandin v. Conner, 515 U.S. 472, 486-87 (1995)
- Ramirez v. Galaza, 334 F.3d 850, 860 (9th Cir. 2003)
- Sprouse v. Babcock, 870 F.2d 450, 452 (8th Cir. 1989)
- Village of Willowbrook v. Olech, 528 U.S. 562, 564 (2000) (per curiam)
- Crowe v. County of San Diego, 608 F.3d 406, 440 (9th Cir. 2010)
- Avalos v. Bacca, 596 F.3d 583, 592 (9th Cir. 2010)

- Lewis v. Casey, 518 U.S. 343, 349-51, 353 n.3, 354-55 (1996)
- Rosati v. Igbinoso, 791 F.3d 1037, 1039 (9th Cir. 2015)

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