

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA

Newman v. Wash et al.

Newman · No. 3:25cv970 DRL-SJF · Decided April 10, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana screened Donald Newman's prisoner complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The court granted Newman leave to proceed against Officer Wash for Eighth Amendment excessive-force and deliberate-indifference-to-medical-needs claims arising from a TASER incident, dismissed the Miami Correctional Facility as a defendant, and dismissed all other claims. The court also directed service and ordered the Indiana Department of Correction to provide identifying information for Officer Wash if necessary.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Damon R. Leichty
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana
DECIDED	April 10, 2026
DOCKET	3:25cv970 DRL-SJF
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Screening of a pro se prisoner complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court reviewed the merits of the prisoner complaint and was required to dismiss claims that were frivolous or malicious, failed to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or sought monetary relief from an immune defendant. At the screening stage, the court accepted well-pleaded allegations and gave Newman the benefit of reasonable inferences.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court opinion; precedential status not stated
PARTIES	Donald Newman v. Wash et al., Miami Correctional Facility

TOPICS

- cruel and unusual punishment
- prisoners rights
- section 1983
- pleadings
- service of process

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

constitutional law

prisoner litigation

civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Newman plausibly alleged an Eighth Amendment excessive-force claim against Officer Wash.
2. Whether Newman plausibly alleged that Officer Wash was deliberately indifferent to a serious medical need by denying treatment for his back injury.
3. Whether Newman plausibly alleged deliberate indifference based on the removal of TASER probes without medical assistance.
4. Whether the Miami Correctional Facility is a suable person or policy-making body under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

HOLDINGS

1. Newman plausibly alleged an Eighth Amendment excessive-force claim against Officer Wash based on the allegation that Wash fired a TASER at him while he was handcuffed, unable to stand because of a back injury, and requesting medical assistance.
2. Newman plausibly alleged an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Officer Wash for denying him medical treatment after he injured his back and could not stand.
3. Newman plausibly alleged an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against Officer Wash based on removing the TASER probes without assistance from medical staff.
4. The Miami Correctional Facility may not be sued under § 1983 because it is a building rather than a person or policy-making body capable of being sued for constitutional violations.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A document filed pro se is to be liberally construed, and a pro se complaint, however inartfully pleaded, must be held to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.”

“The “core requirement” of an excessive force claim is that the defendant “used force not in a good-faith effort to maintain or restore discipline, but maliciously and sadistically to cause harm.””

“Rather, they are entitled to “reasonable measures to meet a substantial risk of serious harm.””

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Newman alleged that on October 13, 2025, he sought medical treatment after throwing out his back and being unable to stand. He alleged that Officer Wash pointed a TASER at him, had him handcuffed, ordered him to stand and return to his cell, and then fired the TASER when Newman said he could not stand. Newman further alleged that Wash and other officers removed the TASER probes without medical assistance and that Wash denied his requests for medical care.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Donald Newman, a prisoner proceeding without counsel, filed a complaint alleging that Officer Wash used excessive force by tasing him and denied him medical treatment. On screening, the court granted Newman leave to proceed against Officer Wash on three Eighth Amendment claims, dismissed all other claims, and dismissed the Miami Correctional Facility as a non-suable entity. The court directed service and ordered the Indiana Department of Correction to provide identifying information for Officer Wash if necessary.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)
- McCottrell v. White, 933 F.3d 651, 662 (7th Cir. 2019)
- Hendrickson v. Cooper, 589 F.3d 887, 890 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 104 (1976)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 834 (1994)
- Greeno v. Daley, 414 F.3d 645, 653 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Board v. Farnham, 394 F.3d 469, 478 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Walker v. Wexford Health Sources, Inc., 940 F.3d 954, 965 (7th Cir. 2019)
- Forbes v. Edgar, 112 F.3d 262, 267 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Johnson v. Doughty, 433 F.3d 1001, 1013 (7th Cir. 2006)
- Smith v. Knox County Jail, 666 F.3d 1037, 1040 (7th Cir. 2012)