

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS

Joshua Young v. Latoya Hughes, Chad Jennings, William Loy, C/O
Hemrich, and C/O Steven

Young · No. 25-cv-2191-DWD · Decided December 17, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois conducted preliminary screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A of Joshua Young’s amended § 1983 complaint concerning allegedly unsafe drinking water at Robinson Correctional Center. The court allowed Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claims to proceed against Latoya Hughes and Chad Jennings, while dismissing claims against William Loy, C/O Hemrich, and C/O Steven. The order directed service on Hughes and Jennings and terminated the other defendants.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
WRITING FOR THE COURT	David W. Dugan
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
DECIDED	December 17, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-2191-DWD
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Screening of a prisoner's amended civil-rights 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's complaint that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks damages from an immune defendant. At the screening stage, allegations in a pro se complaint are liberally construed, and the complaint must contain enough facts to state a plausible claim.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court memorandum and order; generally nonprecedential.
PARTIES	Joshua Young v. Latoya Hughes, Chad Jennings, William Loy, C/O Hemrich, C/O Steven

TOPICS

prisoners rights

section 1983

cruel and unusual punishment

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Civil rights

Prisoner litigation

Constitutional law

Civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Young's allegations that Jennings and Hughes knowingly failed to remedy recurring unsafe or inadequate drinking-water conditions stated plausible Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether the allegations against Hemrich and Steven, based primarily on a single interaction involving discolored water, plausibly stated deliberate indifference.
3. Whether Young stated a claim against Loy where the amended complaint did not describe Loy's role in the alleged constitutional violation.

HOLDINGS

1. Young plausibly stated Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claims against Jennings and Hughes based on allegations that they knew of recurring inadequate drinking-water conditions and failed to remedy them.
2. Young failed to state a plausible deliberate-indifference claim against Hemrich and Steven because the allegations concerned only a single interaction and showed that Steven attempted to obtain alternative water.
3. Young failed to state a claim against Loy because the amended complaint did not allege any facts describing Loy's personal involvement.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Eighth Amendment imposes duties on prison officials to “provide humane conditions of confinement” and to “ensure that inmates receive adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care.”” (Discussion)

“ “[P]risoners are not entitled to Fiji Water on demand, but on the other end of the spectrum, a defendant cannot purposefully deny water until a prisoner is on the brink of death[.]” ” (Discussion)

“ “[N]othing in the Constitution requires that each prisoner be provided with clean, cold, warm, or any other form of running water in his cell[.]” ” (Discussion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Young, an Illinois prisoner at Robinson Correctional Center, alleged recurring periods in 2024 and 2025 when the facility's drinking water was dark brown or otherwise contaminated. He alleged that Jennings knew about the problem through personal conversations and grievances but failed to provide adequate alternative water, and that Hughes failed to investigate or remediate the problem despite grievances and Illinois Environmental Protection

Agency documentation. Young claimed that the water problems caused skin conditions, discoloration of his legs and feet, and breathing difficulty.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Young originally filed a pro se multi-plaintiff action. The plaintiffs elected to proceed independently, and Young filed an amended complaint alleging that prison staff failed to provide safe drinking water. On preliminary review, the court allowed Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claims to proceed against Hughes and Jennings, dismissed the claims against Loy, Hemrich, and Steven, and directed service on Hughes and Jennings.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Rodriguez v. Plymouth Ambulance Serv., 577 F.3d 816, 821 (7th Cir. 2009)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Owens v. Duncan, 788 F. App'x 371, 374 (7th Cir. 2019)
- Gutierrez v. Peters, 111 F.3d 1364, 1374 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Black v. Lane, 22 F.3d 1395, 1401 n.8 (7th Cir. 1994)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 832 (1994)
- Hardeman v. Curran, 933 F.3d 816, 821, 823-24 (7th Cir. 2019)
- Jelinek v. Roth, 1994 WL 447266, at *2 (7th Cir. Aug. 19, 1994)
- Ramirez v. Beatty, 1994 WL 758, at *3 (7th Cir. Mar. 8, 1994)
- Artis v. Neal, 2025 WL 2773381, at *2 (N.D. Ind. Sept. 29, 2025)
- Sims v. Scanlon, 2023 WL 4028984, at *5-6 (S.D. Ind. June 15, 2023)
- Williams v. Collins, 2015 WL 4572311, at *4 (N.D. Ill. July 29, 2015)