

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

Shawn David Dinwiddie v. Walmart Inc., City of Prairie Du Chien,
City of Prairie Du Chien Police Department, Crawford County
Sheriff's Office, and Wisconsin State Patrol

Dinwiddie · No. 25-cv-1043-wmc · Decided January 15, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin dismissed Shawn David Dinwiddie's § 1983 complaint and emergency motion without prejudice for failure to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8. The court found the allegations too vague, granted leave to amend by February 3, 2026, and stated that failure to amend would result in dismissal with prejudice for failure to prosecute.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	William M. Conley
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	January 15, 2026
DOCKET	25-cv-1043-wmc
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A self-represented plaintiff filed a 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint and an emergency motion for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction. Before addressing injunctive relief, the district court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), the court accepted the allegations as true and construed them generously, applying a less stringent standard to the self-represented plaintiff's pleading. The court dismissed claims that were legally frivolous or malicious, failed to state a claim, or sought money damages from an immune defendant.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court opinion

TOPICS

pleadings

civil procedure

section 1983

due process

injunctions

PRACTICE AREAS

Civil procedure

Civil rights litigation

Constitutional law

Federal pleading and screening

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint satisfied Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 by providing sufficient factual notice of what each defendant allegedly did to violate plaintiff's rights.
2. Whether the complaint should be dismissed at screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2).
3. Whether plaintiff's emergency motion for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction could be addressed before the complaint satisfied the screening and pleading requirements.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to satisfy Rule 8 because it did not provide sufficient factual detail or notice regarding what happened, when it happened, or what each defendant allegedly did or failed to do.
2. The complaint was dismissed without prejudice at the screening stage because it failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted due to its noncompliance with Rule 8.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Even under this lenient standard, however, plaintiff’s allegations are too vague to meet the pleading standard of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8, which requires a plaintiff to provide notice to the defendants of what plaintiff believes each of the defendants did to violate his rights.”

“Accordingly, the court will dismiss plaintiff’s complaint without prejudice and give him a brief opportunity to file an amended complaint that fixes the problems with his claim.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Shawn David Dinwiddie alleged that Walmart, the City of Prairie Du Chien and its police department, the Crawford County Sheriff's Office, and the Wisconsin State Patrol provided or relied on false information in an employment background screening. He claimed that this conduct violated his due process rights. The complaint did not specify what occurred, when it occurred, or what each defendant did or failed to do.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff alleged that the defendants provided or relied on false information in an employment screening and thereby violated his due process rights. The court found that the complaint was too vague to satisfy Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8, dismissed the complaint and emergency motion without prejudice, and allowed plaintiff until February 3, 2026, to file an amended complaint. The court stated that failure to amend would result in dismissal with prejudice for failure to prosecute under Rule 41(b).

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Arnett v. Webster, 658 F.3d 742, 751 (7th Cir. 2011)

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