

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Daniel C. Ramsey v. C. Stanback, et al.

Ramsey v. Stanback · No. 2:25-cv-2930-JDP (P) · Decided October 22, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California dismissed Daniel C. Ramsey’s complaint against correctional officer C. Stanback and warden R. St. Andre with leave to amend because it asserted unrelated claims against multiple defendants. The court granted Ramsey’s application to proceed in forma pauperis and allowed 30 days to file an amended complaint or a notice of voluntary dismissal. The order explains the screening and pleading requirements applicable to an in forma pauperis action.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jeremy D. Peterson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of California
DECIDED	October 22, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-2930-JDP (P)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se prisoner civil-rights action screened under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e); the court dismissed the complaint with leave to amend and granted plaintiff's application to proceed in forma pauperis.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Statutory screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e); the court assessed whether the complaint was frivolous, malicious, failed to state a claim, or sought monetary relief from an immune defendant, applying the plausibility standard under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential district-court order
PARTIES	Daniel C. Ramsey v. C. Stanback, R. St. Andre

TOPICS

- joinder
- pleadings
- civil procedure
- prisoners rights

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

prisoner civil rights

constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint could join unrelated claims against different defendants in a single action.
2. Whether the complaint satisfied the federal pleading and screening requirements applicable to an in forma pauperis action.
3. Whether plaintiff should be granted leave to amend after dismissal of the improperly joined complaint.

HOLDINGS

1. Unrelated claims against different defendants cannot proceed together in a single action; plaintiff must pursue them in separate suits or amend to address the joinder deficiency.
2. A federal court must screen a complaint filed by a claimant seeking to proceed in forma pauperis and dismiss any portion that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant.
3. The complaint was dismissed with leave to amend, and plaintiff was given thirty days to file either an amended complaint or a notice of voluntary dismissal without prejudice.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Multiple, unrelated claims against more than one defendant belong in separate suits.” (2)

“The amended complaint will supersede the current complaint.” (2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff, a disabled inmate at High Desert State Prison, alleged that correctional officer C. Stanback failed to ensure that his cell was adequately cleaned. In a separate incident, plaintiff alleged that videos and pictures sent by his family were removed from his tablet and attributed responsibility to warden R. St. Andre. The complaint asserted an Eighth Amendment claim concerning cell cleaning and a First Amendment claim concerning the removed media.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a complaint asserting unrelated claims against a correctional officer and a prison warden, along with an application to proceed in forma pauperis. The district court screened the complaint, found that the unrelated claims could not proceed together, dismissed the complaint without prejudice and with leave to amend, and granted in forma pauperis status.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678-679 (2009)
- Kobold v. Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center, 832 F.3d 1024, 1038 (9th Cir. 2016)
- Nagrampa v. MailCoups, Inc., 469 F.3d 1257, 1264 n.2 (9th Cir. 2006) (en banc)
- Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972) (per curiam)
- Hayes v. Idaho Correctional Center, 849 F.3d 1204, 1208 (9th Cir. 2017)
- Bruns v. National Credit Union Administration, 122 F.3d 1251, 1257 (9th Cir. 1997)
- Ivey v. Board of Regents, 673 F.2d 266, 268 (9th Cir. 1982)
- George v. Smith, 507 F.3d 605, 607 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Lacey v. Maricopa County, 693 F.3d 896, 907 n.1 (9th Cir. 2012) (en banc)

OPINION

Stanback

PER CURIAM.

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8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 11 DANIEL C. RAMSEY, Case No. 2:25-cv-2930-JDP (P) 12 Plaintiff, 13 v. ORDER 14 C.
STANBACK, et al., 15 Defendants. 16 17 18 Plaintiff brings this action against High Desert State
Prison correctional officer C. 19 Stanback and warden R. St. Andre. The complaint contains two
unrelated claims. I will dismiss 20 the complaint with leave to amend and give plaintiff an
opportunity to remedy this deficiency. 21 Plaintiff also filed an application to proceed in forma
pauperis, which makes the required 22 showing and is granted. 23 Screening and Pleading
Requirements 24 A federal court must screen the complaint of any claimant seeking permission to
proceed 25 in forma pauperis. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e). The court must identify any cognizable
claims and 26 dismiss any portion of the complaint that is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a
claim upon 27 28 1 which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is
immune from such 2 relief. Id. 3 A complaint must contain a short and plain statement that
plaintiff is entitled to relief, 4 Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a)(2), and provide “enough facts to state a claim to
relief that is plausible on its 5 face,” Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). The
plausibility standard does not 6 require detailed allegations, but legal conclusions do not suffice.
See Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 7 662, 678 (2009). If the allegations “do not permit the court to
infer more than the mere 8 possibility of misconduct,” the complaint states no claim. Id. at 679.
The complaint need not 9 identify “a precise legal theory.” Kobold v. Good Samaritan Reg’l Med.
Ctr., 832 F.3d 1024, 10 1038 (9th Cir. 2016). Instead, what plaintiff must state is a “claim”—a set
of “allegations that 11 give rise to an enforceable right to relief.” Nagrampa v. MailCoups, Inc.,
469 F.3d 1257, 1264 12 n.2 (9th Cir. 2006) (en banc) (citations omitted). 13 The court must

construe a pro se litigant's complaint liberally. See *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972) (per curiam). The court may dismiss a pro se litigant's complaint "if it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of his claim which would entitle him to relief." *Hayes v. Idaho Corr. Ctr.*, 849 F.3d 1204, 1208 (9th Cir. 2017). However, "a liberal interpretation of a civil rights complaint may not supply essential elements of the claim that were not initially pled." *Bruns v. Nat'l Credit Union Admin.*, 122 F.3d 1251, 1257 (9th Cir. 1997) (quoting *Ivey v. Bd. of Regents*, 673 F.2d 266, 268 (9th Cir. 1982)).

Analysis

The complaint contains allegations about two separate events. The first incident took place in September 2024. ECF No. 1 at 3. Defendant officer Stanback was responsible for ensuring that plaintiff's cell was properly cleaned daily because plaintiff is a disabled inmate who is unable to clean his cell. Id. Plaintiff alleges that on the occasions Stanback did have the cell cleaned, the cleaning job was substandard. Id. Plaintiff alleges that Stanback's actions violate the Eighth Amendment. Id. In an unrelated claim, plaintiff claims that in December 2024 he received videos and pictures from his family on this tablet, but that an unknown correctional officer removed the videos and pictures from his tablet. Id. at 4. Plaintiff alleges that defendant 1 | warden St. Andre is responsible for ensuring that all mail is delivered to prisoners and not 2 | improperly removed. /d. Plaintiff alleges that St. Andre violated his First Amendment rights. Id. 3 Plaintiffs claims against defendants Stanback and St. Andre cannot proceed together. 4 | Multiple, unrelated claims against more than one defendant belong in separate suits. See *George v. Smith*, 507 F.3d 605, 607 (7th Cir. 2007). Plaintiff may file an amended complaint that 6 | addresses this concern. He is advised that the amended complaint will supersede the current 7 | complaint. See *Lacey v. Maricopa Cnty*, 693 F.3d 896, 907 n.1 (9th Cir. 2012) (en banc). The 8 | amended complaint should be titled "First Amended Complaint" and refer to the appropriate case 9 | number. 10 Accordingly, it is ORDERED that: 11 1. Plaintiffs complaint, ECF No. 1, is DISMISSED with leave to amend. 12 2. Plaintiffs application to proceed in forma pauperis, ECF No. 2 is GRANTED. 13 3. Within thirty days from service of this order, plaintiff shall file either (1) an amended 14 | complaint or (2) notice of voluntary dismissal of this action without prejudice. 15 4. Failure to timely file either an amended complaint or notice of voluntary dismissal may 16 result in the imposition of sanctions, including a recommendation that this action be dismissed 17 || with prejudice pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b). 18 5. The Clerk of Court shall send plaintiff a complaint form with this order. 19 20 IT IS SO ORDERED. Dated: _ October 22, 2025 Q_——_

22 JEREMY D., PETERSON

54 UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

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