

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Furtado v. Furtado

Furtado · No. 25-cv-4070 (JMC) · Decided December 8, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Columbia dismissed a pro se complaint in which the plaintiff appeared to be suing himself. The court held that the complaint failed to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2) because it did not identify a cognizable claim, the alleged harm or responsible party, or a basis for federal jurisdiction. The dismissal was without prejudice, and the plaintiff was granted 30 days to file an amended complaint.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Columbia
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jia M. Cobb
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Columbia
DECIDED	December 8, 2025
DOCKET	25-cv-4070 (JMC)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court sua sponte dismissed a pro se civil complaint for failure to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2), while granting leave to file an amended complaint within 30 days.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court applied the requirements of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2) to the complaint and exercised its authority to dismiss sua sponte for failure to comply with procedural rules.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published memorandum opinion

TOPICS

- pleadings
- civil procedure
- subject matter jurisdiction

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- federal jurisdiction
- pleading

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint complied with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2)'s requirement that it contain a short and plain statement showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.
2. Whether the district court could dismiss the complaint sua sponte for failure to comply with Rule 8(a)(2).

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to comply with Rule 8(a)(2) because it did not identify a cognizable claim, the alleged harm, the person who caused the harm, the basis for entitlement to relief, or an apparent jurisdictional basis.
2. The court had authority to dismiss the complaint sua sponte because the plaintiff failed to comply with procedural rules, and dismissal was appropriate under Rule 8(a)(2).

KEY QUOTATIONS

“In short, even construing the complaint liberally, the Court is unable to identify what cognizable harm Furtado is alleging, who caused him that harm, how the law entitles him to any relief, and why this Court has jurisdiction to consider the claim at all.” (at 1)

“Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2) requires civil complaints to include “a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.”” (at 1)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Pro se Plaintiff Rockie Furtado filed a complaint that appeared to name himself as both plaintiff and defendant. The complaint referred to a purported strategy to keep the plaintiff living as a “ghost detainee/prisoner,” but did not identify a cause of action, a cognizable harm, the person responsible, the legal basis for relief, or an apparent federal question supporting jurisdiction.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff Rockie Furtado filed a civil complaint naming Rockie Furtado as the defendant. The district court concluded that the complaint failed to provide a short and plain statement of a legally cognizable claim, did not identify the alleged harm or responsible party, and did not establish federal-question jurisdiction. The court dismissed the complaint without prejudice and granted leave to amend by January 7, 2026.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

No remand was ordered. The court granted Plaintiff leave to file an amended complaint curing the deficiencies within 30 days, by January 7, 2026. Failure to do so, or filing an amended complaint that repeats the present deficiencies, may result in dismissal with prejudice.

CASES CITED

- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007)
- Conley v. Gibson, 355 U.S. 41, 47 (1957)
- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)
- Brown v. WMATA, 164 F. Supp. 3d 33, 35 (D.D.C. 2016)
- Ciralsky v. CIA, 355 F.3d 661, 668-69 (D.C. Cir. 2004)

OPINION

Furtado v. Furtado

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ROCKIE FURTADO,

Plaintiff, Case No. 25-cv-4070 (JMC) v.

ROCKIE FURTADO,

Defendant.

MEMORANDUM OPINION

Pro se Plaintiff Rockie Furtado filed a civil complaint in which he is seemingly suing himself. For the reasons discussed below, the Court DISMISSES the complaint for failure to comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2). Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2) requires civil complaints to include “a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.” It does not demand “detailed factual allegations,” but it does require enough factual information “to raise a right to relief above the speculative level.” *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007). These requirements promote fairness—Rule 8(a) is intended to “give the defendant fair notice of what the . . . claim is and the grounds upon which it rests.” *Id.* (citing *Conley v. Gibson*, 355 U.S. 41, 47 (1957)). Pleadings filed by pro se litigants are held to less stringent standards than those applied to formal pleadings drafted by lawyers. See *Erickson v. Pardus*, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007). But even pro se litigants must comply with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Furtado’s complaint does not satisfy these requirements. The complaint alleges that “Mr. Rockie Furtado” has a “strategy” to “keep” the plaintiff “living as a ghost detainee/prisoner.” ECF 1 at 6. The complaint does not reference a cause of action, nor do its factual assertions support 1 one. No less confounding, it is unclear if the plaintiff is attempting to sue himself, or if a different Rockie Furtado is named as the defendant. And although Furtado says the Court has federal question jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1331, see ECF 1 at 3, there is no apparent federal question on the face of the complaint. In short, even construing the complaint liberally, the Court is unable to identify what cognizable harm Furtado is alleging, who caused him that harm, how the law entitles him to any relief, and why this Court has jurisdiction to consider the claim at all. Furtado’s complaint is therefore dismissed for failure to comply with Rule 8(a)(2).

The Court acknowledges that dismissing a case sua sponte is an unusual step, but the Court has the authority to do so when plaintiffs fail to comply with procedural rules. See, e.g., *Brown v. WMATA*, 164 F. Supp. 3d 33, 35 (D.D.C. 2016) (dismissing a complaint sua sponte for failing to comply with Rule 8(a)); see also *Ciralsky v. CIA*, 355 F.3d 661, 668–69 (D.C. Cir. 2004) (finding no abuse of discretion where a district court dismissed a claim without prejudice for failure to comply with Rule 8(a)). The Court will grant Furtado leave to refile within 30 days (by January 7, 2026) an amended complaint that cures the existing deficiencies. If he does not file an amended complaint within that timeframe, files an amended complaint that recycles the present complaint, or otherwise fails to comply with Rule 8, this action may be dismissed with prejudice. *Brown*, 164 F. Supp. 3d at 35. A separate order accompanies this memorandum opinion. SO ORDERED.

JIA M. COBB

United States District Judge Date: December 8, 2025 2