

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION

Hunter Alexander v. John Doe, et al.

Alexander v. Doe · No. 1:26-cv-00007-JPH-MJD · Decided May 6, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana dismissed Hunter Alexander’s prisoner civil-rights complaint with prejudice for failure to state a claim. The court concluded that the complaint did not adequately allege personal involvement by the warden or IDOC Commissioner and that unnamed medical-provider defendants could not remain as placeholders. The court also denied Alexander’s motion for appointed counsel and directed entry of final judgment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, Indianapolis Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	James Patrick Hanlon
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, Indianapolis Division
DECIDED	May 6, 2026
DOCKET	1:26-cv-00007-JPH-MJD
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court screened a pro se prisoner's civil-rights complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A and dismissed it with prejudice for failure to state a claim.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b), the court must dismiss claims that are frivolous or malicious, fail to state a claim, or seek monetary relief from an immune defendant. In evaluating whether a complaint states a claim, the court applies the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) standard and asks whether the complaint contains sufficient factual matter to state a facially plausible claim.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Hunter Alexander v. John Doe, et al.

TOPICS

motions to dismiss

pleadings

section 1983

prisoners rights

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

prisoner civil rights

constitutional law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the warden and IDOC Commissioner where it did not allege their personal involvement in the asserted constitutional violations.
2. Whether claims against unnamed health-care-provider defendants stated a claim where the plaintiff did not name specific defendants and merely reserved their identities for discovery.
3. Whether the court was required to provide a pro se plaintiff an opportunity to amend or respond to an order to show cause before dismissal.

HOLDINGS

1. The claims against the warden and IDOC Commissioner failed to state a claim because the complaint did not allege that either official was personally involved in the alleged constitutional violations.
2. The claims against the unnamed health-care providers failed to state a claim because Alexander did not name specific medical professionals as defendants and merely identified anonymous defendants whose identities were to be discovered.
3. The court could dismiss the complaint with prejudice without providing an opportunity to amend or show cause because Alexander was subject to a filing restriction barring him from filing papers in civil non-habeas actions in the court for two years and until payment of outstanding filing fees.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face." (Section I)

"Individual liability under § 1983 ... requires personal involvement in the alleged constitutional deprivation." (Section III)

"it is pointless to include [an] anonymous defendant [] in federal court; this type of placeholder does not open the door to relation back under Fed. R. Civ. P. 15, nor can it otherwise help the plaintiff." (Section III)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Alexander, an Indiana Department of Correction inmate, alleged that he was subjected to intrusive searches and degrading conditions at the Reception Diagnostic Center. He also alleged inadequate diabetic care, placement on an upper range despite related medical problems, unhygienic cell conditions, denial of a phone call for more than 30 days, and lost legal mail. He named the facility warden, the IDOC Commissioner, and unnamed health-care providers, but did not allege personal involvement by the warden or Commissioner and did not identify the medical defendants.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Alexander filed the complaint on January 2, 2026, naming the warden of the Reception Diagnostic Center, the Indiana Department of Correction Commissioner, and unnamed health-care providers as defendants. The court screened the complaint, denied Alexander's motion for appointment of counsel, dismissed the action with prejudice, and directed entry of final judgment.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Schillinger v. Kiley, 954 F.3d 990, 993 (7th Cir. 2020)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Cesal v. Moats, 851 F.3d 714, 720 (7th Cir. 2017)
- Colbert v. City of Chicago, 851 F.3d 649, 657 (7th Cir. 2017)
- Wudtke v. Davel, 128 F.3d 1057, 1060 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Luevano v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., 722 F.3d 1014, 1022 (7th Cir. 2013)
- Watts v. Kidman, 42 F.4th 755, 764 (7th Cir. 2022)