

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS, SPRINGFIELD DIVISION

Dixon v. Gerling, et al.

Dixon · No. 26-cv-3104 · Decided April 10, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois grants Rachel Dixon's application to proceed in forma pauperis. The court dismisses her pro se civil-rights complaint without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii) because the allegations lack sufficient factual detail to state a plausible claim for relief. The court grants leave to file an amended complaint within 21 days.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, Springfield Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Colleen R. Lawless
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, Springfield Division
DECIDED	April 10, 2026
DOCKET	26-cv-3104
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se plaintiff filed a civil-rights complaint under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and Bivens and sought leave to proceed in forma pauperis. The district court granted in forma pauperis status, screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), dismissed the complaint without prejudice for failure to state a claim, and granted leave to amend.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii), the court applies the Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) standard, accepts well-pleaded factual allegations as true, and liberally construes them in the plaintiff's favor, but does not accept conclusory statements or labels as sufficient.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court opinion
PARTIES	Rachel Dixon v. Jennifer Gerling, Dr. Killian & Associates, Medicaid Dr.'s, various defendants

TOPICS

section 1983 civil rights motions to dismiss civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights constitutional law federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Dixon qualified to proceed in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1).
2. Whether the complaint stated a plausible claim for relief under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 or Bivens sufficient to survive screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).

HOLDINGS

1. Dixon demonstrated that she was unable to pay the costs of proceeding, so her request to proceed in forma pauperis was granted.
2. The complaint failed to state a plausible claim for relief and was subject to dismissal without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A claim has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” (at 2)

“Plaintiff’s Complaint (Doc. 2) is Dismissed without Prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Dixon alleged that she was pulled over after hitting or turning around near a fence or driveway, that police and other persons followed her, and that she suffered pain and harassment after a June 21, 2024 car accident. She also alleged courthouse corruption, judicial bias, and difficulties obtaining medical assistance, but did not identify a specific constitutional or statutory right violated by any defendant.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Rachel Dixon filed a pro se complaint alleging civil-rights violations and an application to proceed without prepaying fees and costs. The court granted the in forma pauperis application, screened the complaint, found that the allegations lacked sufficient factual content to state a plausible claim, dismissed the complaint without prejudice, and allowed an amended complaint within 21 days.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- *Bivens v. Six Unknown Named Agents of Fed. Bureau of Narcotics*, 403 U.S. 388 (1971)
- *Coleman v. Lab. & Indus. Rev. Comm'n of Wis.*, 860 F.3d 461, 468 (7th Cir. 2017)
- *Turley v. Rednour*, 729 F.3d 645, 649, 651-52 (7th Cir. 2013)
- *Alexander v. United States*, 721 F.3d 418, 422 (7th Cir. 2013)
- *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007)
- *Roake v. Forest Preserve Dist. of Cook Cnty.*, 849 F.3d 342, 346 (7th Cir. 2017)
- *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- *Swanson v. Citibank, N.A.*, 614 F.3d 400, 404 (7th Cir. 2010)

OPINION

rndgay, }UAPM, 24U20 □□□□□□ □□ Clerk, U.S. District Court, IL IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD DIVISION RACHEL DIXON,) Plaintiff,) v. Case No. 26-cv-3104 JENNIFER GERLING, ei al., Defendants.) OPINION COLLEEN R. LAWLESS, United States District Judge: Rachel Dixon, proceeding pro se, filed a complaint (Doc.

2) against various defendants alleging violations of her civil rights under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and *Bivens v. Six Unknown Named Agents of Federal Bureau of Narcotics*, 403 U.S. 388 (1971). She does not assert any particular federal constitutional or statutory right violated by defendants.

The Court reviews the Complaint for merit under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) based on Plaintiff's Application to Proceed in District Court without Prepaying Fees and Costs. (Doc. 4). I. DISCUSSION A. In Forma Pauperis Petition Plaintiff requests to proceed in forma pauperis pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1). She submitted an affidavit signed under penalty of perjury that demonstrates she is unable to pay the costs of proceeding in this action.

Accordingly, Plaintiff's request to proceed in forma pauperis is granted. Page 1 of 4 B. Legal Standard - ---A-eourt may dismiss any claim that "is frivolous or malicious," "fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted," or "seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief." 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iii). When determining whether complaint fails to state a claim under § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii), the standard under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) applies.

Coleman v. Lab & Indus. Rev. Comm'n of Wis., 860 F.3d 461, 468 (7th Cir. 2017). Applying that standard, the court accepts a complaint's factual allegations as true and liberally construes them in the plaintiff's favor. *Turley v. Rednour*, 729 F.3d 645, 649 (7th Cir. 2013).

However, conclusory statements and labels are insufficient to state a claim. See *id.* at 651-52. "[A] complaint must contain facts that are sufficient, when accepted as true, to 'state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.'" *Alexander v. United States*, 721 F.3d 418, 422 (7th Cir. 2013) (quoting *Bell Atl. Corp. 2. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)). "A claim has facial plausibility

when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Roake v. Forest Preserve Dist. of Cook Cnty.*, 849 F.3d 342, 346 (7th Cir.

2017) (quoting *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)). C. Analysis Plaintiff has failed to allege sufficient factual content to state any plausible claim to relief. *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678; 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii). Plaintiff’s factual allegations largely consist of the following: I was pulled over for hitting a fence, when there was no fence in Montgomery [sic] County for turning around in a driveway!

Courthouse corruption, my Page 2 of 4 Judge Chris Matoush is conflict of interest, and bias. And I can prove that cops follow my location to pull me over for anything to keep me going to court for fines through maliciousness for Christian County, Montgomery....On 6/21/24 I was in a car accident, and they say it was my fault, when I can prove people follow me, cops follow me, I see one every where I turn, I have suffered lots of pain and suffering from malicious misconduct, harrasement [sic].

(Doc. 2). These allegations fail to tell a story that holds together, *Swanson v. Citibank, N.A.*, 614 F.3d 400, 404 (7th Cir. 2010), and lack the necessary detail to state any cognizable claim for relief, *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555.1 The Complaint merely “tenders naked assertions devoid of further factual enhancement.” *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678 (internal quotation marks omitted and cleaned up).

Therefore, dismissal is warranted.2 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii). II. CONCLUSION For the reasons stated herein, the Petition for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (Doc. 4) is GRANTED. Plaintiff’s Complaint (Doc. 2) is Dismissed without Prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).

The Court grants Plaintiff leave to file an amended complaint within 21 days from the entry of this Order. Failure to file an amended complaint within that time may result in dismissal of this case with prejudice. 1 Furthermore, it is unclear how Defendants Jennifer Gerling, Dr. Killian & Associates, and “Medicaid Dr’s.” fit into the principal allegations, notwithstanding the assertion that Plaintiff has suffered “intentional emotional distress from trying to get help for the last 1 year and I get no where except copies from Dr. papers that look very malicious and weird.” (Doc.

2 at 5). 2 The Court’s ruling that the Complaint fails to state a plausible claim for relief does not foreclose any future finding that the action “is frivolous or malicious” or “seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief.” 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(i), (iii). Page 3 of 4 ENTER: 4/10/2026 COLLEEN R. LAWLESS UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE Page 4 of 4