

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

Charles Flynn v. Steven Campbell, et al.

Flynn · No. 3:25-cv-03386-SEM-DJQ · Decided May 14, 2026

SUMMARY

The court screened Charles Flynn’s amended complaint alleging that Illinois prison officials violated his Fourteenth Amendment due process rights in handling his requests for protective custody and related classification decisions. The court dismissed the complaint without prejudice for failure to state a claim but granted Flynn 28 days to seek leave to amend with a proposed amended complaint.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, Springfield Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sue E. Myerscough
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, Springfield Division
DECIDED	May 14, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-cv-03386-SEM-DJQ
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Screening of an incarcerated pro se plaintiff's amended civil-rights complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court accepts factual allegations as true and liberally construes them in the plaintiff's favor, but dismisses claims that are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim, or seek monetary relief from an immune defendant. Conclusory statements and labels are insufficient; the allegations must state a plausible claim for relief.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order
PARTIES	Charles Flynn v. Steven Campbell, Jeremiah Brown, Margaret Madole, Latoya Hughes, Ryan Rothenagle, Gonzales, Rich, Unknown Vulnerable Legal Classification Revocation Personnel, Michael Clemons, Doe Defendants

TOPICS

prisoners rights

procedural due process

civil rights

section 1983

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Prisoner civil rights

Constitutional litigation

Federal pleading and screening

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether an inmate has a protected liberty interest in a particular correctional facility, classification level, or prison placement for purposes of a Fourteenth Amendment due-process claim.
2. Whether alleged violations of Illinois statutes or prison regulations, without more, establish a federal civil-rights claim.
3. Whether the amended complaint stated a plausible federal due-process claim under the Prison Litigation Reform Act screening standard.

HOLDINGS

1. An inmate generally has no protected liberty interest in being housed at a particular correctional facility or in receiving a particular classification level or placement, unless the challenged conditions impose an atypical and significant hardship in relation to the ordinary incidents of prison life.
2. A violation of state law or state administrative regulations, standing alone, is not a basis for a federal civil-rights claim.
3. The amended complaint failed to state a plausible Fourteenth Amendment due-process claim and was subject to dismissal without prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“An inmate does not have a protected liberty interest to be housed in any specific correctional center within the state prison system.” (Order)

“And Plaintiff’s allegations that Illinois prison officials failed to follow Illinois regulations or statutes related to the processing of his requests do not state a federal claim.” (Order)

“Plaintiff’s Amended Complaint is dismissed without prejudice because it does not state a claim for relief.” (Order at disposition)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Charles Flynn, an incarcerated plaintiff at Lawrence Correctional Center, challenged Illinois prison officials' decisions concerning his placement, classification, and requests for protective custody. He alleged that officials made erroneous decisions and failed to provide procedures required by Illinois statutes and administrative regulations. He asserted that these actions violated his Fourteenth Amendment right to due process.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Flynn filed an amended complaint alleging that Illinois prison officials violated his Fourteenth Amendment due-process rights in handling his placement, classification, and requests for protective custody. The district court screened the amended complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, dismissed it without prejudice for failure to state a claim, and allowed Flynn 28 days to seek leave to file another amended complaint.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Turley v. Rednour, 729 F.3d 645, 649 (7th Cir. 2013)
- Alexander v. United States, 721 F.3d 418, 422 (7th Cir. 2013)
- Lekas v. Briley, 405 F.3d 602, 609 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Thomas v. Ramos, 130 F.3d 754, 762 n.8 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Moore v. Pemberton, 110 F.3d 22, 23 (7th Cir. 1997)
- Madison v. Parker, 104 F.3d 765, 768 (5th Cir. 1997)
- Whitford v. Boglino, 63 F.3d 527, 533 n.7 (7th Cir. 1995)
- Guarjardo-Palma v. Martinson, 622 F.3d 801, 806 (7th Cir. 2010)

OPINION

Flynn

PER CURIAM.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD DIVISION

CHARLES FLYNN,)

) Plaintiff,)) v.) 3:25-cv-03386-SEM-DJQ) STEVEN CAMPBELL, et al.)) Defendants.)

ORDER

Plaintiff, proceeding pro se and presently incarcerated at Lawrence Correctional Center, alleges Defendants violated his Fourteenth Amendment right to due process in their handling of his request for protective custody. The Court must “screen” Plaintiff’s complaint and identify and dismiss any legally insufficient claim. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. A claim is legally insufficient if it “(1) is frivolous, malicious, or fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted; or (2) seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief.” *Id.* The Court accepts factual allegations as true, liberally construing them in the plaintiff’s favor. *Turley v. Rednour*, 729 F.3d 645, 649 (7th Cir. 2013). Conclusory statements and labels are insufficient – facts alleged must “state a claim for relief that is plausible on its face.” *Alexander v. United States*, 721 F.3d 418, 422 (7th Cir. 2013). Allegations Plaintiff names as Defendants Graham Correctional Center administrative officers Steven Campbell and Jeremiah Brown, Administrative Review Board

member Margaret Madole, IDOC Director Latoya Hughes, Doe Defendants, ARB member Ryan Rothnagle, Intelligence Officer Gonzales, Intelligence Officer Rich, Unknown Vulnerable Legal Classification Revocation Personnel, and ARB chairperson Michael Clemons. Plaintiff contends that the United States Constitution entitles him to certain procedural process regarding Defendants' rulings and decisions on his placement, classification, and requests to be placed in protective custody. He puts forth extensive allegations related to reasons he believes certain placement decisions were made in error and without proper procedural process, according to Illinois law and administrative regulations. Analysis An inmate does not have a protected liberty interest to be housed in any specific correctional center within the state prison system. See *Lekas v. Briley*, 405 F.3d 602, 609 (7th Cir. 2005) (“[A] prisoner may be transferred from one state prison to another without implicating the inmate’s liberty interest—even where the conditions of the destination prison are “much more disagreeable” than those of the originating prison.”). Likewise, an inmate does not have a protected liberty interest in any specific classification level or placement within a prison facility (unless the given conditions of confinement amount to an atypical and significant hardship in relation to the significant curtailment of liberty incidental to all prison life). *Thomas v. Ramos*, 130 F.3d 754, 762 n.8 (7th Cir. 1997) (citing *Moore v. Pemberton*, 110 F.3d 22, 23 (7th Cir. 1997) (two weeks denial of commissary privileges does not implicate liberty interest); *Madison v. Parker*, 104 F.3d 765, 768 (5th Cir. 1997) (30 days denial of commissary does not create a liberty interest); *Whitford v. Boglino*, 63 F.3d 527, 533 n.7 (7th Cir. 1995) (demotion to C-grade for six months does not implicate federal due process rights)). And Plaintiff’s allegations that Illinois prison officials failed to follow Illinois regulations or statutes related to the processing of his requests do not state a federal claim. *Guarjardo-Palma v. Martinson*, 622 F.3d 801, 806 (7th Cir. 2010) (“[A] violation of state law is not a ground for a federal civil rights suit.”). IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. Plaintiff’s Amended Complaint is dismissed without prejudice because it does not state a claim for relief.
2. Plaintiff is allowed 28 days to file a motion for leave to amend, with attached proposed amended complaint, if he believes he can plausibly state a federal claim. If the proposed amended complaint still does not state a claim the case will be dismissed.

Entered this 14th day of May, 2026. s/Sue E. Myerscough

SUE E. MYERSCOUGH

UNITED STATES DISTRICT

JUDGE