

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Nigel Fredricks v. Donald Trump and U.S. Army Undercover Federal Agents John Does and Janes Does

25-CV-6725-FPG · No. 6:25-cv-06725-FPG · Decided May 22, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of New York dismisses Nigel Fredricks’s amended prisoner complaint alleging retaliation, inadequate medical care, food tampering, due process violations, and mail tampering by President Donald Trump and unidentified federal agents. The court dismisses the official-capacity damages claims without prejudice and without leave to amend, and dismisses the individual-capacity Bivens retaliation claims with prejudice based on the new context, lack of personal involvement, and presidential immunity. The court grants leave to amend to the extent the plaintiff intended to name state actors or assert other constitutional claims, while advising that disciplinary claims arising at Green Haven Correctional Facility must be brought in the Southern District of New York.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of New York
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Frank P. Geraci, Jr.
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of New York
DECIDED	May 22, 2026
DOCKET	6:25-cv-06725-FPG
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Prisoner civil-rights action screened under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A after Plaintiff filed an amended complaint. The court dismissed the amended complaint, dismissed some claims without leave to amend, and granted leave to file a second amended complaint as to specified claims.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court must dismiss a prisoner complaint that is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant. On screening, the court accepts alleged facts as true, draws reasonable inferences in the plaintiff’s

favor, construes pro se pleadings liberally, and applies the Rule 8 and plausibility standards.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE

unpublished district-court order

TOPICS

prisoners rights

section 1983

civil rights

pleadings

venue

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

federal courts

constitutional torts

pleading and screening

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the amended complaint stated claims under § 1983 or Bivens against the named federal defendants.
2. Whether official-capacity claims for monetary damages against federal officers were barred by sovereign immunity and subject-matter jurisdiction.
3. Whether Plaintiff's alleged First Amendment retaliation claim could proceed as a Bivens damages action.
4. Whether the amended complaint adequately alleged the personal involvement of President Trump or unnamed federal agents.
5. Whether Plaintiff should receive leave to amend other potential constitutional claims and where any due-process claim arising from Green Haven disciplinary proceedings should be brought.

HOLDINGS

1. Claims seeking monetary damages from President Trump and the unnamed federal agents in their official capacities are barred by sovereign immunity and were properly dismissed without prejudice for lack of subject-matter jurisdiction and without leave to amend.
2. Plaintiff's alleged First Amendment retaliation claim presents a new Bivens context, and special factors counsel hesitation; therefore, the claim cannot proceed as a Bivens damages action.
3. The complaint failed to state Bivens claims because it did not allege that President Trump or any particular federal agent was personally and directly involved in the alleged constitutional violations.
4. Because § 1983 applies to state actors and Plaintiff identified only federal defendants, the court construed the damages claims as Bivens claims rather than § 1983 claims.
5. Plaintiff was granted leave to file a second amended complaint asserting claims against properly identified state actors under § 1983 and other constitutional claims against individual federal defendants, but not official-capacity damages claims or First Amendment retaliation Bivens claims.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Section 1983 itself creates no substantive rights; it provides only a procedure for redress for the deprivation of rights established elsewhere.” (at 3)

“The only remedy available in a Bivens action is an award for monetary damages from defendants in their individual capacities.” (at 7)

“Bivens, Davis, and Carlson—represent the only instances in which the Court has approved of an implied damages remedy under the Constitution itself.” (at 8)

“The violation must be established against the supervisory official directly.” (at 9)

“Examples of unjustifiable interference include prison officials engaging in ‘an ongoing practice of censorship’ or delaying the delivery of mail to a prisoner in a way that ‘causes him to miss court deadlines or in any way prejudices his legal actions.’” (at 14)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff is incarcerated at Sing Sing Correctional Facility and alleged that federal agents or Army personnel and New York correctional personnel retaliated against him, ignored medical complaints, tampered with his food, interfered with his mail, and subjected him to disciplinary punishment. He alleged that he experienced medical symptoms and that he had previously asserted constitutional claims and brought litigation. He also alleged that he received disciplinary reports and spent 135 days in a special housing unit at Green Haven Correctional Facility, although the opinion noted that the disciplinary events occurred in the Southern District of New York.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff, a prisoner proceeding pro se, filed an amended complaint asserting retaliation, deliberate indifference to medical needs, due process violations, food tampering, and mail tampering claims against President Donald Trump and unnamed federal agents. The case had previously been transferred from the Northern District of New York to the Western District of New York because venue was improper in the Northern District. The court screened the amended complaint under § 1915A, dismissed official-capacity damages claims and First Amendment retaliation claims brought under Bivens, and allowed amendment of other potential constitutional claims.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Larkin v. Savage, 318 F.3d 138, 139 (2d Cir. 2003)
- King v. Simpson, 189 F.3d 284, 287 (2d Cir. 1999)
- McEachin v. McGuinnis, 357 F.3d 197, 200 (2d Cir. 2004)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 676, 678 (2009)
- Chavis v. Chappius, 618 F.3d 162, 170 (2d Cir. 2010)

- Sykes v. James, 13 F.3d 515, 519 (2d Cir. 1993)
- City of Oklahoma City v. Tuttle, 471 U.S. 808, 816 (1985)
- United States v. Acosta, 502 F.3d 54, 60 (2d Cir. 2007)
- Karman v. U.S. Customs & Border Protection, 24-312-CV, 2025 WL 972997, at *1 (2d Cir. Apr. 1, 2025)
- Alcantara v. City of New York, 646 F. Supp. 2d 449, 456-57 (S.D.N.Y. 2009)
- Hernandez v. Keane, 341 F.3d 137, 144 (2d Cir. 2003)
- Gomez v. United States American Savings Bank, 171 F.3d 794, 796 (2d Cir. 1999)
- Ruffolo v. Oppenheimer & Co., 987 F.2d 129, 131 (2d Cir. 1993)
- Tanvir v. Tanzin, 894 F.3d 449, 461 (2d Cir. 2018), *aff'd*, 592 U.S. 43 (2020)
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. v. Meyer, 510 U.S. 471, 485-86 (1994)
- Hartman v. Moore, 547 U.S. 250, 254 n.2 (2006)
- Corr. Services Corp. v. Malesko, 534 U.S. 61, 69 (2001)
- Hernandez v. Mesa, 589 U.S. 93, 102 (2020)
- Wiley v. Fernandez, 2021 WL 6550821, at *5 (N.D.N.Y. Nov. 24, 2021), report and recommendation adopted, 2022 WL 168965 (N.D.N.Y. Jan. 19, 2022)
- Rodriguez v. Easter, 2022 WL 356478, at *6 (D. Conn. Feb. 7, 2022)
- Bettis v. Grijalva, 2023 WL 4141869, at *7 (S.D.N.Y. June 23, 2023)
- LaForge v. Bureau of Prisons, 2025 WL 3478833, at *6 (D. Conn. Oct. 20, 2025)
- Nixon v. Fitzgerald, 457 U.S. 731, 755 (1982)
- Bacon v. Phelps, 961 F.3d 533, 542 (2d Cir. 2020)
- Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 104-05 (1976)
- Collymore v. Myers, 74 F.4th 22, 30 (2d Cir. 2023)
- Chance v. Armstrong, 143 F.3d 698, 702 (2d Cir. 1998)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 834, 837-38 (1994)
- Wilson v. Seiter, 501 U.S. 294, 297-99 (1991)
- Robles v. Coughlin, 725 F.2d 12, 15 (2d Cir. 1983)
- Kentucky Department of Corrections v. Thompson, 490 U.S. 454, 460 (1989)
- Sandin v. Conner, 515 U.S. 472, 484 (1995)
- Sealey v. Giltner, 197 F.3d 578, 586 (2d Cir. 1999)
- Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539, 556, 563-67 (1974)
- Eng v. Coughlin, 858 F.2d 889, 897 (2d Cir. 1988)
- Johnson v. Goord, 445 F.3d 532, 534 (2d Cir. 2006)
- Davis v. Goord, 320 F.3d 346, 351-52 (2d Cir. 2003)
- McFadden v. Noeth, 827 F. App'x 20, 29-30 (2d Cir. 2020)
- Ahlers v. Rabinowitz, 684 F.3d 53, 64 (2d Cir. 2012)
- International Controls Corp. v. Vesco, 556 F.2d 665, 668 (2d Cir. 1977)
- Palm Beach Strategic Income, LP v. Salzman, 457 F. App'x 40, 43 (2d Cir. 2012)

- *Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438 (1962)

Retrieved from lawtools.ai · <https://lawtools.ai/cases/federal/united-states-district-court-for-the-western-district-of-new/2026/nigel-fredricks-v-donald-trump-and-u-s-army-undercover-tye29z7k>