

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
GEORGIA, MACON DIVISION

Bostic v. Georgia Department of Corrections, et al.

Civil Action No. 5:24-cv-406 (MTT) (M.D. Ga. Dec. 4, 2025) · No. 5:24-cv-406 (MTT) · Decided December 4, 2025

SUMMARY

This is an order from the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia addressing defendants’ motion to dismiss a second amended complaint arising from the death of an inmate at Hancock State Prison. The court rejects the shotgun-pleading argument, dismisses the generalized failure-to-protect claim and supervisory cold-conditions claims, and allows the on-duty defendants’ conditions-of-confinement claim concerning extreme cold and lack of clothing and bedding to proceed. The order also dismisses claims against a defendant who was not addressed in the second amended complaint without prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia, Macon Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Marc T. Treadwell
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia, Macon Division
DECIDED	December 4, 2025
DOCKET	5:24-cv-406 (MTT)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendants moved under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) to dismiss the second amended complaint alleging Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claims arising from inmate-on-inmate violence, extreme cold and deprivation of clothing and bedding, and failure to provide medical care.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a Rule 12(b)(6) motion, the court accepts well-pleaded facts as true and draws reasonable inferences in the plaintiff's favor, but disregards conclusory allegations and legal conclusions. The complaint must contain sufficient factual matter to state a facially plausible claim for relief.

PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown
PARTIES	Norman Bostic, individually and as Administrator of the Estate of Norman Samples v. Georgia Department of Corrections, Ivey, Harrison, Floyd, Salad, Crayton, Saulsbury, Ward, Toole, Toby, Jeremy Foston, John Does

TOPICS

prisoners rights

cruel and unusual punishment

motions to dismiss

qualified immunity

section 1983

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

prisoner litigation

constitutional torts

federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the second amended complaint was an impermissible shotgun pleading.
2. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged that the defendants were deliberately indifferent to a general threat of inmate-on-inmate violence in the segregation unit.
3. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged that the on-duty defendants were deliberately indifferent to the substantial risk of serious harm from extreme cold and the deprivation of clothing and bedding.
4. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged supervisory liability against Ward, Toole, and Toby for the cold-exposure and deprivation claim.
5. Whether the complaint plausibly alleged deliberate indifference to Samples' serious medical needs and whether qualified immunity barred the claims against the on-duty defendants.

HOLDINGS

1. The second amended complaint was not an impermissible shotgun pleading because it clearly identified the claims and the facts allegedly supporting them.
2. The complaint failed to state an Eighth Amendment failure-to-protect claim based on a generalized threat of inmate-on-inmate violence in the segregation unit.
3. The complaint plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement deliberate-indifference claim against the on-duty defendants based on Samples' severe and prolonged exposure to cold and deprivation of clothing and bedding.
4. The complaint failed to plausibly allege supervisory liability against Ward, Toole, and Toby for the cold-exposure and deprivation claim.
5. The complaint plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference claim against the on-duty defendants for failing to provide medical care after the attack.
6. At the motion-to-dismiss stage, qualified immunity did not bar the claims against the on-duty defendants because the complaint plausibly alleged constitutional violations and clearly established law gave notice

that the alleged conduct violated the Eighth Amendment.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Under the Eighth Amendment, prison officials must “provide humane conditions of confinement ... ensure that inmates receive adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care, and ... ‘take reasonable measures to guarantee the safety of the inmates.’”” (III.A)

“To establish deliberate indifference based on a generalized risk, the plaintiff must show ‘that serious inmate-on-inmate violence was the norm or something close to it.’” (III.A.1)

“Accordingly, we ... hold that a prison official may be liable under the Eighth Amendment ... if he knows that inmates face a substantial risk of serious harm and disregards that risk by failing to take reasonable measures to abate it.” (III.C)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Norman Samples was incarcerated in the segregation unit at Hancock State Prison during December 2022. The complaint alleged severe understaffing, dangerously cold conditions, and that Samples was moved into a cell with a violent inmate who attacked him. After the attack, officers allegedly stripped Samples of his clothing and bedding, left him bleeding and exposed to extreme cold for hours, and failed to obtain medical care despite hearing his pleas for help. Samples was later found naked and unresponsive and died; blunt-force trauma was identified as the primary cause of death, and hypothermia could not be ruled out as a contributing cause.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The court had previously dismissed the first amended complaint as a shotgun pleading and ordered Bostic to show cause concerning additional defects. Bostic filed a second amended complaint. The defendants moved to dismiss it, and the court granted the motion in part and denied it in part, allowing certain claims against the on-duty defendants to proceed and dismissing the remaining claims without prejudice.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 570 (2007)
- Chaparro v. Carnival Corp., 693 F.3d 1333, 1337 (11th Cir. 2012)
- FindWhat Investment Group v. FindWhat.com, 658 F.3d 1282, 1296 (11th Cir. 2011)
- Garfield v. NDC Health Corp., 466 F.3d 1255, 1261 (11th Cir. 2006)
- Oxford Asset Management, Ltd. v. Jaharis, 297 F.3d 1182, 1188 (11th Cir. 2002)
- Patel v. Specialized Loan Servicing, LLC, 904 F.3d 1314, 1321 (11th Cir. 2018)
- Vinyard v. Wilson, 311 F.3d 1340, 1346 (11th Cir. 2002)

- Estate of Cummings v. Davenport, 906 F.3d 934, 940 (11th Cir. 2018)
- Edwards v. Shanley, 666 F.3d 1289, 1294 (11th Cir. 2012)
- Lewis v. City of West Palm Beach, 561 F.3d 1288, 1291 (11th Cir. 2009)
- Pearson v. Callahan, 555 U.S. 223, 236 (2009)
- Stalley v. Cumbie, 124 F.4th 1273, 1283-84 (11th Cir. 2024)
- Wilson v. Dunn, 618 F. Supp. 3d 1253, 1269-73 (N.D. Ala. 2022)
- Chandler v. Crosby, 379 F.3d 1278, 1288-96, 1289, 1295 (11th Cir. 2004)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 832, 837, 839, 844, 847 (1994)
- Hudson v. Palmer, 468 U.S. 517, 526-27 (1984)
- Helling v. McKinney, 509 U.S. 25, 31-32 (1993)
- Goodman v. Kimbrough, 718 F.3d 1325, 1331 (11th Cir. 2013)
- Bowen v. Warden Baldwin State Prison, 826 F.3d 1312, 1320 (11th Cir. 2016)
- Lane v. Philbin, 835 F.3d 1302, 1305-07 (11th Cir. 2016)
- Marbury v. Warden, 936 F.3d 1227, 1233-35 (11th Cir. 2019)
- Purcell ex rel. Estate of Morgan v. Toombs County, Ga., 400 F.3d 1313, 1320, 1322 (11th Cir. 2005)
- Wade v. McDade, 106 F.4th 1251, 1253, 1255, 1262 (11th Cir. 2024)
- Rodriguez v. Secretary for Department of Corrections, 508 F.3d 611, 617, 622-23 (11th Cir. 2007)
- Nelson v. Tompkins, 89 F.4th 1289, 1298 (11th Cir. 2024)
- Douglas v. Yates, 535 F.3d 1316, 1322 (11th Cir. 2008)
- West v. Tillman, 496 F.3d 1321, 1328-29 (11th Cir. 2007)
- Hill v. Dekalb Regional Youth Detention Center, 40 F.3d 1176, 1187 (11th Cir. 1994)
- Hope v. Pelzer, 536 U.S. 730, 739 (2002)
- Fleming v. Wayne County Jail, 2023 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 136842, at *14, 2023 WL 5807052 (E.D. Mich. May 19, 2023)
- Patel v. Lanier County, Ga., 969 F.3d 1173, 1190 (11th Cir. 2020)