

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
TENNESSEE

Matthew Cody Ball v. James Bachman, et al.

No. 3:25-cv-00809 (M.D. Tenn. Apr. 20, 2026) · No. 3:25-cv-00809 · Decided April 20, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee grants Matthew Cody Ball’s application to proceed in forma pauperis but dismisses his civil-rights action. The court holds that his claims arising from an allegedly warrantless arrest, search, and seizure accrued no later than his June 10, 2024 preliminary hearing and were filed outside Tennessee’s one-year statute of limitations. The court declines supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims and denies pending motions as moot.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Aleta A. Trauger
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee
DECIDED	April 20, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-cv-00809
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A pro se prisoner brought a civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and related state-law claims. The district court granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis, conducted the required preliminary screening, dismissed the federal claims as untimely, declined supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims, and denied pending motions as moot.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On initial screening under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and 1915A, the court applies a failure-to-state-a-claim standard equivalent to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), accepting well-pleaded factual allegations as true and determining whether the complaint states a facially plausible claim. Pro se pleadings are liberally construed.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court memorandum opinion

TOPICS

statute of limitations

section 1983

civil rights

motions to dismiss

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

prisoner civil rights

constitutional law

civil procedure

statute of limitations

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Ball's Section 1983 claims arising from his alleged unlawful arrest, search, and seizure were barred by Tennessee's one-year statute of limitations.
2. Whether the court should exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Ball's related state-law claims after dismissing the federal claims.
3. Whether Ball should be permitted to proceed in forma pauperis while remaining responsible for the full civil filing fee under the Prisoner Litigation Reform Act.

HOLDINGS

1. Tennessee's one-year statute of limitations applies to Ball's Section 1983 claims, and his claims accrued no later than June 10, 2024, when he became detained pursuant to legal process. Because he filed his complaint no earlier than July 10, 2025, the claims were untimely and were dismissed.
2. After dismissing the federal claims, the court declined to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over Ball's state-law claims under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(3).
3. Ball was permitted to proceed in forma pauperis, but remained responsible for paying the full \$350 civil filing fee through the initial payment and installment procedures required by the Prisoner Litigation Reform Act.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Plaintiff’s constitutional claims are therefore untimely under Tennessee’s one-year statute of limitations and will be dismissed.” (Analysis, Section IV)

“This action is DISMISSED. Plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims are DISMISSED as untimely. The court declines to exercise jurisdiction over Plaintiff’s state-law claims.” (Conclusion, Section V)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Ball alleged that officers arrested him in his home without a warrant on May 1, 2024, and searched and seized property, including his vehicle and iPad. His preliminary hearing occurred on June 10, 2024. He asserted that the arrest, search, and seizure violated the Fourth Amendment, other constitutional provisions, and Tennessee law. He signed the complaint on July 10, 2025, more than one year after the latest accrual date identified by the court.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Matthew Ball filed a pro se complaint alleging an unlawful warrantless arrest, search, and seizure occurring in 2024. He filed an application to proceed in forma pauperis. On initial review under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and 1915A, the court concluded that his Section 1983 claims accrued no later than June 10, 2024, but the complaint

was filed no earlier than July 10, 2025. The court dismissed the action, declined supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims, denied pending motions as moot, and directed that final judgment issue under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 58(b)(1)(C).

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Hill v. Lappin, 630 F.3d 468, 470-71 (6th Cir. 2010)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)
- Tackett v. M & G Polymers, USA, LLC, 561 F.3d 478, 488 (6th Cir. 2009)
- Harris v. United States, 422 F.3d 322, 331 (6th Cir. 2005)
- Zundel v. Holder, 687 F.3d 271, 281 (6th Cir. 2012)
- Eidson v. State of Tenn. Dep't of Children's Servs., 510 F.3d 631, 634-35 (6th Cir. 2007)
- Wallace v. Kato, 549 U.S. 384, 397 (2007)
- King v. Harwood, 852 F.3d 568, 578-79 (6th Cir. 2017)
- Harper v. Jackson, 293 Fed. Appx. 389, 391 n.1 (6th Cir. 2008)

OPINION

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE NASHVILLE DIVISION MATTHEW CODY BALL, # 131689,)) Plaintiff,)) v.) No. 3:25-cv-00809) JAMES BACHMAN, et al.,) Judge Trauger) Defendants.)
MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER Plaintiff Matthew Ball, who is in custody of the Sumner County Jail in Gallatin, Tennessee, filed a pro se complaint alleging violations of his civil rights.

(Doc. No. 1). For the reasons below, this action will be dismissed. I. FILING FEE Plaintiff filed an Application for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (“IFP Application”) (Doc. No. 2). Under the Prisoner Litigation Reform Act (“PLRA”), 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a), a prisoner bringing a civil action may be permitted to file suit without prepaying the filing fee required by 28 U.S.C. § 1914(a).

From a review of Plaintiff’s IFP Application and supporting documentation, it appears that Plaintiff lacks sufficient financial resources from which to pay the full filing fee in advance. Therefore, his IFP Application (Doc. No. 2) will be granted.

Under § 1915(b), Plaintiff nonetheless remains responsible for paying the full filing fee. The obligation to pay the fee accrues at the time the case is filed, but the PLRA provides prisoner-

plaintiffs the opportunity to make a “down payment” of a partial filing fee and to pay the remainder in installments.

Accordingly, Plaintiff is hereby assessed the full civil filing fee of \$350, to be paid as follows: (1) The custodian of Plaintiff’s inmate trust fund account at the institution where he now resides is DIRECTED to submit to the Clerk of Court, as an initial payment, “20 percent of the greater of – (a) the average monthly deposits to Plaintiff’s account; or (b) the average monthly balance in Plaintiff’s account for the 6-month period immediately preceding the filing of the complaint.” 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

(2) After the initial filing fee is fully paid, the trust fund officer must withdraw from Plaintiff’s account and pay to the Clerk of this Court monthly payments equal to 20% of all deposits credited to Plaintiff’s account during the preceding month, but only when the amount in the account exceeds \$10. Such payments must continue until the entire filing fee is paid in full.

28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). (3) Each time the trust account officer makes a payment to this court as required by this Order, he or she must print a copy of the prisoner’s account statement showing all activity in the account since the last payment made in accordance with this Order and submit it to the Clerk along with the payment. All submissions to the court must clearly identify Plaintiff’s name and the case number as indicated on the first page of this Order, and must be mailed to: Clerk, United States District Court, Middle District of Tennessee, 719 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37203.

The Clerk of Court is DIRECTED send a copy of this Order to the administrator of inmate trust fund accounts at the Sumner County Jail to ensure that the custodian of Plaintiff’s inmate trust account complies with that portion of 28 U.S.C. § 1915 pertaining to the payment of the filing fee. If Plaintiff is transferred from his present place of confinement, the custodian of his inmate trust fund account MUST ensure that a copy of this Order follows Plaintiff to his new place of confinement for continued compliance.

II. LEGAL STANDARD The court must conduct an initial review and dismiss the Complaint if it is facially frivolous or malicious, if it fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or if it seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2), 1915A. Review of the Complaint to determine whether it states a claim upon which relief may be granted asks whether it contains “‘sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face,’” such that it would survive a motion to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6).

Hill v. Lappin, 630 F.3d 468, 470–71 (6th Cir. 2010) (quoting Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)). Although pro se pleadings must be liberally construed, Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007), the plaintiff must still “plead[] factual content that allows the court to draw the

reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged,” *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678, upon “view[ing] the complaint in the light most favorable to the plaintiff[.]” *Tackett v. M & G Polymers, USA, LLC*, 561 F.3d 478, 488 (6th Cir.

2009). III. ALLEGATIONS AND CLAIMS In the Complaint, Plaintiff alleges that he was arrested in his home without a warrant on May 1, 2024. (Doc. No. 1 at 7). Officers searched and seized Plaintiff’s property, including his vehicle and iPad. (Id. at 7–8). Plaintiff’s preliminary hearing was on June 10, 2024. (Id. at 8). Plaintiff asserts that Defendants’ actions constituted unlawful search and seizure in violation of the Fourth Amendment, other constitutional provisions, and Tennessee state law.

(Id. at 5). IV. ANALYSIS Tennessee’s one-year statute of limitations applies to Plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims. See *Harris v. United States*, 422 F.3d 322, 331 (6th Cir. 2005); *Zundel v. Holder*, 687 F.3d 271, 281 (6th Cir. 2012); Tenn. Code Ann. § 28-3-104(a)(1). And federal law federal law determines “[t]he date on which the statute of limitations begins to run.” *Eidson v. State of Tenn. Dep’t of Children’s Servs.*, 510 F.3d 631, 634–35 (6th Cir.

2007). “[T]he statute of limitations upon a § 1983 claim seeking damages for a false arrest in violation of the Fourth Amendment, where the arrest is followed by criminal proceedings, begins to run at the time the claimant becomes detained pursuant to legal process.” *Wallace v. Kato*, 549 U.S. 384, 397 (2007); see *King v. Harwood*, 852 F.3d 568, 578–79 (6th Cir.

2017) (same for claims of false imprisonment). Claims of unlawful search and seizure accrue on the date the alleged unlawful search and seizure occurred. *Harper v. Jackson*, 293 Fed. Appx. 389, 391 n.1 (6th Cir. 2008).

Here, Plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims accrued, at the latest, on June 10, 2024, the date of his preliminary hearing, when he became detained pursuant to legal process. (Doc. No. 1 at 8). Plaintiff filed his complaint no earlier than July 10, 2025, more than a year later. (Id. at 17) (signature date “7/10/2025”). Plaintiff’s constitutional claims are therefore untimely under Tennessee’s one-year statute of limitations and will be dismissed.

The court declines to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over those claims. See 28 U.S.C. § 1367(c)(3). The court makes no finding regarding the timeliness or merit of those claims. V. CONCLUSION Plaintiff’s IFP Application (Doc. No. 2) is GRANTED. This action is DISMISSED. Plaintiff’s Section 1983 claims are DISMISSED as untimely.

The court declines to exercise jurisdiction over Plaintiff’s state-law claims. Plaintiff’s pending motions (Doc. Nos. 7, 8, 10) are DENIED as moot. This Order denies all relief in this action. Final judgment SHALL issue in accordance with Rule 58(b)(1)(C) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. It is so ORDERED. he: Uy Aleta A. Trauger United States District Judge

