

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

Cornel Myers v. Angel Quiros, et al.

Myers · No. 3:25-CV-763 (SVN) · Decided January 20, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Connecticut conducted an initial review of Cornel Myers’s pro se 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint concerning alleged retaliation, prison conditions, medical care, and placement in restrictive housing. The court dismissed the complaint without prejudice for failure to allege defendants’ personal involvement and failure to state plausible constitutional claims, while allowing Myers to file an amended complaint by February 19, 2026.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sarala V. Nagala
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
DECIDED	January 20, 2026
DOCKET	3:25-CV-763 (SVN)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Initial review of a pro se prisoner's 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint under the Prison Litigation Reform Act.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the complaint under the PLRA screening standards, accepting the factual allegations as true and determining whether the complaint was frivolous, malicious, failed to state a plausible claim, or sought relief from an immune defendant.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- pleadings
- motions to dismiss
- first amendment
- fourteenth amendment

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil rights
- constitutional law
- prisoner litigation
- civil procedure
- remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint adequately alleged the personal involvement of the named defendants in constitutional violations for purposes of a damages claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
2. Whether the complaint plausibly stated a First Amendment retaliation claim based on Myers's hunger strike.
3. Whether the complaint plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment conditions-of-confinement claim.
4. Whether the complaint plausibly stated an Eighth Amendment deliberate-indifference-to-medical-needs claim.
5. Whether the complaint plausibly stated a Fourteenth Amendment procedural due process claim based on placement in restrictive housing.
6. Whether Myers could obtain injunctive or declaratory relief against defendants sued only in their individual capacities and against officials at a facility where he was no longer housed.
7. Whether John Dempsey Hospital, as a state agency, was a person subject to suit under § 1983.

HOLDINGS

1. A plaintiff seeking damages under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 must allege facts establishing each defendant's personal involvement in the alleged constitutional violation, including supervisory officials; Myers failed to do so.
2. A First Amendment retaliation claim requires protected speech or conduct, adverse action, and a causal connection between the protected conduct and the adverse action; Myers's allegations did not plausibly satisfy those requirements.
3. A conditions-of-confinement claim requires an objectively sufficiently serious deprivation or substantial risk of serious harm and a defendant's subjective deliberate indifference; Myers's allegation that he was placed in a filthy cell was insufficiently specific to state a plausible claim.
4. A medical deliberate-indifference claim requires actual deprivation of adequate medical care in response to a sufficiently serious medical condition and subjective recklessness by the defendant; Myers's allegation that he lost consciousness and was hospitalized did not state a plausible claim.
5. A procedural due process claim concerning restrictive housing requires a protected liberty interest and constitutionally sufficient procedures; Myers failed to allege facts concerning the conditions, duration, or procedures of his confinement.
6. Claims for injunctive and declaratory relief must be asserted against officials in their official capacities and require an ongoing constitutional violation; Myers's claims were unavailable against defendants sued only individually, moot as to officials at the facility he left, or unsupported by allegations of an ongoing violation.
7. A state agency is not a person subject to suit under 42 U.S.C. § 1983; therefore, the claims against John Dempsey Hospital were dismissed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Based on the foregoing, the Court DISMISSES the Complaint without prejudice for failure to allege the personal involvement of any Defendants in the alleged constitutional violations and for failure to state a plausible claim for relief under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.” (Section IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Myers, a sentenced inmate at Cheshire Correctional Institution, alleged that he began a hunger strike at MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution to seek adequate medical, mental-health, and food services. After he refused to end the hunger strike, he alleged that correctional officers threatened him, placed him in a filthy cell in restrictive housing, revoked his privileges, and stopped his communications. He further alleged that he later lost consciousness and was hospitalized, but he did not identify which defendants were involved in the alleged conduct or describe the relevant conditions, medical care, duration of confinement, or procedures used.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Cornel Myers filed a pro se § 1983 complaint against Connecticut Department of Correction officials, DOC employees, and John Dempsey Hospital, alleging violations of the First, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments. The district court conducted screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A and dismissed the complaint without prejudice for failure to allege personal involvement and failure to state plausible constitutional claims. The court permitted Myers to file an amended complaint by February 19, 2026, and stated that the case would be closed if he did not do so.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Mangiafico v. Blumenthal, 471 F.3d 391, 398 (2d Cir. 2006)
- Kelley v. Quiros, No. 3:22-cv-1425 (KAD), 2023 WL 1818545, at *2 n.1 (D. Conn. Feb. 8, 2023)
- Sykes v. Bank of America, 723 F.3d 399, 403 (2d Cir. 2013)
- Triestman v. Federal Bureau of Prisons, 470 F.3d 471, 474, 477 (2d Cir. 2006)
- Eason v. Maletz, No. 24-CV-1493 (VDO), 2024 WL 4814266, at *2 (D. Conn. Nov. 18, 2024)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555, 557 (2007)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Fowlkes v. Ironworkers Local 40, 790 F.3d 378, 387 (2d Cir. 2015)
- Wright v. Smith, 21 F.3d 496, 501 (2d Cir. 1994)
- Moffitt v. Town of Brookfield, 950 F.2d 880, 885 (2d Cir. 1991)
- Tangreti v. Bachman, 983 F.3d 609, 620 (2d Cir. 2020)
- Burns v. Martuscello, 890 F.3d 77, 84 (2d Cir. 2018)
- Brandon v. Kinter, 938 F.3d 21, 40 (2d Cir. 2019)
- Davis v. Goord, 320 F.3d 346, 353 (2d Cir. 2003)

- Nieves v. Bartlett, 587 U.S. 391, 399 (2019)
- Hartman v. Moore, 547 U.S. 250, 260 (2006)
- Handsome, Inc. v. Town of Monroe, No. 23-711, 2024 WL 2747142, at *5 (2d Cir. May 29, 2024)
- Rhodes v. Chapman, 452 U.S. 337, 347 (1981)
- Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 832, 834-37 (1994)
- Chance v. Armstrong, 143 F.3d 698, 702 (2d Cir. 1998)
- Walker v. Schult, 717 F.3d 119, 125 (2d Cir. 2013)
- Wilson v. Seiter, 501 U.S. 294, 304 (1991)
- Willey v. Kirkpatrick, 801 F.3d 51, 68 (2d Cir. 2015)
- Hutto v. Finney, 437 U.S. 678, 686-87 (1978)
- Department of Agriculture Rural Development Rural Housing Service v. Kirtz, 601 U.S. 42, 55 (2024)
- Salahuddin v. Goord, 467 F.3d 263, 279-80 (2d Cir. 2006)
- Kravitz v. Purcell, 87 F.4th 111, 119, 122 (2d Cir. 2023)
- Thomas v. Wolf, 832 F. App'x 90, 92 (2d Cir. 2020)
- Hill v. Curcione, 657 F.3d 116, 122 (2d Cir. 2011)
- Swarthout v. Cooke, 562 U.S. 216, 219 (2011)
- Meachum v. Fano, 427 U.S. 215, 225, 228 (1976)
- Sandin v. Conner, 515 U.S. 472, 483-84 (1995)
- Palmer v. Richards, 364 F.3d 60, 64 (2d Cir. 2004)
- Jusino v. Rinaldi, No. 3:18-CV-2004 (MPS), 2019 WL 2720763, at *5-6 (D. Conn. June 27, 2019)
- Fowler v. Department of Correction, No. 3:17-CV-848 (JAM), 2019 WL 1025243, at *5 (D. Conn. Mar. 4, 2019)
- Hewitt v. Helms, 459 U.S. 460, 476 (1983)
- Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539, 564-66, 572 (1974)
- Superintendent v. Hill, 472 U.S. 445, 454-56 (1985)
- Taylor v. Rodriguez, 238 F.3d 188, 194 (2d Cir. 2001)
- Kuck v. Danaher, 822 F. Supp. 2d 109, 143 (D. Conn. 2011)
- Patterson v. Lichtenstein, No. 3:18-CV-2130 (MPS), 2020 WL 837359, at *2 (D. Conn. Feb. 20, 2020)
- Virginia Office for Protection & Advocacy v. Stewart, 563 U.S. 247, 254-55 (2011)
- Ex parte Young, 209 U.S. 123 (1908)
- Kentucky v. Graham, 473 U.S. 159, 169 (1985)
- Stewart v. John Dempsey Hospital, No. 303CV1703WWE, 2004 WL 78145, at *2 (D. Conn. Jan. 9, 2004)
- Will v. Michigan Department of State Police, 491 U.S. 58, 71 (1989)
- Siminausky v. Starkowski, No. 3:15-CV-159 (VLB), 2016 WL 236208, at *6 (D. Conn. Jan. 20, 2016)

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