

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
OHIO, WESTERN DIVISION

Tyease Williams v. City of Springfield, et al.

Williams · No. 1:25-cv-294 · Decided March 11, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio adopted a magistrate judge’s Report and Recommendation and dismissed Tyease Williams’s in forma pauperis complaint. The court overruled Williams’s untimely objection and held that several defendants could not be liable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, while the claims against the City of Springfield and certain claims against Trooper D.L. Webb were inadequately pleaded. Federal claims against several defendants were dismissed with prejudice, and other federal and state-law claims were dismissed without prejudice.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Western Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Susan J. Dlott
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Western Division
DECIDED	March 11, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-cv-294
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Pro se plaintiff proceeding in forma pauperis filed constitutional and state-law claims arising from an allegedly wrongful arrest. A magistrate judge recommended dismissal following screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), and the district court adopted the recommendation, overruled plaintiff's untimely objection, and dismissed the complaint.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A timely objection to a magistrate judge's recommendation on a dispositive matter receives de novo review, but a district court need not conduct de novo review of frivolous, conclusive, or general objections. The complaint was screened under the failure-to-state-a-claim standard applicable to in forma pauperis actions.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished

PARTIES

Tyease Williams v. City of Springfield, Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office, Lawrence County Municipal Clerk, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lockland Police Department, D.L. Webb, Janiaya Canty

TOPICS

section 1983 municipal liability civil procedure pleadings subject matter jurisdiction

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure civil rights constitutional law municipal law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the district court could adopt the magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation without considering Williams's untimely objection.
2. Whether the complaint stated a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the named governmental entities, Trooper Webb, and Janiaya Canty.
3. Whether the complaint stated a municipal-liability claim against the City of Springfield.
4. Whether the court should exercise subject matter jurisdiction over Williams's state-law claims after dismissing the federal claims.
5. Whether Williams's proposed amended complaint should be considered after she failed to timely file a compliant amendment.

HOLDINGS

1. Because Williams filed her objection more than five weeks after the objection deadline, the district court could adopt the Report and Recommendation without considering the objection.
2. The complaint failed to state constitutional claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office, Lawrence County Municipal Clerk, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lockland Police Department, Trooper Webb in his official capacity, and Canty.
3. Williams failed to state a municipal-liability claim against the City of Springfield.
4. The federal claims against Trooper Webb in his individual capacity were conclusory and failed to state a claim; they were dismissed without prejudice.
5. After dismissing the federal claims, the court declined to exercise subject matter jurisdiction over the state-law claims and dismissed them without prejudice.
6. The court would not consider Williams's proposed amended complaint because she failed to timely file an amended complaint complying with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the magistrate judge's order.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A complaint filed by a pro se plaintiff must be “liberally construed” and “held to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.”” (Standards of Law, Section II.A)

“Accordingly, the Report and Recommendation (Doc. 4) is ADOPTED.” (Conclusion, Section IV)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Williams alleged that a Lawrence County, Ohio, warrant issued in 2015 based on an allegedly false identity-fraud accusation and inadequate investigation. Although the charges were dismissed and the warrant was recalled on May 15, 2023, Williams alleged that an administrative error caused the warrant to remain active, resulting in her arrest on May 26, 2023. She also alleged emotional harm and damage or theft of property during the arrest. The court noted that the complaint did not adequately connect the City of Springfield to the events and pleaded the individual-capacity federal claims against Trooper Webb only conclusorily.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Williams filed the complaint on April 24, 2025. The magistrate judge issued a Report and Recommendation on September 8, 2025, recommending dismissal for failure to state a claim. Williams filed an untimely objection and a motion for leave to amend out of time; after she failed to comply with Rule 11(a)'s signature requirement, the motion and proposed amended complaint were stricken. The district court adopted the Report and Recommendation, overruled the objection, and dismissed the claims with prejudice in part and without prejudice in part.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 31–32 (1992)
- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007) (per curiam)
- Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 106 (1976)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Hill v. Lappin, 630 F.3d 468, 470–471 (6th Cir. 2010)
- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140, 152 (1985)
- Roane v. Warden of Corr. Reception Ctr., No. 2:22-CV-2768, 2022 WL 16535903, at *1 (S.D. Ohio Oct. 28, 2022)
- Lassiter v. Dullaghan, No. 1:10-CV-010, 2011 WL 110259, at *1 (S.D. Ohio Jan. 13, 2011)
- Baker v. Peterson, 67 F. App'x 308, 310 (6th Cir. 2003)
- Mira v. Marshall, 806 F.2d 636, 637 (6th Cir. 1986) (per curiam)
- Lavado v. Keohane, 992 F.2d 601, 605–606 (6th Cir. 1993)

OPINION

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
WESTERN DIVISION Tyease Williams,:: Case No. 1:25-cv-294 Plaintiff,:: Judge Susan J. Dlott
v.: Order Adopting Report and City of Springfield, et al.,: Recommendation and Dismissing:
Complaint Defendants.: Plaintiff Tyease Williams, who is proceeding pro se and in forma
pauperis, has sued Ohio state, county, and municipal officials for alleged violations of
constitutional rights and state law.

(Doc. 1-1.) Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Preston Deavers issued a Report and Recommendation on
September 8, 2025 recommending that the Court dismiss her Complaint. (Doc. 4.) Williams filed
an untimely Objection to the Report and Recommendation on October 30, 2025. (Doc. 6.)

For the reasons below, the Court will ADOPT the Report and Recommendation, OVERRULE the
Objection, and DISMISS the Complaint. I. BACKGROUND A. Facts Alleged The Magistrate
Judge aptly summarized the facts alleged in Williams's Complaint: The crux of Plaintiff's
Complaint is that she was wrongfully arrested on a recalled warrant that remained active due to an
error by the Lawrence County Municipal Court Clerk's Office.

Plaintiff claims the events that led to her arrest began back in March of 2015, when a woman
named Janiaya Canty was stopped by law enforcement in Lawrence County, Ohio. (Doc. 1-1, at
PAGEID # 7). Plaintiff alleges Canty provided officers with her real name and date of birth, but
Canty said she did not have a driver's license or identification. (Id.) Approximately two months
after this stop, Canty claimed she had not been the driver.

Canty accused Plaintiff of being the driver and sent law enforcement a photograph of Plaintiff.
(Id.) Plaintiff claims that Ohio State Highway Patrol Trooper Webb failed to conduct a proper
investigation or obtain a signed witness statement from Canty. (Id.). Nevertheless, Trooper Webb
issued a "criminal affidavit" and obtained a warrant for Plaintiff's arrest.

(Id.) Plaintiff asserts that the Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office allowed the charges to proceed
despite the lack of probable cause or corroborating evidence. (Id.) Plaintiff alleges that she learned
of the false charge in May of 2023, and she traveled from Georgia to Ohio to clear her name. (Id.)

On May 15, 2023, the charges were dismissed and the Lawrence County Municipal Court Clerk
submitted a request to remove the warrant, but that request was mistakenly sent to the Sheriff's
Office, rather than the originating agency, causing the warrant to remain active. (Id.) Then, on May
26, 2023, while preparing to return to Georgia, Plaintiff was arrested on the warrant by
unidentified officers from the Lockland Police Department, despite showing them documentation
that her case was dismissed.

(Id.) Plaintiff states she was not allowed to hug or comfort her minor daughter who was with her
when she was arrested. (Id.) This resulted in emotional trauma. (Id.) And during the arrest, officers

failed to protect or properly handle her property, resulting in theft and damage to electronics and identification documents. (Id.) (Doc. 4 at PageID 19–20.)

The Magistrate Judge also took judicial notice of the following facts: On September 10, 2015, a complaint was filed against Plaintiff in the Lawrence County Municipal Court for identity fraud in violation of Ohio Revised Code § 2913.49, a felony of the fifth degree, and a warrant was issued on that complaint. See *State of Ohio v. Tyease L. Williams*, Case No. CRA1500691.

The case remained inactive for nearly a decade. The state court docket sheet reflects that on May 15, 2023, the case came before the court for a hearing, the warrant was recalled, and the prosecuting attorney moved the Court to enter a nolle prosequi dismissing the case, citing insufficient evidence to proceed.

The docket sheet reflects that the warrant issued on September 10, 2015 has been inactive since May 15, 2023. (Id. at PageID 20.) B. Procedural Posture Williams filed a Complaint on April 24, 2025 against seven Defendants: the City of Springfield; the Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office; the Lawrence County Municipal Clerk; the Ohio State Highway Patrol; the Lockland Police Department; Trooper D.L.

Webb (in his individual and official capacity); and Janiaya Canty. (Doc. 1-1 at PageID 5.) She purported to assert federal claims for false arrest, malicious prosecution, violation of due process, and state law claims for emotional distress and harm to reputation. (Doc. 1 at PageID 4; Doc. 1-1 at PageID 6–7.) Then, on May 12, 2025, Williams filed a Notice of Intent to File Amended Complaint within 21 days.

But she did not file an amended complaint at that time. (Doc. 3 at PageID 13.) The Magistrate Judge completed an initial review of the Complaint as required by 28 U.S.C. § 1915 and issued her Report and Recommendation on September 8, 2025. (Doc. 4.) She concluded that Williams had failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted, and she recommended dismissing the Complaint.

(Id. at PageID 20–26.) The Magistrate Judge gave Williams notice that she had fourteen days to file objections to the Report and Recommendation. (Id. at PageID 26–27.) Almost two months after the Magistrate Judge issued the Report and Recommendation, on October 30, 2025, Williams filed an untimely Objection to the Report and Recommendation. (Doc. 6.) She also filed that same day a Motion for Leave to File an Amended Complaint Out of Time, with a proposed Amended Complaint attached as an exhibit.

(Doc. 9.) In an Order dated January 16, 2026, the Magistrate Judge determined that Williams had not complied with the signature requirements stated in Rule 11(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure in her Motion for Leave to File an Amended Complaint Out of Time. (Doc. 11.)

The Magistrate Judge ordered Williams to refile her Motion and the proposed Amended Complaint with a proper signature within fourteen days or have the unsigned Motion and proposed Amended Complaint stricken from the record. (Id. at PageID 131.) Williams did not satisfy her obligation, so the Motion and Amended Complaint were stricken from the record. (Doc. 12.)¹ II.

STANDARDS OF LAW A. Initial Review of in Forma Pauperis Complaints Williams is proceeding pro se—without the representation of counsel—and in forma pauperis—without the payment of filing fees. District courts must dismiss an in forma pauperis complaint if the action is frivolous or malicious or fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(i) and (ii); see also *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S. 25, 31–32 (1992).

A complaint filed by a pro se plaintiff must be “liberally construed” and “held to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.” *Erickson v. Pardus*, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007) (per curiam) (quoting *Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97, 106 (1976)). By the same token, however, the complaint “must contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to ‘state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.’” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009) (quoting *Bell Atl.*

Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)); see also *Hill v. Lappin*, 630 F.3d 468, 470–471 (6th Cir. 2010) (stating that the “dismissal standard articulated in *Iqbal* and *Twombly* governs dismissals for failure to state a claim” under § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii)). B. Review of a Report and Recommendation Title 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(B) & (C) and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(b) (1) Williams also failed to comply with the signature requirements when she filed a Motion for Appointment of Counsel and Service by U.S. Marshal and a Motion for Disability Accommodations.

(Docs. 7, 8.) The Magistrate Judge struck both filings for violating the signature requirements as well. (Doc. 10.) Also, as noted by the Magistrate Judge, the appointment of counsel is not a constitutional right in a civil case.

The Court agrees that exceptional circumstances justifying the appointment of counsel are not present here. See *Lavado v. Keohane*, 992 F.2d 601, 605–606 (6th Cir. 1993) (denying appointment of counsel in a civil case for lack of exceptional circumstances).

The Court also agrees with the Magistrate Judge that whether Williams needed accommodations such as participation in conferences by telephone or extensions of filing deadlines could have been handled as such issues arose. (Doc. 10 at PageID 128.) authorize magistrate judges to make recommendations concerning dispositive motions that have been referred to them.

Parties then have fourteen days to make, file, and serve specific written objections to the report and recommendations. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(b)(2). A district court need not independently review a report and recommendation to which no objection is made. See *Thomas v.*

Arn, 474 U.S. 140, 152 (1985). But some district courts follow the Advisory Committee Notes to Rule 72(b) and review the report and recommendation for clear error.

See e.g., *Roane v. Warden of Corr. Reception Ctr.*, No. 2:22-CV-2768, 2022 WL 16535903, at *1 (S.D. Ohio Oct. 28, 2022); *Lassiter v. Dullaghan*, No. 1:10-CV-010, 2011 WL 110259, at *1 (S.D. Ohio Jan. 13, 2011). If a party files objections to a report and recommendation on a dispositive matter, a district judge must review it under the de novo standard. *Baker v. Peterson*, 67 F. App'x 308, 310 (6th Cir.

2003). “[T]he district court need not provide de novo review where the objections are frivolous, conclusive or general.” *Mira v. Marshall*, 806 F.2d 636, 637 (6th Cir. 1986) (per curiam) (cleaned up) “The district judge may accept, reject, or modify the recommended disposition; receive further evidence; or return the matter to the magistrate judge with instructions.” Fed.

R. Civ. P. 72(b)(3); see also 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1) (substantively similar). III. ANALYSIS Williams filed her Objection more than five weeks beyond the deadline, so the Court can adopt the Report and Recommendation without considering the Objection at all.

To be clear, however, the Court would adopt the Report and Recommendation even under a de novo review. The Magistrate Judge was correct that the Lawrence County Prosecutor’s Office, the Lawrence County Municipal Clerk, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Lockland Police Department, Trooper D.L. Webb in his official capacity, and Janiaya Canty cannot be held liable for the alleged constitutional violations under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.2 Williams fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted against the City of Springfield.

Williams has not pleaded facts sufficient to find municipal liability, nor did she explain what the City of Springfield’s connection is to this case. The federal claims against Trooper D.L. Webb in his individual capacity are conclusory.

Finally, the Court would decline to exercise subject matter jurisdiction over the state law claims. Williams cannot remedy these Complaint defects by alleging additional facts or substituting in named government officials as new defendants in the Objection.

The Court would have considered such changes in an amended complaint, but Williams failed to timely file an amended complaint that complied with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or the Magistrate Judge’s January 16, 2026 Order. IV. CONCLUSION Accordingly, the Report and Recommendation (Doc. 4) is ADOPTED.

The Complaint is DISMISSED insofar as (1) the federal claims against the Lawrence County Prosecutor’s Office, the Lawrence County Municipal Clerk, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, and the Lockland Police Department, Trooper D.L. Webb in his official capacity, and Janiaya Canty

are DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE, (2) the claims against the City of Springfield and against Trooper D.L.

Webb in his individual capacity are DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE, and (3) the state law claims are DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE. The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) (3) that an appeal of this Order would not be taken in good faith. 2 Williams concedes that the State of Ohio, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Lockland Police Department, and Janiaya Canty were properly dismissed.

(Doc. 6 at PageID 33.) IT IS SO ORDERED. BY THE COURT: S/Susan J. Dlott Susan J. Dlott
United States District Judge