

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION**

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| SONNIE KORAN JOHNSON, |) | |
| |) | |
| Plaintiff, |) | |
| |) | |
| v. |) | No. 4:15CV613 HEA |
| |) | |
| MISSOURI DEPT. OF CORR., et al., |) | |
| |) | |
| Defendants. |) | |

OPINION, MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

This matter is before the Court upon the motion of plaintiff (registration no.90771), an inmate at Greene County Justice Center, for leave to commence this action without payment of the required filing fee. For the reasons stated below, the Court finds that plaintiff does not have sufficient funds to pay the entire filing fee and will assess an initial partial filing fee of \$4.12. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1). Furthermore, based upon a review of the complaint, the Court finds that the complaint should be dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1)

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1), a prisoner bringing a civil action in forma pauperis is required to pay the full amount of the filing fee. If the prisoner has insufficient funds in his or her prison account to pay the entire fee, the Court must assess and, when funds exist, collect an initial partial filing fee of 20 percent of the greater of (1) the average monthly deposits in the prisoner's account, or (2) the average monthly balance in the prisoner's account for the prior six-month period. After payment of the initial partial filing fee, the prisoner is required to make monthly payments of 20 percent of the preceding month's income credited to the prisoner's account. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). The agency having custody of the prisoner will forward these

monthly payments to the Clerk of Court each time the amount in the prisoner's account exceeds \$10, until the filing fee is fully paid. *Id.*

Plaintiff has submitted an affidavit and a certified copy of his prison account statement for the six-month period immediately preceding the submission of his complaint. A review of plaintiff's account indicates an average monthly deposit of \$20.58, and an average monthly balance of \$12.72. Plaintiff has insufficient funds to pay the entire filing fee. Accordingly, the Court will assess an initial partial filing fee of \$4.12, which is 20 percent of plaintiff's average monthly deposit.

28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court must dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis if the action is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. An action is frivolous if it "lacks an arguable basis in either law or fact." *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 328 (1989); *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992). An action is malicious if it is undertaken for the purpose of harassing the named defendants and not for the purpose of vindicating a cognizable right. *Spencer v. Rhodes*, 656 F. Supp. 458, 461-63 (E.D.N.C. 1987), *aff'd* 826 F.2d 1059 (4th Cir. 1987). A complaint fails to state a claim if it does not plead "enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face." *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007).

The Complaint

Plaintiff, Sonnie Koran Johnson, an inmate at Green County Justice Center, brings this action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 alleging violations of his civil rights. Named as defendants are the Missouri Department of Corrections and Farmington Correctional Center.

Plaintiff seeks monetary damages, asserting that defendants treated him unfairly from December of 2007 through February of 2009 by housing him in the same correctional facility as an inmate who had killed his sister (Farmington Correctional Center). He asserts that the Department of Corrections should not be allowed to place inmates with “people who have taken the life of another person’s family member.”

Discussion

Plaintiff’s claim against the Missouri Department of Corrections and Farmington Correctional Center is barred by the Eleventh Amendment. *See Alabama v. Pugh*, 438 U.S. 781, 782 (1978). Moreover, a suit against the Missouri Department of Corrections and FCC is, in effect, a suit against the State of Missouri; however, the State of Missouri is not a “person” for purposes of a § 1983 action. *Will v. Michigan Dept. of State Police*, 491 U.S. 58, 63 (1989). As a result, the complaint shall be dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that plaintiff’s motion to proceed in forma pauperis [Doc. #2] is **GRANTED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the plaintiff shall pay an initial filing fee of \$4.12 within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order. Plaintiff is instructed to make his remittance payable to “Clerk, United States District Court,” and to include upon it: (1) his name; (2) his prison registration number; (3) the case number; and (4) that the remittance is for an original proceeding.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this action is **DISMISSED** pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

An Order of Dismissal will accompany this Memorandum and Order.

Dated this 11th day of May, 2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Henry Edward Autrey", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

HENRY EDWARD AUTREY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE