

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS  
LITTLE ROCK DIVISION**

SAMMIE BROWN

PLAINTIFF

V.

NO: 4:10CV01664 SWW

LYNN FRANK PLEMMONS

DEFENDANT

**ORDER**

Plaintiff, currently held at the Faulkner County Detention Facility, filed a *pro se* complaint, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (docket entry #2), on November 16, 2010, naming as a Defendant attorney Lynn Frank Plemmons. Because the actions of Plaintiff's retained counsel were not committed under color of state law, Plaintiff's complaint should be dismissed.

**I. Screening**

Before docketing the complaint, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the court must review the complaint to identify cognizable claims or dismiss the complaint if it: (1) is frivolous or malicious; (2) fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted; or (3) seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. Fed.R.Civ.P. 8(a)(2) requires only "a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief." In *Bell Atlantic Corporation v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007) (overruling *Conley v. Gibson*, 355 U.S. 41 (1967), and setting new standard for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted), the court stated, "a plaintiff's obligation to provide the 'grounds' of his 'entitle[ment]to relief' requires more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not do....Factual allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculative level," *citing* 5 C. Wright & A. Miller, *Federal Practice and Procedure* § 1216, pp. 235-

236 (3d ed. 2004). A complaint must contain enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face, not merely conceivable. *Twombly* at 570. However, a *pro se* plaintiff's allegations must be construed liberally. *Burke v. North Dakota Dept. of Corr. & Rehab.*, 294 F.3d 1043, 1043-1044 (8th Cir.2002) (citations omitted).

## **II. Analysis**

According to Plaintiff's complaint, he paid Defendant \$1,500.00 to represent him in a criminal matter, but Defendant has failed to do so. Because Defendant is not a state actor, Plaintiff's complaint must be dismissed. Section 1983 provides that:

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom or usage, of any State . . . subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States . . . to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in any action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress. . .

42 U.S.C. § 1983.

To state a cognizable claim for money damages under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Plaintiff must allege that the conduct of a defendant acting "under color of state law" deprived him of a right, privilege, or immunity secured by the federal Constitution or laws of the United States. 42 U.S.C. § 1983; *Hamilton v. Schriro*, 74 F.3d 1545, 1549 (8th Cir. 1996). The conduct of counsel, either retained or appointed, in representing clients, does not constitute action under color of state law for purposes of a section 1983 violation. *Bilal v. Kaplan*, 904 F.2d 14 (8th Cir. 1990).

## **III. Conclusion**

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. Plaintiff's complaint is DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

2. This dismissal counts as a “strike” for purposes of 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g).
3. The Court certifies that an *in forma pauperis* appeal taken from the order and judgment dismissing this action is considered frivolous and not in good faith.

DATED this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2010.

/s/Susan Webber Wright

UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE