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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

CARLOS HENDON,

Plaintiff,

v.

REED, et al.,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 1:05-cv-00790-OWW-SMS PC

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDING GRANTING
DEFENDANTS’ MOTIONS FOR SUMMARY
JUDGMENT

(ECF Nos. 36, 41, 47)

/ OBJECTIONS DUE WITHIN THIRTY DAYS

I. Procedural History

Plaintiff Carlos Hendon (“Carlos Hendon”) is a state prisoner proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis in this civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. This action is proceeding on Plaintiff’s second amended complaint, filed February 25, 2008, against Defendants Granillo, Lopez, and Brimage¹ for violations of the Eighth Amendment. (ECF No. 11.) On July 9, 2010, Defendants filed a motion for summary judgment on the issue of excessive force in violation of the Eighth Amendment. (ECF No. 36.) The Magistrate Judge issued findings and recommendations recommending granting Defendants’ motion for summary judgment on the ground that they were entitled to qualified immunity on January 31, 2011. (ECF No. 42.) On March 23, 2011, the District Judge issued an order vacating the findings and recommendations and referring the matter back to the Magistrate Judge for further proceedings. (ECF No. 44.) The Magistrate Judge issued an order directing Defendants to file a supplemental motion for summary judgment addressing the action as

¹Defendant Brimage is identified as Julie B. in the second amended complaint.

1 conditions of confinement in violation of the Eighth Amendment. (ECF No. 45.) On May 6, 2011,
2 Defendants filed a motion to offer an unenumerated Rule 12(b) motion beyond time and a
3 supplemental motion for summary judgment.² (ECF Nos. 46, 47.) Plaintiff has not filed an
4 objection.³

5 Defendants bring the motion for summary judgment on the grounds that 1) Plaintiff's Eighth
6 Amendment rights were not violated; 2) Plaintiff failed to comply with the California Tort Claims
7 Act thereby barring his state law claims; 3) Plaintiff failed to exhaust administrative remedies; 4)
8 Plaintiff cannot recover for emotional injury because he did not suffer a cognizable physical injury;
9 and 5) Defendants are entitled to qualified immunity.

10 **II. Motion to Dismiss For Failure to Exhaust Administrative Remedies**

11 **A. Legal Standard**

12 Pursuant to the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1995, “[n]o action shall be brought with
13 respect to prison conditions under [42 U.S.C. § 1983], or any other Federal law, by a prisoner
14 confined in any jail, prison, or other correctional facility until such administrative remedies as are
15 available are exhausted.” 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a). The section 1997e(a) exhaustion requirement
16 applies to all prisoner suits relating to prison conditions. Woodford v. Ngo, 548 U.S. 81, 85 (2006).
17 All available remedies must be exhausted, not just those remedies that meet federal standards,
18 Woodford, 548 U.S. at 84, nor must they be “plain, speedy, and effective,” Booth v. Churner, 532
19 U.S. 731, 739 (2001). Prisoners must complete the prison’s administrative process, regardless of
20 the relief sought by the prisoner and regardless of the relief offered by the process, as long as the
21 administrative process can provide some sort of relief on the complaint stated. Id at 741; see
22 Woodford, 548 U.S. at 93.

23 The California Department of Corrections has an administrative grievance system for
24 prisoner complaints. Cal. Code Regs., tit. 15 § 3084, et seq. “Any inmate or parolee under the

25
26 ²By separate order the Court granted Defendants’ motion to offer an unenumerated Rule 12(b) argument
beyond time.

27 ³Plaintiff was provided with notice of the requirements for opposing a motion for summary judgment by the
28 second informational order filed May 14, 2009. Klinge v. Eikenberry, 849 F.2d 409 (9th Cir. 1988). (ECF No.
20.)

1 department's jurisdiction may appeal any departmental decision, action, condition, or policy which
2 they can demonstrate as having an adverse effect upon their welfare." Cal. Code Regs. tit. 15, §
3 3084.1(a). Four levels of appeal are involved, including the informal level, first formal level, second
4 formal level, and third formal level, also known as the "Director's Level." Cal. Code Regs. tit 15,
5 § 3084.5.

6 Section 1997e(a) does not impose a pleading requirement, but rather, is an affirmative
7 defense which defendants have the burden of raising and proving the absence of exhaustion. Lira
8 v. Herrera, 427 F.3d 1164, 1171 (9th Cir. 2005). The failure to exhaust nonjudicial administrative
9 remedies that are not jurisdictional is subject to an unenumerated Rule 12(b) motion, rather than a
10 summary judgment motion. Wyatt v. Terhune, 315 F.3d 1108, 1119 (9th Cir. 2003) (citing Ritza
11 v. Int'l Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union, 837 F.2d 365, 368 (9th Cir. 1998) (per curium)).
12 "In deciding a motion to dismiss for failure to exhaust, a court may look beyond the pleadings and
13 decide disputed issues of fact." Sapp v. Kimbrell, 623 F.3d. 813, 821 (9th Cir. 2010) (quoting
14 Wyatt, 315 F.3d at 1119-20). If the court concludes that the prisoner has failed to exhaust
15 administrative remedies, the proper remedy is dismissal without prejudice, even where there has
16 been exhaustion while the suit is pending. Lira, 427 F.3d at 1171.

17 **B. Discussion**

18 Plaintiff claims that his rights under the Eighth Amendment were violated when correctional
19 officers threw feces and urine at him. Plaintiff alleges that on September 9, 2002, Defendant Granillo
20 threw a dust pan full of feces on Plaintiff, striking him in the face and torso while he was secured in
21 his cell. Plaintiff also claims that Defendant Lopez threw a cup full of urine on Plaintiff while he was
22 in his cell on September 15, 2002. Plaintiff states that Defendant Julie Brimage was present during
23 both incidents and took no action to prevent the incidents from occurring.

24 Plaintiff stated that after the incidents occurred he attempted to tell a sergeant, but no sergeant
25 responded. (Deposition of Carlos Hendon, p. 45.) After he was taken off management status he
26 completed an inmate appeal form and mailed it to the appeals coordinator. (Id. at. 46.) Plaintiff filed
27 his administrative grievance on September 23, 2002. (Opposition 7, ECF No. 41.) Plaintiff never
28 received a response so he submitted a second appeal and never received a response to that appeal

1 either. (Deposition of Carlos Hendon at 47.) He never received a log number for either appeal and
2 does not have a copy. (Id. at 48.) When Plaintiff filed his inmate appeals he included both incidents
3 on the same grievance form. He complained that he had been gassed by Defendants Lopez and
4 Granillo. (Id. at 51.) He never mentioned Defendant Brimage in the appeals. (Id. at 52.)

5 Defendants argue that Plaintiff never submitted an inmate appeal based on these incidents.
6 The only appeal submitted by Plaintiff was related to the denial of due process at his disciplinary
7 hearing and did not mention the alleged assault by Defendants Granillo or Lopez. Therefore Plaintiff
8 failed to exhaust his administrative remedies and the action should be dismissed.

9 Defendants have not submitted any documentation to indicate that Plaintiff failed to exhaust
10 administrative remedies. The evidence submitted merely indicates that there are no records to show
11 whether Plaintiff submitted an inmate appeal on these incidents in 2002. Additionally, if he did
12 submit an appeal as he claims, there is no evidence to show if it was returned because it did not
13 comply with the regulations or if officials failed to respond. Defendants have failed to meet their
14 burden of showing that Plaintiff failed to exhaust his administrative remedies and the motion to
15 dismiss for failure to exhaust should be denied.

16 **III. Motion for Summary Judgment**

17 **A. Legal Standard**

18 Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 56(c), summary judgment is appropriate when
19 it is demonstrated that there exists no genuine issue as to any material fact, and that the moving party
20 is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. Summary judgment must be entered, “after adequate time
21 for discovery and upon motion, against a party who fails to make a showing sufficient to establish the
22 existence of an element essential to that party’s case, and on which that party will bear the burden of
23 proof at trial.” Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317, 322 (1986). However, the court is to liberally
24 construe the filings and motions of pro se litigants. Thomas v. Ponder, 611 F.3d 1144, 1150 (9th Cir.
25 2010.) The “party seeking summary judgment bears the initial responsibility of informing the district
26 court of the basis for its motion, and identifying those portions of the ‘pleadings, depositions, answers
27 to interrogatories, and admissions on file, together with the affidavits, if any,’ which it believes
28 demonstrate the absence of a genuine issue of material fact.” Celotex, 477 U.S. at 323 (quoting Rule

1 56(c) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure).

2 If the moving party meets its initial responsibility, the burden then shifts to the opposing party
3 to establish that a genuine issue as to any material fact actually does exist. Matsushita Elec. Indus.
4 Co. v. Zenith Radio Corp., 475 U.S. 574, 586 (1986). In attempting to establish the existence of this
5 factual dispute, the opposing party may not rely upon the denials of its pleadings, but is required to
6 tender evidence of specific facts in the form of affidavits, and/or admissible discovery material, in
7 support of its contention that the dispute exists. Fed. R. Civ. P. 56(e); Matsushita, 475 U.S. at 586
8 n.11.

9 The parties bear the burden of supporting their motions and oppositions with the papers they
10 wish the Court to consider and/or by specifically referencing any other portions of the record for
11 consideration. Carmen v. San Francisco Unified School Dist., 237 F.3d 1026, 1031 (9th Cir. 2001).
12 The Court will not undertake to mine the record for triable issues of fact. Simmons v. Navajo County,
13 Arizona, 609 F.3d 1011, 1017 (9th Cir. 2010)

14 **B. Plaintiff's Allegations**

15 Plaintiff alleges that on September 9, 2002, Defendant Granillo threw a dustpan full of
16 Plaintiff's feces at Plaintiff, striking him in the chest and face. On September 15, 2002, Defendant
17 Lopez threw a cup of urine on Plaintiff striking him in the back of the head and on his back.
18 Defendant Brimage stood by and watched while these incidents took place. (Second Amend. Compl.
19 3, ECF No. 11.) As a result of these incidents, Plaintiff suffered pain and a stinging sensation in his
20 eyes and on his skin and suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Plaintiff also brings state law
21 claims for negligence and assault and battery due to these incidents. (Id. at 4.)

22 **C. Undisputed Facts⁴**

- 23 1. Plaintiff is a state prisoner who was in the custody of the California Department of
24 Corrections and Rehabilitation ("CDCR") at all times material to the matters at issue.
- 25 2. Defendants Granillo, Lopez, and Brimage are Correctional Officers employed by the
26

27 ⁴Plaintiff did not comply with Local Rule 260(b), therefore the Court compiled the statement of undisputed
28 facts from Defendant's statement of undisputed facts, Plaintiff's oppositions to the motions for summary judgment,
and Plaintiff's complaint

1 CDCR, were assigned to the California Correctional Institution (“CCI”), and were
2 working in the administrative segregation unit at all times material to the matters at
3 issue.

4 3. The administrative segregation unit houses inmates whose presence in the institution’s
5 general population presents a threat to the safety of the inmate or others, endangers
6 security, or jeopardizes the integrity of an investigation. When a determination is
7 made that the inmate poses a threat, he is immediately removed from the general
8 population and placed into administrative segregation.

9 4. Plaintiff was transferred to CCI’s Security Housing Unit (SHU) on June 5, 2002, after
10 he threatened a staff member while housed at Salinas Valley State Prison.

11 5. While in the SHU, Plaintiff continued to exhibit disruptive behavior. Because of his
12 disorderly conduct, when released from the SHU, Plaintiff was retained in
13 administrative segregation pending a review of his housing status.

14 6. Inmates housed in administrative segregation do not go to the chow hall for meals, but
15 have meals delivered to their cells by staff members.

16 7. When cell feeding the inmates, officers generally work in pairs; one officer opens the
17 food port on the cell door, the other officer passes the food tray to the inmate.

18 8. The food ports open outward forming a five-inch ledge on the outside of the door on
19 which the officer can rest the inmate’s tray. The tray can then be grabbed by the
20 inmate.

21 9. On the morning of September 9, 2002, Plaintiff was upset with custody staff. As a
22 sign of his displeasure, Plaintiff slid some of his feces underneath his cell door, out
23 onto the tier.

24 10. When an inmate slides fecal matter out onto the tier it is the officer’s duty to clean it
25 up. The officer uses a hose to wash the feces down the hallway to the shower drain,
26 which is located about ten feet away from the cells.

27 11. Defendant Granillo was working second watch in the administrative segregation
28 housing unit on the morning of September 9, 2002. Defendant Granillo hosed the

1 feces away from the front of the cell that morning.

2 12. Later that same day, Defendant Lopez was working third watch in the administrative
3 segregation unit.

4 13. At approximately 8:00 p.m., Defendant Lopez heard banging coming from B-Section.
5 Defendant Lopez thought it sounded like an inmate was kicking his cell door.

6 14. Defendant Lopez entered B-Section and saw Plaintiff standing at the door to his cell.
7 When Defendant Lopez asked Plaintiff if he had been kicking his door, Plaintiff
8 replied, "yes," and then asked why he had not received his dinner tray. Defendant
9 Lopez explained that Plaintiff had refused his tray, but offered to go get Plaintiff a tray
10 if he wanted to eat. Plaintiff requested a tray and Defendant Lopez left the tier to go
11 retrieve one.

12 15. Because it was not time for cell feeding, Defendant Lopez was alone when he returned
13 with the tray. Defendant Lopez opened the food port on Plaintiff's cell door and
14 placed the tray on the ledge.

15 16. Plaintiff quickly grabbed a milk carton from inside his cell and threw the contents out
16 of the food port before Defendant Lopez was able to close it. The carton contained
17 liquid mixed with fecal matter. The liquid hit Defendant Lopez on his vest and the
18 lower part of his jumpsuit.

19 17. Defendant Lopez left B-Section and went to the staff restroom to wash up, trying to
20 decontaminate himself using a hose, soap, and water.

21 18. Defendant Lopez told Officer Bohan that he had been "gassed" by Plaintiff.

22 19. "Gassing" is the phrase used by prison staff to indicate that an inmate has thrown
23 bodily fluids or excrement at an officer.

24 20. Officer Bojan picked up Defendant Lopez's vest from the ground, then removed and
25 decontaminated the vest's protective inserts.

26 21. Sergeant Beckett was notified of the "gassing" incident via radio and responded to the
27 housing unit where he saw Defendant Lopez standing in the rotunda. Defendant
28 Lopez's uniform was wet from the abdomen, down. Sergeant Beckett also noticed

1 what appeared to be fecal matter on the vest. Sergeant Beckett reported the incident
2 to his supervisor, Lieutenant Cox, and then Beckett escorted Defendant Lopez to the
3 medical clinic.

4 22. Once inside the clinic, Defendant Lopez was examined by Medical Technical
5 Assistant (MTA) Bishop, who noted that Defendant Lopez's uniform was wet from
6 the abdomen area to his knees, with a small amount of feces still visible on his
7 uniform. Because of possible exposure to disease, MTA Bishop advised Defendant
8 Lopez to seek medical attention either at the Emergency Room, or from his private
9 physician.

10 23. Medical staff looked at Plaintiff through the window of his cell to determine if he had
11 suffered any injuries. MTA Bishop noted no marks on Plaintiff's body, but he did
12 notice fecal matter on the floor in front of Plaintiff's cell. Plaintiff denied that he had
13 suffered any injuries.

14 24. Following the incident, Defendant Lopez advised Plaintiff of his *Miranda* rights.
15 Plaintiff elected to remain silent.

16 25. Defendant Lopez then left the institution for further medical treatment, arriving at the
17 Tehachapi Hospital Emergency room at approximately 9:10 p.m.

18 26. Defendant Lopez filed a disciplinary violation against Plaintiff, noting the incident
19 that had occurred on September 9, 2002.

20 **D. Conditions of Confinement in Violation of the Eighth Amendment**

21 **1. Legal Standard**

22 Liability under section 1983 exists where a defendant "acting under the color of law" has
23 deprived the plaintiff "of a right secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States." Jensen
24 v. Lane County, 222 F.3d 570, 574 (9th Cir. 2000). Under section 1983, Plaintiff must demonstrate
25 that each defendant personally participated in the deprivation of his rights. Jones v. Williams, 297
26 F.3d 930, 934 (9th Cir. 2002).

27 To prove a violation of the Eighth Amendment the plaintiff must "objectively show that he
28 was deprived of something 'sufficiently serious,' and make a subjective showing that the deprivation

1 occurred with deliberate indifference to the inmate’s health or safety.” Thomas, 611 F.3d at 1150
2 (citations omitted). Deliberate indifference requires a showing that “prison officials were aware of
3 a “substantial risk of serious harm” to an inmates health or safety and that there was no “reasonable
4 justification for the deprivation, in spite of that risk.” Id. (quoting Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825,
5 837, 844 (1994)). Officials may be aware of the risk because it is obvious. Thomas, 611 F.3d at
6 1152. The circumstances, nature, and duration of the deprivations are critical in determining whether
7 the conditions complained of are grave enough to form the basis of a viable Eighth Amendment
8 claim.” Johnson v. Lewis, 217 F.3d 726, 731 (9th Cir. 2006).

9 **2. Discussion**

10 Defendants claim that they are entitled to summary judgment because they did not violate
11 Plaintiff’s Eighth Amendment rights. Defendants argue that they did not throw excrement on
12 Plaintiff, and the undisputed evidence shows that Plaintiff was the assailant, and both Granillo and
13 Lopez were the targets of Plaintiff’s assaults. Since the conditions Plaintiff alleges that he was
14 subjected to lasted only a few minutes they do not rise to the level of a significant deprivation.
15 Plaintiff alleges that Defendant Granillo tossed Plaintiff’s own fecal matter at him, striking him in
16 the chest, face, and neck. The excrement hit Plaintiff’s shirt, which he took off and washed within
17 a few minutes. Later that same day, Plaintiff admits that he “gassed” Defendant Lopez with a cup
18 filled with urine and feces. Plaintiff alleges that Defendant Lopez responded by filling a cup with
19 urine and throwing it at Plaintiff, striking him in the back. Plaintiff cleaned up shortly after the
20 incident. Plaintiff was examined by medical personnel and found to have no marks and Plaintiff
21 denied having injuries.

22 Additionally Defendants argue that actions taken for the purpose of harassment and abuse,
23 which do not pose a substantial risk of serious harm, fall short of the requirement that they be
24 “sufficiently serious.” Even taking Plaintiff’s allegations against Defendants Granillo and Lopez as
25 true, they constitute no more than *de minimis* acts of harassment, not cruel and unusual punishment.
26 Plaintiff’s allegation against Defendant Brimage, that she was present and failed to intervene, requires
27 that Plaintiff show that Defendant Brimage was aware that Plaintiff was at a substantial risk of harm
28 and had an opportunity to act to prevent the harm. In his deposition Plaintiff stated that Defendant

1 Lopez was by himself when he came to Plaintiff's cell. Plaintiff was standing toward the back of the
2 cell, facing the wall and could not see where Defendant Brimage was standing or determine her ability
3 to see what was occurring. Since Defendant Brimage did not see Defendant Lopez throw any liquid
4 at Plaintiff she cannot be held liable for failure to intervene.

5 Defendants argue that even taking Plaintiff's allegations as true, they are not sufficiently
6 serious to rise to the level of a Constitutional violation. Routine discomfort that is inherent in the
7 prison setting is insufficient to establish an Eighth Amendment violation, deprivations that deny "the
8 minimal civilized measure of life's necessities" are objectively sufficiently serious. Wilson v. Seiter,
9 501 U.S. 294, 298 (1991); Johnson, 217 F.3d at 731. While the circumstances, nature, and duration
10 of the deprivations are critical in determining whether the conditions complained of are grave enough
11 to form the basis of a viable Eighth Amendment claim, id., exposure to human waste carries particular
12 weight in the determination. See McBride v. Deer, 240 F.3d 1287, 1292 (10th Cir. 2001) ("human
13 waste has been considered particularly offensive so that 'courts have been especially cautious about
14 condoning conditions that include an inmate's proximity to [it]'" (citation omitted); Fruit v. Norris,
15 905 F.2d 1147, 1150-51 (8th Cir. 1990) (common sense suggests that officials would know "that
16 unprotected contact with human waste could cause disease"); McCord v. Maggio, 927 F.2d 844, 848
17 (5th Cir. 1991) (it is unquestionably a health hazard to have an inmate live in "filthy water
18 contaminated with human waste").

19 However, the circumstances in the cases finding an Eighth Amendment violation have been
20 more severe than what is alleged here. In McBride, an Eighth Amendment violation was found where
21 the inmate was forced to live in a feces covered cell for three days. McBride, 240 F.3d at 1292. The
22 inmate in McCord repeatedly had to live in sewage and foul water and slept on a bare mattress in
23 water contaminated with human feces. McCord, 927 F.2d at 846-47. In Fruit, the inmates were
24 required to clean out a wet-well portion of the prison's raw sewage lift-pump station, and were denied
25 protective clothing and equipment. Waste flowed continually into the wet-well and the inmates filled
26 5 gallon buckets to be lifted out of the well, while the temperature inside the well was 125 degrees.
27 Fruit, 905 F.2d at 1148.

28 The Ninth Circuit has held that subjecting an inmate to "a lack of sanitation that is severe or

1 prolonged can constitute an infliction of pain within the Eighth Amendment.” Anderson v. County
2 of Kern, 45 F.3d 1310, 1315 (9th Cir. 1995). In Anderson, a civil rights action alleging that suicidal
3 inmates were on occasion shackled to a grate over a pit toilet in a cell that was dirty and smelled bad,
4 the claim was rejected because plaintiffs had failed to show that the conditions were more than
5 temporary. Anderson, 45 F.3d at 1315. Plaintiff’s allegation that his own feces was thrown on him
6 and that on another occasion urine was thrown on him do not demonstrate a prolonged or severe
7 deprivation that would rise to the level of a constitutional violation. See Hunt v. Downing, 112 F.3d
8 452, 453 (10th Cir. 1997) (no Eighth Amendment claim where inmate made to sleep one night on
9 urinated sheets while detained in a state juvenile facility as punishment for intentionally soiling the
10 bed covers); Greene v. Mazzuca, 485 F.Supp.2d 447, 451 (S.D.N.Y. 2007) (claim that inmate was
11 yelled and spit at, and threatened with time in SHU does not rise to level of a constitutional violation);
12 see also Muhammad v. Dir. of Corrections, No. CIV S-07-0375 GEB GGH P, 2010 WL 3126169,
13 at *6 (E.D.Cal. Aug. 6, 2010); Stearns v. Woodford, No. C 05-2443 JF, 2008 WL 4544372, at *4
14 (N.D.Cal. Sept. 30, 2008); Grizzle v. Cambra, No. C 96-885 SI (PR), 1999 WL 66139, at *9 (N.D.Cal
15 Feb. 10, 1999); cf. Sherman v. Gonzalez, No. 2010 WL 2791565, *4-5 (E.D.Cal. July 14, 2010)
16 (denying summary judgment where inmate suffered asthma attack). Plaintiff immediately removed
17 his clothing and was able to clean the substance off of him, so the exposure was for a very short
18 period of time. Additionally, Plaintiff suffered no injury.

19 While Plaintiff’s allegations that feces and urine were thrown on him are revolting, and the
20 Court in no way condones the actions, under the circumstances alleged in this action the conduct does
21 not rise to the level of a constitutional violation and Defendants are entitled to summary adjudication.

22 **E. State Law Tort Claims**

23 Defendants allege that Plaintiff’s state law tort claims of negligence and assault and battery
24 are barred because he failed to comply with the California Tort Claims Act. Plaintiff claims that he
25 filed a claim with the California Tort Claims Board but did not receive a response. Since Plaintiff
26 did not pursue the matter further he is barred from asserting his state law claims.

27 The Tort Claims Act requires that a tort claim against a public entity or its employees be
28 presented to the California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board, formerly known

1 as the State Board of Control, no more than six months after the cause of action accrues. Cal. Gov't
2 Code §§ 905.2, 910, 911.2, 945.4, 950-950.2 (West 2010). Presentation of a written claim, and action
3 on or rejection of the claim are conditions precedent to suit. State v. Superior Court of Kings County
4 (Bodde), 32 Cal.4th 1234, 1240 (2004); Shirk v. Vista Unified School District, 42 Cal.4th 201, 209
5 (2007). Compliance with the Tort Claims Act is an element of the cause of action, Bodde, 32 Cal.4th
6 at 1240, is required, and “failure to file a claim is fatal to a cause of action.” Hacienda La Puente
7 Unified School Dist. Of Los Angeles v. Honig, 976 F.2d 487, 495 (9th Cir. 1992); City of San Jose
8 v. Superior Court, 12 Cal.3d 447, 454 (1974).

9 If written notice is not given that the claim is rejected, the Tort Claims Act requires that the
10 claim must be filed “within two years from the accrual of the cause of action.” Cal. Gov't Code §
11 945.6(a)(2). Plaintiff's cause of action accrued on September 9, 2002 and September 15, 2002. Since
12 Plaintiff asserts that he never received a response to his claim, the Tort Claims Act required him to
13 file suit within two years. The complaint in this action was filed on June 16, 2005, approximately
14 nine months after the date he was required to file to be in compliance with the Tort Claims Act.⁵
15 Therefore, Plaintiff failed to comply with the California Tort Claims Act and Defendants' motion for
16 summary adjudication on his state law claims should be granted.

17 **F. Recovery for Emotional Injury and Qualified Immunity**

18 Defendants' final arguments are that Plaintiff may not recover for emotional injury and that
19 they are entitled to qualified immunity. Because the Court recommends granting Defendants' motion
20 based on the foregoing analysis, the Court does not reach Defendants' remaining arguments.

21 **IV. Conclusion and Recommendation**

22 The Court finds that Defendants Granillo, Lopez and Brimage are entitled to judgment as a
23 matter of law on Plaintiff's claims that they violated the Eighth Amendment. Accordingly, it is
24 HEREBY RECOMMENDED that Defendants' motions for summary judgment, filed July 9, 2010
25 and May 6, 2011, be GRANTED.

26 These findings and recommendations will be submitted to the United States District Judge

27 _____
28 ⁵California Code of Civil Procedure Section 352.1 does not apply to “a cause of action for which a claim is
required to be presented in accordance with [the Tort Claims Act]. Cal. Code Civ. Proc. § 352.1(b).

1 assigned to the case, pursuant to the provisions of Title 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1). Within thirty (30) days
2 after being served with these findings and recommendations, the parties may file written objections
3 with the Court. The document should be captioned “Objections to Magistrate Judge’s Findings and
4 Recommendations.” The parties are advised that failure to file objections within the specified time
5 may waive the right to appeal the District Court’s order. Martinez v. Ylst, 951 F.2d 1153 (9th Cir.
6 1991).

7
8 IT IS SO ORDERED.

9 **Dated: June 6, 2011**

/s/ Sandra M. Snyder
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE