



1 **II. Screening Requirement**

2 When an individual seeks to proceed *in forma pauperis*, the Court is required to review the  
3 complaint and shall dismiss a complaint, or portion of the complaint, if it is “frivolous, malicious or  
4 fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted; or . . . seeks monetary relief from a defendant  
5 who is immune from such relief.” 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b); 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2). A plaintiff’s claim  
6 is frivolous “when the facts alleged rise to the level of the irrational or the wholly incredible, whether or  
7 not there are judicially noticeable facts available to contradict them.” *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S.  
8 25, 32-33 (1992).

9 **III. Pleading Standards**

10 General rules for pleading complaints are governed by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. A  
11 pleading must include a statement affirming the court’s jurisdiction, “a short and plain statement of the  
12 claim showing the pleader is entitled to relief; and . . . a demand for the relief sought, which may  
13 include relief in the alternative or different types of relief.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a).

14 A complaint must give fair notice and state the elements of the plaintiff’s claim in a plain and  
15 succinct manner. *Jones v. Cmty Redevelopment Agency*, 733 F.2d 646, 649 (9th Cir. 1984). The  
16 purpose of the complaint is to give the defendant fair notice of the claims against him, and the grounds  
17 upon which the complaint stands. *Swierkiewicz v. Sorema N.A.*, 534 U.S. 506, 512 (2002). The  
18 Supreme Court noted,

19 Rule 8 does not require detailed factual allegations, but it demands more than an  
20 unadorned, the-defendant-unlawfully-harmed-me accusation. A pleading that offers  
21 labels and conclusions or a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will  
not do. Nor does a complaint suffice if it tenders naked assertions devoid of further  
factual enhancement.

22 *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678-79 (2009) (internal quotation marks and citations omitted). Vague  
23 and conclusory allegations do not support a cause of action. *Ivey v. Board of Regents*, 673 F.2d 266,  
24 268 (9th Cir. 1982). The Court clarified further,

25 [A] complaint must contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to “state a claim  
26 to relief that is plausible on its face.” [Citation]. A claim has facial plausibility when  
the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable  
27 inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged. [Citation]. The  
28 plausibility standard is not akin to a “probability requirement,” but it asks for more than  
a sheer possibility that a defendant has acted unlawfully. [Citation]. Where a complaint

1 pleads facts that are “merely consistent with” a defendant’s liability, it “stops short of  
2 the line between possibility and plausibility of ‘entitlement to relief.’  
3 *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 679 (citations omitted). When factual allegations are well-pled, a court should  
4 assume their truth and determine whether the facts would make the plaintiff entitled to relief; legal  
5 conclusions are not entitled to the same assumption of truth. *Id.* The Court may grant leave to amend a  
6 complaint to the extent deficiencies of the complaint can be cured by an amendment. *Lopez v. Smith*,  
7 203 F.3d 1122, 1127-28 (9th Cir. 2000) (en banc).

8 **IV. Discussion and Analysis**

9 Plaintiff seeks review of a decision by the Commissioner of Social Security denying disability  
10 benefits. (Doc. 1) The Court may have jurisdiction pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 405(g), which provides in  
11 relevant part:

12 Any individual, after any final decision of the Commissioner made after a hearing to  
13 which he was a party, irrespective of the amount in controversy, may obtain a review of  
14 such decision by a civil action commenced within sixty days after the mailing to him of  
15 such decision or within such further time as the Commissioner may allow. Such action  
16 shall be brought in the district court of the United States for the judicial district in  
17 which the plaintiff resides, or has his principal place of business . . . The court shall  
have power to enter, upon the pleadings and transcript of the record, a judgment  
affirming, modifying, or reversing the decision of the Commissioner of Social Security,  
with or without remanding the cause for a rehearing.

18 *Id.* Except as provided by statute, “[n]o findings of fact or decision of the Commissioner shall be  
19 reviewed by any person, tribunal, or governmental agency.” 42 U.S.C. § 405(h).

20 Here, Plaintiff alleges the Appeals Council denied his request for review of the decision on  
21 September 18, 2015, at which time the decision of the administrative law judge became the decision of  
22 the Commissioner. (Doc. 1 at 2) Therefore, Plaintiff’s request for review would be due within sixty  
23 five days of the date of Appeal’s Council’s notice, or no later than November 22, 2015. *See* 42 U.S.C.  
24 §405(g) (noting a claimant is “presumed” to have received the notice of denial within “5 days after the  
25 date of such notice”). Because Plaintiff initiated this action November 19, 2015, his request for judicial  
26 review is timely, and the Court has jurisdiction over the matter pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

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1 **V. Conclusion and Order**

2 Plaintiff's complaint states a cognizable claim for review of the administrative decision denying  
3 Social Security benefits. Based upon the foregoing, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

- 4 1. Plaintiff's motion to proceed *in forma pauperis* (Doc. 2) is **GRANTED**;
- 5 2. The Clerk of Court is **DIRECTED** to issue summons as to the defendant, Carolyn  
6 Colvin, Acting Commissioner of Social Security;
- 7 3. The Clerk of Court is **DIRECTED** to issue and serve Plaintiff with Social Security Case  
8 Documents, including the Scheduling Order, Order regarding Consent, the Consent  
9 Form, and USM-285 Forms; and
- 10 4. The U.S. Marshal is **DIRECTED** to serve a copy of the complaint, summons, and this  
11 order upon the defendant as directed by Plaintiff in the USM Forms.

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13 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

14 Dated: **December 28, 2015**

**/s/ Jennifer L. Thurston**  
15 UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE