

E-FILED - 2/9/10

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

RICHARD B. HALL,

Plaintiff,

v.

ANTHONY HEDGPETH, et al,

Defendants.

No. C 09-5935 RMW (PR)

ORDER OF SERVICE;
DIRECTING DEFENDANTS
TO FILE DISPOSITIVE
MOTION OR NOTICE
REGARDING SUCH MOTION

Plaintiff, proceeding pro se, filed a civil rights complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against officials and employees of Salinas Valley State Prison, where plaintiff's allegations occurred. Plaintiff is granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis in a separate order. The court orders service of the complaint on the named defendants.

DISCUSSION

A. Standard of Review

Federal courts must engage in a preliminary screening of cases in which prisoners seek redress from a governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). In its review the court must identify any cognizable claims, and dismiss any claims which are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seek monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. Id. at §

1 1915A(b)(1),(2). Pro se pleadings must, however, be liberally construed. Balistreri v. Pacifica
2 Police Dep't, 901 F.2d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1988).

3 To state a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege two essential
4 elements: (1) that a right secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States was violated,
5 and (2) that the alleged deprivation was committed by a person acting under the color of state
6 law. West v. Atkins, 487 U.S. 42, 48 (1988).

7 B. Plaintiff's Claim

8 Plaintiff alleges that Salinas Valley State Prison does not offer or recognize Reformed
9 Christians as a separate belief from other Christian faiths. Plaintiff recites several examples of
10 how his federal rights have been violated by prison officials. As a result, plaintiff claims that he
11 is being denied his right to worship and practice his religion. Liberally construed, plaintiff states
12 a cognizable claim that defendants are violating his right to free exercise and equal protection
13 and RLUIPA. The court will order service of the complaint based on the cognizable claims
14 described above.

15 To the extent plaintiff is claiming that defendants improperly handled any administrative
16 grievance, that claim is DISMISSED. There is no constitutional right to a prison administrative
17 appeal or grievance system. See Ramirez v. Galaza, 334 F.3d 850, 860 (9th Cir. 2003).

18 **CONCLUSION**

19 1. The clerk of the court shall issue summons and the United States Marshal shall
20 serve, without prepayment of fees, a copy of the complaint, all attachments thereto, and a copy
21 of this order upon: WARDEN ANTHONY HEDGPETH; CHIEF DEPUTY WARDEN L.
22 TREXLER; COMMUNITY RESOURCES MANAGER JIM BONNIFIELD; CCII P.
23 NICKERSON; CHAPLAIN J. YOUNG in SOLEDAD, CALIFORNIA and CHIEF INMATE
24 APPEALS BRANCH N. GRANNIS in SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA. The clerk shall also
25 mail a courtesy copy of this order and the complaint, with all attachments thereto, to the
26 **California Attorney General's Office.**

27 3. No later than **ninety (90) days** from the date of this order, defendants shall file a
28 motion for summary judgment or other dispositive motion with respect to the claims in the

1 complaint as set forth above, or notify the court that they are of the opinion that this case cannot
2 be resolved by such a motion.

3 a. If defendants elect to file a motion to dismiss on the grounds that plaintiff
4 failed to exhaust his available administrative remedies as required by 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a),
5 defendant shall do so in an unenumerated Rule 12(b) motion pursuant to Wyatt v. Terhune, 315
6 F.3d 1108, 1119-20 (9th Cir. 2003).

7 b. Any motion for summary judgment shall be supported by adequate factual
8 documentation and shall conform in all respects to Rule 56 of the Federal Rules of Civil
9 Procedure. **Defendants are advised that summary judgment cannot be granted, nor**
10 **qualified immunity found, if material facts are in dispute. If any defendant is of the**
11 **opinion that this case cannot be resolved by summary judgment, he shall so inform the**
12 **court prior to the date the summary judgment motion is due.**

13 4. Plaintiff's opposition to the dispositive motion shall be filed with the court and
14 served on defendant no later than **thirty (30) days** from the date defendant's motion is filed.

15 a. In the event defendants file an unenumerated motion to dismiss under
16 Rule 12(b), plaintiff is hereby cautioned as follows:¹

17 The defendants have made a motion to dismiss pursuant to Rule 12(b) of
18 the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, on the ground you have not exhausted your
19 administrative remedies. The motion will, if granted, result in the dismissal of
20 your case. When a party you are suing makes a motion to dismiss for failure to
21 exhaust, and that motion is properly supported by declarations (or other sworn
22 testimony) and/or documents, you may not simply rely on what your complaint
23 says. Instead, you must set out specific facts in declarations, depositions, answers
24 to interrogatories, or documents, that contradict the facts shown in the defendant's
25 declarations and documents and show that you have in fact exhausted your
26 claims. If you do not submit your own evidence in opposition, the motion to
27 dismiss, if appropriate, may be granted and the case dismissed.

28 b. In the event defendants file a motion for summary judgment, the
Ninth Circuit has held that the following notice should be given to plaintiffs:

The defendants have made a motion for summary judgment by which
they seek to have your case dismissed. A motion for summary judgment under

¹The following notice is adapted from the summary judgment notice to be given to pro se
prisoners as set forth in Rand v. Rowland, 154 F.3d 952, 963 (9th Cir. 1998) (en banc). See
Wyatt v. Terhune, 315 F.3d at 1120 n.14.

1 Rule 56 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure will, if granted, end your case.

2 Rule 56 tells you what you must do in order to oppose a motion for
3 summary judgment. Generally, summary judgment must be granted when there is
4 no genuine issue of material fact--that is, if there is no real dispute about any fact
5 that would affect the result of your case, the party who asked for summary
6 judgment is entitled to judgment as a matter of law, which will end your case.
7 When a party you are suing makes a motion for summary judgment that is
8 properly supported by declarations (or other sworn testimony), you cannot simply
9 rely on what your complaint says. Instead, you must set out specific facts in
10 declarations, depositions, answers to interrogatories, or authenticated documents,
11 as provided in Rule 56(e), that contradict the facts shown in the defendants'
12 declarations and documents and show that there is a genuine issue of material fact
13 for trial. If you do not submit your own evidence in opposition, summary
14 judgment, if appropriate, may be entered against you. If summary judgment is
15 granted in favor of defendants, your case will be dismissed and there will be no
16 trial.

17 See Rand v. Rowland, 154 F.3d 952, 963 (9th Cir. 1998) (en banc). Plaintiff is advised to read
18 Rule 56 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317
19 (1986) (holding party opposing summary judgment must come forward with evidence showing
20 triable issues of material fact on every essential element of his claim). Plaintiff is cautioned that
21 failure to file an opposition to defendant's motion for summary judgment may be deemed to be a
22 consent by plaintiff to the granting of the motion, and granting of judgment against plaintiff
23 without a trial. See Ghazali v. Moran, 46 F.3d 52, 53-54 (9th Cir. 1995) (per curiam); Brydges
24 v. Lewis, 18 F.3d 651, 653 (9th Cir. 1994).

25 5. Defendants shall file a reply brief no later than **fifteen (15) days** after plaintiff's
26 opposition is filed.

27 6. The motion shall be deemed submitted as of the date the reply brief is due. No
28 hearing will be held on the motion unless the court so orders at a later date.

7. All communications by the plaintiff with the court must be served on defendants,
or defendants' counsel once counsel has been designated, by mailing a true copy of the
document to defendants or defendants' counsel.

8. Discovery may be taken in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.
No further court order is required before the parties may conduct discovery.

For plaintiff's information, the proper manner of promulgating discovery is to send

1 demands for documents or interrogatories (questions asking for specific, factual responses)
2 directly to defendants' counsel. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 33-34. The scope of discovery is limited to
3 matters "relevant to the claim or defense of any party . . ." See Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1).
4 Discovery may be further limited by court order if "(i) the discovery sought is unreasonably
5 cumulative or duplicative, or is obtainable from some other source that is more convenient, less
6 burdensome, or less expensive; (ii) the party seeking discovery has had ample opportunity by
7 discovery in the action to obtain the information sought; or (iii) the burden or expense of the
8 proposed discovery outweighs its likely benefit." Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(2). In order to comply
9 with the requirements of Rule 26, before deciding to promulgate discovery plaintiff may find it
10 to his benefit to wait until defendants have filed a dispositive motion which could include some
11 or all of the discovery plaintiff might seek. In addition, no motion to compel will be considered
12 by the Court unless the meet-and-confer requirement of Rule 37(a)(2)(B) and N.D. Cal. Local
13 Rule 37-1 has been satisfied. Because plaintiff is detained, he is not required to meet and confer
14 with defendants in person. Rather, if his discovery requests are denied and he intends to seek a
15 motion to compel he must send a letter to defendants to that effect, offering them one last
16 opportunity to provide him with the sought-after information.

17 9. It is plaintiff's responsibility to prosecute this case. Plaintiff must keep the court
18 and all parties informed of any change of address and must comply with the court's orders in a
19 timely fashion. Failure to do so may result in the dismissal of this action for failure to prosecute
20 pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b).

21 IT IS SO ORDERED.

22 DATED: 2/8/10


RONALD M. WHYTE
United States District Judge