

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

**GARY DICKEY**  
**AS-6265,**

Plaintiff,

V.

GILBERT MENDOZA; WARDEN OF  
STATE PRISON,

## Defendants.

Case No.: 3:17-cv-00206-WQH-AGS

## ORDER:

**1) GRANTING PLAINTIFF'S  
MOTION TO PROCEED *IN FORMA  
PAUPERIS* PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C.  
§ 1915(a) (ECF No. 2)**

AND

**2) DIRECTING U.S. MARSHAL TO  
EFFECT SERVICE OF SUMMONS  
AND COMPLAINT PURSUANT TO  
28 U.S.C. § 1915(d)  
AND Fed.R.Civ.P. 4(c)(3)**

Gary Dickey (“Plaintiff”), currently incarcerated at Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility located in San Diego, California, and proceeding pro se, has filed a civil rights complaint (“Compl.”) pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (ECF No. 1). Plaintiff did not prepay the civil filing fee required by 28 U.S.C. § 1914(a); instead, he has filed a Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (“IFP”) pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) (ECF No. 2).

1       **I. Plaintiff's Motion to Proceed IFP**

2       All parties instituting any civil action, suit or proceeding in a district court of the  
3       United States, except an application for writ of habeas corpus, must pay a filing fee of  
4       \$400. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1914(a).<sup>1</sup> An action may proceed despite a plaintiff's failure to  
5       prepay the entire fee only if he is granted leave to proceed IFP pursuant to 28 U.S.C.  
6       § 1915(a). *See Andrews v. Cervantes*, 493 F.3d 1047, 1051 (9th Cir. 2007); *Rodriguez v.*  
7       *Cook*, 169 F.3d 1176, 1177 (9th Cir. 1999). However, if a prisoner, like Plaintiff, is  
8       granted leave to proceed IFP, he remains obligated to pay the entire fee in "increments,"  
9       *see Williams v. Paramo*, 775 F.3d 1182, 1185 (9th Cir. 2015), regardless of whether his  
10      action is ultimately dismissed. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1) & (2); *Taylor v. Delatoore*,  
11      281 F.3d 844, 847 (9th Cir. 2002).

12      Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915, as amended by the Prison Litigation Reform Act  
13      ("PLRA"), a prisoner seeking leave to proceed IFP must submit a "certified copy of the  
14      trust fund account statement (or institutional equivalent) for the prisoner for the six-  
15      month period immediately preceding the filing of the complaint." 28 U.S.C.  
16      § 1915(a)(2); *Andrews v. King*, 398 F.3d 1113, 1119 (9th Cir. 2005). From the trust  
17      account statement, the Court assesses an initial payment of 20% of (a) the average  
18      monthly deposits in the account for the past six months, or (b) the average monthly  
19      balance in the account for the past six months, whichever is greater, unless the prisoner  
20      has no assets. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1); 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4). The institution then  
21      collects subsequent payments, assessed at 20% of the preceding month's income, in any  
22      month in which the prisoner's account exceeds \$10, and forwards those payments to the  
23      Court until the entire filing fee is paid. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2).

24  
25      

---

26      <sup>1</sup> In addition to the \$350 statutory fee, all parties filing civil actions on or after May 1, 2013, must pay  
27      an additional administrative fee of \$50. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1914(a) (Judicial Conference Schedule of Fees,  
District Court Misc. Fee Schedule) (eff. May 1, 2013). However, the additional \$50 administrative fee  
is waived if the plaintiff is granted leave to proceed IFP. *Id.*

1        In support of his IFP Motion, Plaintiff has submitted a certified copy of his trust  
2 account statement pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(2) and S.D. Cal. CivLR 3.2. *Andrews*,  
3 398 F.3d at 1119. The Court has reviewed Plaintiff's trust account statement, which  
4 shows that he has a current available balance of zero. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4)  
5 (providing that “[i]n no event shall a prisoner be prohibited from bringing a civil action  
6 or appealing a civil action or criminal judgment for the reason that the prisoner has no  
7 assets and no means by which to pay the initial partial filing fee.”); *Taylor*, 281 F.3d at  
8 850 (finding that 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4) acts as a “safety-valve” preventing dismissal of  
9 a prisoner’s IFP case based solely on a “failure to pay . . . due to the lack of funds  
10 available to him when payment is ordered.”).

11       Therefore, the Court **GRANTS** Plaintiff’s Motion to Proceed IFP (**ECF No. 2**) and  
12 assesses no initial partial filing fee per 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1). However, the entire \$350  
13 balance of the filing fees mandated will be collected by the California Department of  
14 Corrections and Rehabilitation (“CDCR”) and forwarded to the Clerk of the Court  
15 pursuant to the installment payment provisions set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

16 **II. Initial Screening pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and § 1915A**

17       Notwithstanding Plaintiff’s IFP status or the payment of any partial filing fees, the  
18 PLRA also obligates the Court to review complaints filed by all persons proceeding IFP  
19 and by those, like Plaintiff, who are “incarcerated or detained in any facility [and]  
20 accused of, sentenced for, or adjudicated delinquent for, violations of criminal law or the  
21 terms or conditions of parole, probation, pretrial release, or diversionary program,” “as  
22 soon as practicable after docketing.” *See* 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and 1915A(b). Under  
23 these statutes, the Court must sua sponte dismiss complaints, or any portions thereof,  
24 which are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim, or which seek damages from  
25 defendants who are immune. *See* 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B) and 1915A(b); *Lopez v.*  
26 *Smith*, 203 F.3d 1122, 1126-27 (9th Cir. 2000) (en banc) (§ 1915(e)(2)); *Rhodes v.*  
27 *Robinson*, 621 F.3d 1002, 1004 (9th Cir. 2010) (discussing 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)).

1       All complaints must contain “a short and plain statement of the claim showing that  
2 the pleader is entitled to relief.” Fed.R.Civ.P. 8(a)(2). Detailed factual allegations are  
3 not required, but “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action, supported by  
4 mere conclusory statements, do not suffice.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)  
5 (citing *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007)). “Determining  
6 whether a complaint states a plausible claim for relief [is] . . . a context-specific task that  
7 requires the reviewing court to draw on its judicial experience and common sense.” *Id.*  
8 The “mere possibility of misconduct” falls short of meeting this plausibility standard.  
9 *Id.*; *see also Moss v. U.S. Secret Service*, 572 F.3d 962, 969 (9th Cir. 2009).

10       “[W]hen determining whether a complaint states a claim, a court must accept as true all  
11 allegations of material fact and must construe those facts in the light most favorable to  
12 the plaintiff.”); *Barren v. Harrington*, 152 F.3d 1193, 1194 (9th Cir. 1998) (noting that §  
13 1915(e)(2) “parallels the language of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6)”).

14       However, while the court “ha[s] an obligation where the petitioner is pro se,  
15 particularly in civil rights cases, to construe the pleadings liberally and to afford the  
16 petitioner the benefit of any doubt,” *Hebbe v. Pliler*, 627 F.3d 338, 342 & n.7 (9th Cir.  
17 2010) (citing *Bretz v. Kelman*, 773 F.2d 1026, 1027 n.1 (9th Cir. 1985)), it may not  
18 “supply essential elements of claims that were not initially pled.” *Ivey v. Board of  
19 Regents of the University of Alaska*, 673 F.2d 266, 268 (9th Cir. 1982).

20       As currently pleaded, the Court finds allegations in Plaintiff’s Complaint which are  
21 sufficient to survive the sua sponte screening required by 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and  
22 1915A(b). Accordingly, the Court will direct the U.S. Marshal to effect service on  
23 Plaintiff’s behalf. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (“The officers of the court shall issue and  
24 serve all process, and perform all duties in [IFP] cases.”); Fed.R.Civ.P. 4(c)(3) (“[T]he  
25

1 court may order that service be made by a United States marshal or deputy marshal . . . if  
2 the plaintiff is authorized to proceed *in forma pauperis* under 28 U.S.C. § 1915.”).

3 **III. Conclusion and Order**

4 Good cause appearing, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that:

5 1. Plaintiff’s Motion to Proceed IFP pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) (ECF No.  
6 2) is **GRANTED**.

7 2. The Secretary of the CDCR, or his designee, shall collect from Plaintiff’s  
8 prison trust account the \$350 filing fee owed in this case by collecting monthly payments  
9 from the account in an amount equal to twenty percent (20%) of the preceding month’s  
10 income and forward payments to the Clerk of the Court each time the amount in the  
11 account exceeds \$10 in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). **ALL PAYMENTS**  
12 **SHALL BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED BY THE NAME AND NUMBER ASSIGNED**  
13 **TO THIS ACTION.**

14 3. The Clerk of the Court is directed to serve a copy of this Order on Scott  
15 Kernan, Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, P.O. Box  
16 942883, Sacramento, California, 94283-0001.

17 **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that:

18 4. The Clerk is **DIRECTED** to issue a summons as to Plaintiff’s Complaint  
19 (ECF No. 1) upon Defendants and forward it to Plaintiff along with blank U.S. Marshal  
20 Form 285s for each named Defendant. In addition, the Clerk is directed provide Plaintiff  
21 with a certified copy of this Order and a certified copy of his Complaint (ECF No. 1) and  
22 the summons so that he may serve each named Defendant. Upon receipt of this “IFP  
23 Package,” Plaintiff is directed to complete the Form 285s as completely and accurately as  
24 possible, and to return them to the United States Marshal according to the instructions  
25 provided by the Clerk in the letter accompanying his IFP package.

26    ///

27    ///

1       5. Upon receipt, the U.S. Marshal is **ORDERED** to serve a copy of the  
2 Complaint and summons upon the named Defendants as directed by Plaintiff on the USM  
3 Form 285s. All costs of service will be advanced by the United States. *See* 28 U.S.C.  
4 § 1915(d); Fed.R.Civ.P. 4(c)(3).

5       6. Defendants are thereafter **ORDERED** to reply to Plaintiff's Complaint  
6 within the time provided by the applicable provisions of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure  
7 12(a). *See* 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(g)(2) (while a defendant may occasionally be permitted to  
8 "waive the right to reply to any action brought by a prisoner confined in any jail, prison,  
9 or other correctional facility under section 1983," once the Court has conducted its sua  
10 sponte screening pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and § 1915A(b), and thus, has made  
11 a preliminary determination based on the face on the pleading alone that Plaintiff has a  
12 "reasonable opportunity to prevail on the merits," the defendant is required to respond).

13       7. Plaintiff must serve upon the Defendants or, if appearance has been entered  
14 by counsel, upon Defendants' counsel, a copy of every further pleading or other  
15 document submitted for consideration by the Court. Plaintiff must include with the  
16 original paper to be filed with the Clerk of the Court, a certificate stating the manner in  
17 which a true and correct copy of the document was served on the Defendants, or counsel  
18 for Defendants, and the date of that service. Any paper received by the Court which has  
19 not been properly filed with the Clerk, or which fails to include a Certificate of Service,  
20 may be disregarded.

21       Dated: February 9, 2017

  
Hon. William Q. Hayes  
United States District Court