

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

Civil Action No. 09-cv-01231-BNB

**FILED**  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DENVER, COLORADO

JERRY L. MASKE,

JUN 04 2009

Plaintiff,

GREGORY C. LANGHAM  
CLERK

v.

ARAPAHOE COUNTY OFFICE OF CLERK AND RECORDER,

Defendant.

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ORDER DIRECTING PLAINTIFF TO FILE AMENDED COMPLAINT

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Plaintiff, Jerry L. Maske, has filed a *pro se* Complaint. The Court must construe the Complaint liberally because Mr. Maske is not represented by an attorney. **See *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520-21 (1972); *Hall v. Bellmon*, 935 F.2d 1106, 1110 (10<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1991).** However, the Court should not act as a *pro se* litigant's advocate. **See *Hall*, 935 F.2d at 1110.** For the reasons stated below, Mr. Maske will be ordered to file an Amended Complaint.

The Court has reviewed the Complaint and has determined that it is deficient because the Complaint does not comply with the pleading requirements of Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The twin purposes of a complaint are to give the opposing parties fair notice of the basis for the claims against them so that they may respond and to allow the Court to conclude that the allegations, if proven, show that the plaintiff is entitled to relief. **See *Monument Builders of Greater Kansas City, Inc. v. American Cemetery Ass'n of Kansas*, 891 F.2d 1473, 1480 (10<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1989).** The requirements of Fed. R. Civ. P. 8 are designed to meet these purposes. **See *TV***

*Communications Network, Inc. v. ESPN, Inc.*, 767 F. Supp. 1062, 1069 (D. Colo. 1991), *aff'd*, 964 F.2d 1022 (10<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1992). Specifically, Rule 8(a) provides that a complaint “must contain (1) a short and plain statement of the grounds for the court’s jurisdiction, . . . (2) a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief; and (3) a demand for the relief sought.” The philosophy of Rule 8(a) is reinforced by Rule 8(d)(1), which provides that “[e]ach allegation must be simple, concise, and direct.” Taken together, Rules 8(a) and (d)(1) underscore the emphasis placed on clarity and brevity by the federal pleading rules. Prolix, vague, or unintelligible pleadings violate the requirements of Rule 8.

Although Mr. Maske asserts that because he is disabled and on a budgeted income he should not have to pay an excessive return-check fee issued from his bank, he fails to set forth a short and plain statement of the grounds on which the Court’s jurisdiction depends. In other words, he fails to cite the statutory authority that allows this Court to consider the claims he is asserting in this action.

A decision to dismiss a pleading pursuant to Rule 8 is within the trial court’s sound discretion. *See Atkins v. Northwest Airlines, Inc.*, 967 F.2d 1197, 1203 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1992); *Gillibeau v. City of Richmond*, 417 F.2d 426, 431 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1969). The Court finds that the Complaint does not meet the requirements of Fed. R. Civ. P. 8 and that Mr. Maske should be given an opportunity to file an Amended Complaint. Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that Mr. Maske file, **within thirty days from the date of this Order**, an Amended Complaint that complies with this Order. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of the Court mail to Mr. Maske, together with a copy of this Order, two copies of a current Court-approved Complaint form. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that if Mr. Maske fails within the time allowed to file an Amended Complaint that complies with this Order, to the Court's satisfaction, the action will be dismissed without further notice.

DATED June 4, 2009, at Denver, Colorado.

BY THE COURT:

s/ Boyd N. Boland  
United States Magistrate Judge

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

Civil Action No. 09-cv-01231-BNB

Jerry Maske  
2705 Danube Way, Unit 101  
Aurora, CO 80013

I hereby certify that I have mailed a copy of the **ORDER** and **two copies of the Complaint form** to the above-named individuals on 6/4/09

GREGORY C. LANGHAM, CLERK

By: 

Deputy Clerk