

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

Civil Action No. 09-cv-01531-BNB

TERRY BLEVINS,

Plaintiff,

v.

JIM KELLER,  
TASHA DOBBS,  
JEFF WELLS,  
CAROLYNNE SONDA,  
D. COOL,  
STAN H.,  
BEHAVIOR CLINICAL SERVICES,  
JOHN DOES #1-10,  
MESA COUNTY DETENTION FACILITY,  
MESA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, and  
ROBERT ARMENTA,

Defendants.

FILED  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DENVER, COLORADO

JUL 24 2009

GREGORY C. LANGHAM  
CLERK

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ORDER DIRECTING PLAINTIFF TO FILE AMENDED COMPLAINT

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Plaintiff, Terry Blevins, is a prisoner in the custody of the Colorado Department of Corrections who currently is incarcerated at the Limon, Colorado, correctional facility. Mr. Blevins has filed *pro se* a civil rights complaint for money damages and injunctive relief pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and 28 U.S.C. § 1343(a)(3). He alleges that his constitutional rights have been violated. He has been granted leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915.

The Court must construe the complaint liberally because Mr. Blevins is a *pro se* litigant. *See Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520-21 (1972); *Hall v. Bellmon*, 935 F.2d 1106, 1110 (10th 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. Blevins will be ordered to file an amended complaint.

The Court has reviewed the complaint and finds that it is deficient. Defendants Mesa County Detention Facility and Mesa County Sheriff's Department are not proper parties to this action. Municipalities and municipal entities are not liable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 solely because their employees inflict injury on a plaintiff. **Monell v. New York City Dep't of Social Servs.**, 436 U.S. 658, 694 (1978); **Hinton v. City of Elwood, Kan.**, 997 F.2d 774, 782 (10th Cir. 1993). To establish liability, a plaintiff must show that a policy or custom exists and that there is a direct causal link between the policy or custom and the injury alleged. **City of Canton, Ohio v. Harris**, 489 U.S. 378, 385 (1989). Mr. Blevins cannot state a claim for relief under § 1983 merely by pointing to isolated incidents. **See Monell**, 436 U.S. at 694.

Mr. Blevins claims are confusing. They appear to concern the conditions of his parole and his sex-offender classification. One reason the complaint is confusing is because Mr. Blevins' handwriting is hard to decipher and makes understanding his allegations difficult. Rule 10.1 of the Local Rules of Practice for this Court requires that all papers filed in cases in this Court be double-spaced and legible. **See** D.C.COLO.LCivR 10.1E. and G. Another reason the complaint Mr. Blevins filed is difficult to read is because the complaint is single-spaced and typed in part in all capital letters. Therefore, the amended complaint Mr. Blevins will be directed to file, whether handwritten or typed, shall be double-spaced and legible, in capital and lower-case letters.

Mr. Blevins also must assert personal participation by each named defendant. **See *Bennett v. Passic***, 545 F.2d 1260, 1262-63 (10th Cir. 1976). To establish personal participation, Mr. Blevins must show how the defendants caused a deprivation of his federal rights. **See *Kentucky v. Graham***, 473 U.S. 159, 166 (1985). There must be an affirmative link between the alleged constitutional violation and each defendant's participation, control or direction, or failure to supervise. **See *Butler v. City of Norman***, 992 F.2d 1053, 1055 (10th Cir. 1993). A defendant may not be held liable on a theory of respondeat superior merely because of his or her supervisory position. **See *Pembaur v. City of Cincinnati***, 475 U.S. 469, 479 (1986); ***McKee v. Heggy***, 703 F.2d 479, 483 (10th Cir. 1983).

Mr. Blevins may use fictitious names, such as "John or Jane Doe," if he does not know the real names of the individuals who allegedly violated his rights. However, if Mr. Blevins uses fictitious names he must provide sufficient information about such defendants so that they can be identified for purposes of service.

Lastly, the amended complaint Mr. Blevins will be directed to file must 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 (10th 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 (10th Cir. 1992).

Specifically, Rule 8(a) requires that a complaint "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. In order for Mr. Blevins to state a claim in federal court, his "complaint must explain what each defendant did to him or her; when the defendant did it; how the defendant's action harmed him or her; and, what specific legal right the plaintiff believes the defendant violated." *Nasious v. Two Unknown B.I.C.E. Agents*, 492 F.3d 1158, 1163 (10th Cir. 2007). Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that Plaintiff, Terry Blevins, file **within thirty days from the date of this order** an amended complaint that complies with the directives of this order. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that the clerk of the Court mail to Mr. Blevins, together with a copy of this order, two copies of the Court-approved Prisoner Complaint form to be used in submitting the amended complaint. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that the amended complaint shall be titled "Amended Prisoner Complaint," and shall be filed with the Clerk of the Court, United States District Court for the District of Colorado, Alfred A. Arraj United States Courthouse, 901 Nineteenth Street, A105, Denver, Colorado 80294. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that if Mr. Blevins fails to file an amended complaint within the time allowed, the complaint and the action will be dismissed without further notice.

DATED at Denver, Colorado, this 24<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2009.

BY THE COURT:

*s/Craig B. Shaffer*  
Craig B. Shaffer  
United States Magistrate Judge

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

Civil Action No. 09-cv-01531-BNB

Terry Blevins  
Prisoner No. 111164  
Limon Correctional Facility  
49030 State Hwy. 71  
Limon, CO 80826

I hereby certify that I have mailed a copy of the **ORDER** and **two copies of the Prisoner Complaint form** to the above-named individuals on 7/24/09

GREGORY C. LANGHAM, CLERK

By: 

Deputy Clerk