

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

Civil Action No. 13-cv-03249-BNB

JAMIE R. WILLIAMS,

Plaintiff,

v.

LT. MARTIN,  
LT. WILCOX,  
OFFICER ROY,  
OFFICER GABBY,  
OFFICER VALVERDE,  
OFFICER MARQUEZ,  
OFFICER THOMPSON, and  
OFFICER YENTER or YETNER,

Defendants.

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ORDER DIRECTING PLAINTIFF TO FILE AMENDED COMPLAINT

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Plaintiff, Jamie R. Williams, is a prisoner in the custody of the Federal Bureau of Prisons incarcerated at the United States Penitentiary, Florence High, in Florence, Colorado. He submitted *pro se* a Prisoner Complaint (ECF No. 7) pursuant to *Bivens v. Six Unknown Named Agents of Fed. Bureau of Narcotics*, 403 U.S. 388 (1971). He has been granted leave pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915.

The Court must construe liberally the Prisoner Complaint because Mr. Williams 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 (10th Cir. 1991). However, the Court should not be an advocate for a *pro se* litigant. See *Hall*, 935 F.2d at 1110. For the reasons stated below, Mr. Williams will be ordered to file an amended prisoner complaint if he wishes to pursue his claims in this action.

The Prisoner Complaint fails to comply with the pleading requirements of Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The complaint is verbose and nearly unreadable. It contains allegations concerning the excessive use of force, retaliation, deliberate indifference, harassment, and racial discrimination, but it does not assert separate claims against specific Defendants with supporting facts for each claim.

The Court directs Mr. Williams to submit an amended prisoner complaint that complies with the pleading requirements of Rule 8. 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 Rule 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) 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 Rule 8.

It is Mr. Williams’s responsibility to present his claims in a manageable and readable format that allows the Court and defendants to know what claims are being asserted and to be able to respond to those claims. Mr. Williams must allege, simply

and concisely, his specific claims for relief, including the specific rights that allegedly have been violated and the specific acts of each defendant that allegedly violated his rights. A long, chronological recitation of facts is not required. Nor is it the obligation of the Court or defendants to sift through Mr. Williams's verbose allegations to locate the heart of each claim. The general rule that *pro se* pleadings must be construed liberally has limits and "the Court cannot take on the responsibility of serving as the litigant's attorney in constructing arguments and searching the record." *Garrett v. Selby Connor Maddux & Janer*, 425 F.3d 836, 840 (10th Cir. 2005).

To state a claim in federal court, Plaintiff "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). Personal participation is an essential allegation in a civil rights action. *See Bennett v. Passic*, 545 F.2d 1260, 1262-63 (10th Cir. 1976). To establish personal participation, Mr. Williams must show that each defendant caused the deprivation of a federal right. *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 supervisory official may not be held liable for the unconstitutional conduct of his or her subordinates on a theory of respondeat superior. *See Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 676 (2009). Furthermore,

when a plaintiff sues an official under *Bivens* or § 1983 for conduct "arising from his or her superintendent responsibilities," the plaintiff must plausibly plead and eventually prove not only that the official's subordinates violated the Constitution, but that the official by virtue of his

own conduct and state of mind did so as well.

*See Dodds v. Richardson*, 614 F.3d 1185, 1198 (10th Cir. 2010) (quoting *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 677). Therefore, in order to succeed in a § 1983 suit against a government official for conduct that arises out of his or her supervisory responsibilities, a plaintiff must allege and demonstrate that: “(1) the defendant promulgated, created, implemented or possessed responsibility for the continued operation of a policy that (2) caused the complained of constitutional harm, and (3) acted with the state of mind required to establish the alleged constitutional deprivation.” *Id.* at 1199.

Mr. Williams 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. Williams uses fictitious names he must provide sufficient information about each defendant so that he or she can be identified for purposes of service.

Finally, 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 10.1*. Thus, Mr. Williams’s amended prisoner complaint, whether handwritten or typed, must be double-spaced and legible, in compliance with *D.C.COLO.LCivR 10.1*.

A decision to dismiss a complaint pursuant to Rule 8 is within the trial court’s sound discretion. *See Atkins v. Northwest Airlines, Inc.*, 967 F.2d 1197, 1203 (8th Cir. 1992); *Gillibeau v. City of Richmond*, 417 F.2d 426, 431 (9th Cir. 1969). The Court finds that the complaint does not meet the requirements of Fed. R. Civ. P. 8. Mr. Williams will be given an opportunity to cure the deficiencies in his complaint by submitting an amended prisoner complaint that states claims clearly and concisely in compliance with Rule 8, and alleges specific facts that demonstrate how each named defendant personally participated in the asserted constitutional violations. Mr. Williams

also must provide the full address for each named defendant in “Section A. Parties” and sign and date the declaration under penalty of perjury in the complaint. The Court will not consider any claims raised in separate attachments, amendments, supplements, motions, or other documents not included in the amended complaint.

Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that Plaintiff, Jamie R. Williams, cure the deficiencies designated above **within thirty (30) days from the date of this order**. Any papers that Plaintiff files in response to this order must include the civil action number on this order. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that Plaintiff shall obtain (with the assistance of his case manager or the facility’s legal assistant) the court-approved form for filing a Prisoner Complaint, along with the applicable instructions, at [www.cod.uscourts.gov](http://www.cod.uscourts.gov), and shall use that form in curing the designated deficiencies by filing an amended complaint that complies with Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. It is

FURTHER ORDERED that, if Plaintiff fails to cure the designated deficiencies **within thirty days from the date of this order**, some claims against some defendants or the entire complaint and action may be dismissed without further notice.

DATED January 17, 2014, at Denver, Colorado.

BY THE COURT:

s/ Boyd N. Boland  
United States Magistrate Judge