

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION**

CORTNEY WARD,

Plaintiff,

v.

ST. LOUIS POLICE DEPARTMENT, et al.,

Defendants.

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No. 4:17-CV-1337 CDP

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

This matter is before the Court on review of plaintiff’s amended complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e). Upon review, the Court finds that this action must be dismissed.

Standard of Review

Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e), the Court is required to dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis if it is frivolous, malicious, or fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. To state a claim for relief, a complaint must plead more than “legal conclusions” and “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action [that are] supported by mere conclusory statements.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009). A plaintiff must demonstrate a plausible claim for relief, which is more than a “mere possibility of misconduct.” *Id.* at 679. “A claim has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.” *Id.* at 678. Determining whether a complaint states a plausible claim for relief is a context-specific task that requires the reviewing court to draw on its judicial experience and common sense. *Id.* at 679.

When reviewing a complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e), the Court accepts the well-pled facts as true. Furthermore, the Court liberally construes the allegations.

The Complaint

On February 5, 2015, plaintiff engaged in a car chase with officers of the Metropolitan St. Louis Police Department. He crashed his car as a result. After the crash, unidentified officers pulled him from the car, handcuffed him, and shot him with a Taser gun. He does not know the names of the officers. He sues the Chief of Police, Sam Dotson, under the theory of *respondeat superior*.

Discussion

“Liability under § 1983 requires a causal link to, and direct responsibility for, the alleged deprivation of rights.” *Madewell v. Roberts*, 909 F.2d 1203, 1208 (8th Cir. 1990); *see Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 676 (2009) (“Because vicarious liability is inapplicable to *Bivens* and § 1983 suits, a plaintiff must plead that each Government-official defendant, through the official’s own individual actions, has violated the Constitution.”); *Camberos v. Branstad*, 73 F.3d 174, 176 (8th Cir. 1995) (“a general responsibility for supervising the operations of a prison is insufficient to establish the personal involvement required to support liability.”). Plaintiff has not alleged any facts showing Dotson was personally involved in the alleged violations of his rights. Therefore, the allegations against him fail to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

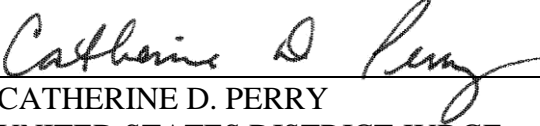
The only other named defendants are unknown police officers. Fictitious parties, however, may not be named as defendants in a civil action. *Phelps v. United States*, 15 F.3d 735, 739 (8th Cir. 1994). As a result, this case must be dismissed.

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that this action is **DISMISSED** without prejudice.

An Order of Dismissal will be filed forthwith.

Dated this 18th day of August, 2017.



CATHERINE D. PERRY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE