

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA  
HELENA DIVISION

JORDAN KEEFE,

Plaintiff,

vs.

MONTANA STATE, MICHAEL  
FLETCHER, and LINDA JESS,

Defendants.

CV 17-00092-H-BMM-JTJ

ORDER

Plaintiff Jordan Keefe filed a Motion for Default arguing that it has been 53 days since service of the summons and complaint and Defendants have not responded. (Doc. 6.) Rule 55(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure provides, “[w]hen a party against whom a judgment for affirmative relief is sought has failed to plead or otherwise defend, and that failure is shown by affidavit or otherwise, the clerk must enter the party’s default.”

In this case, there is no indication that the Complaint has been properly served upon Defendants. Because Mr. Keefe is proceeding in forma pauperis, “[t]he officers of the court shall issue and serve all process.” 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d). But, as Mr. Keefe was previously advised (Doc. 4), pursuant to the federal statutes governing proceedings in forma pauperis and cases filed by prisoners, federal

courts must engage in a preliminary screening of a case to assess the merits of the claims. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2); 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). Accordingly, the Court must identify cognizable claims, or dismiss the complaint, or any portion of the complaint, if the complaint is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2); 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The Court will not direct service of Mr. Keefe's Complaint until the completion of this screening process.

Because there is no proof of service of the Complaint in this matter, there is no basis for the entry of default or default judgment.

Accordingly, the Court issues the following:

**ORDER**

Mr. Keefe's Motion for Default Judgment (Doc. 6) is DENIED.

DATED this 17th day of November, 2017.

/s/ John Johnston  
John Johnston  
United States Magistrate Judge