

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

NATHAN PHILLIPS,

Plaintiff,

v.

CAMDEN COUNTY CORRECTIONAL
FACILITY,

Defendant.

HONORABLE JEROME B. SIMANDLE

Civil Action
No. 16-cv-06051(JBS-AMD)

OPINION

APPEARANCES:

Nathan Phillips, Plaintiff Pro Se
1518 South 7th Street Avent Garden Apartments
Camden, NJ 08103

SIMANDLE, Chief District Judge:

1. Plaintiff Nathan Phillips seeks to bring a civil rights complaint pursuant to the 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the Camden County Correctional Facility ("CCCF"). Complaint, Docket Entry 1. Based on Plaintiff's affidavit of indigency, the Court will grant his *in forma pauperis* application.

2. Section 1915(e)(2) requires a court to review complaints prior to service in cases in which a plaintiff is proceeding in forma pauperis. The Court must sua sponte dismiss any claim that is frivolous, is malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. This action is

subject to sua sponte screening for dismissal under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B) because Plaintiff is proceeding *in forma pauperis*.

3. For the reasons set forth below, the Court will dismiss the complaint without prejudice for failure to state a claim. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(b)(ii).

4. To survive sua sponte screening for failure to state a claim, the complaint must allege "sufficient factual matter" to show that the claim is facially plausible. *Fowler v. UPMS Shadyside*, 578 F.3d 203, 210 (3d Cir. 2009) (citation omitted). "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." *Fair Wind Sailing, Inc. v. Dempster*, 764 F.3d 303, 308 n.3 (3d Cir. 2014) (quoting *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678). "[A] pleading that offers 'labels or conclusions' or 'a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not do.'" *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009) (quoting *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007)).

5. Plaintiff seeks monetary damages from CCCF for an allegedly illegal search. As the CCCF is not a "state actor" within the meaning of § 1983, the claims against it must be dismissed with prejudice. *See, e.g., Grabow v. Southern State Corr. Facility*, 726 F. Supp. 537, 538-39 (D.N.J. 1989) (correctional facility is not a "person" under § 1983).

6. Plaintiff may be able to amend the complaint to name state actors who were personally involved in the alleged illegal search, however. To that end, the Court shall grant Plaintiff leave to amend the complaint within 30 days of the date of this order.¹

7. Plaintiff is advised that the amended complaint must plead sufficient facts to support a reasonable inference that a constitutional violation has occurred in order to survive this Court's review under § 1915. The factual portion of the complaint states in its entirety: "Illegal search." Complaint § III. Even accepting the statement as true for screening purposes only, there is not enough factual support for the Court to infer a constitutional violation has occurred, such as what was searched or any circumstances of the search.

8. In the event Plaintiff files an amended complaint, he should include specific facts, such as the dates and length of his confinement(s), what kind of search occurred, where it occurred, any specific individuals who were involved in the search, and any other relevant facts.

9. Plaintiff should note that when an amended complaint is filed, the original complaint no longer performs any function in the case and cannot be utilized to cure defects in the

¹ The amended complaint shall be subject to screening prior to service.

amended complaint, unless the relevant portion is specifically incorporated in the new complaint. 6 Wright, Miller & Kane, Federal Practice and Procedure 1476 (2d ed. 1990) (footnotes omitted). An amended complaint may adopt some or all of the allegations in the original complaint, but the identification of the particular allegations to be adopted must be clear and explicit. *Id.* To avoid confusion, the safer course is to file an amended complaint that is complete in itself. *Id.* The amended complaint may not adopt or repeat claims that have been dismissed with prejudice by the Court.

10. For the reasons stated above, the complaint is dismissed without prejudice for failure to state a claim. The Court will reopen the matter in the event Plaintiff files an amended complaint within the time allotted by the Court.

11. An appropriate order follows.

November 23, 2016
Date

s/ Jerome B. Simandle
JEROME B. SIMANDLE
Chief U.S. District Judge