

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

MICHAEL D. JONES,

Plaintiff,

v.

CAMDEN COUNTY CORRECTIONAL
FACILITY, WARDEN JAMES OWENS,
WARDEN J. TAYLOR, CAMDEN
COUNTY BOARD OF FREEHOLDERS,
and METRO POLICE,

Defendants.

HONORABLE JEROME B. SIMANDLE

Civil Action
No. 16-06378(JBS-AMD)

OPINION

APPEARANCES:

Michael D. Jones, Plaintiff Pro Se
1335 Chase Street
Camden, NJ 08104

SIMANDLE, Chief District Judge:

I. INTRODUCTION

Plaintiff Michael D. Jones seeks to bring a civil rights complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the Camden Correctional Facility ("CCF"), Warden James Owens ("Owens"), Warden J. Taylor ("Taylor"), Camden County Board of Freeholders ("BOF"), and Metro Police ("MP") for allegedly unconstitutional conditions of confinement. Complaint, Docket Entry 1. Based on Plaintiff's affidavit of indigency, the Court will grant his application to proceed *in forma pauperis*.

At this time, the Court must review the complaint, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) to determine whether it should be

dismissed as frivolous or malicious, for failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or because it seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. For the reasons set forth below it is clear from the Complaint that the claim arose more than two years before the Complaint was filed. It is therefore barred by the two-year statute of limitations that governs claims of unconstitutional conduct under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The Court will therefore dismiss the Complaint with prejudice for failure to state a claim. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(b)(ii).

II. BACKGROUND

With respect to alleged facts giving rise to his claims, Plaintiff states: “[T]he housing officer assigned me to a room that had at least 4 people in ther[e] and I had to sleep on the floor in harsh conditions.” Complaint § III(C). Plaintiff alleges that these events occurred “around 2007, 2009 [and] 2013.” *Id.* § III(B). Plaintiff claims to have “tripped in the room[,] causing me to hit my head and face and back.” *Id.* § IV. Plaintiff seeks “aroun[d] \$5.5 million” in relief. *Id.* § V.

III. Standard of Review

Section 1915(e)(2) requires a court to review complaints prior to service of the summons and complaint 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*.

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)).

IV. DISCUSSION

The Complaint alleges that Plaintiff experienced unconstitutional conditions of confinement while he was detained in the CCCF in 2007, 2009 and 2013. Civil rights claims under §

1983 are governed by New Jersey's limitations period for personal injury and must be brought within two years of the claim's accrual. See *Wilson v. Garcia*, 471 U.S. 261, 276 (1985); *Dique v. New Jersey State Police*, 603 F.3d 181, 185 (3d Cir. 2010). "Under federal law, a cause of action accrues 'when the plaintiff knew or should have known of the injury upon which the action is based.'" *Montanez v. Sec'y Pa. Dep't of Corr.*, 773 F.3d 472, 480 (3d Cir. 2014) (quoting *Kach v. Hose*, 589 F.3d 626, 634 (3d Cir. 2009)).

The allegedly unconstitutional conditions of confinement at CCCF would have been immediately apparent to Plaintiff at the time of detention; therefore, the statute of limitations for Plaintiff's claims expired in 2015 at the latest, well before this Complaint was filed in 2016. Plaintiff has filed this lawsuit too late. Although the Court may toll, or extend, the statute of limitations in the interests of justice, certain circumstances must be present before it can do so. Tolling is not warranted in this case because the state has not "actively misled" Plaintiff as to the existence of a cause of action, there are no extraordinary circumstances that prevented Plaintiff from filing the claim, and there is nothing to indicate Plaintiff filed the claim on time but in the wrong forum. See *Omar v. Blackman*, 590 F. App'x 162, 166 (3d Cir. 2014).

As it is clear from the face of the Complaint that more than two years have passed since Plaintiff's claims accrued, the Complaint is dismissed with prejudice, meaning Plaintiff may not file an amended complaint concerning the events of 2007, 2009, and 2013. *Ostuni v. Wa Wa's Mart*, 532 F. App'x 110, 112 (3d Cir. 2013) (per curiam) (affirming dismissal with prejudice due to expiration of statute of limitations).

V. CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, the Complaint is dismissed with prejudice for failure to state a claim. An appropriate order follows.

April 13, 2017
Date

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