

FILED
United States Court of Appeals
Tenth Circuit

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

August 24, 2026

Christopher M. Wolpert
Clerk of Court

CHAYCE AARON ANDERSON,

Plaintiff - Appellant,

v.

YVONNE “MISSY” WOODS, Colorado Bureau of Investigation Serologist; RYAN FLORES, Warden Centennial; JARED POLIS, Governor; PHILIP J. WEISER, Attorney General; MOSES “ANDRE” STANCIL, Executive Director; AMANDA RETTING, Sex Offender Treatment and Monitoring Program Administrator and Department of Corrections Representative on the Sex Offender Management Board; KIMBERLY KLINE, Chief of Behavioral Health at the Department of Corrections and Chair of the Sex Offender Management Board; MALEBRANCHE, Major of Programs at Centennial Correctional Facility; STRAWN, Captain of Prison Operations for Kitchen at Centennial Correctional Facility; MICHAEL RIVERA, Lieutenant for Kitchen at Centennial Correctional Facility; STEER, Lieutenant for Kitchen at Centennial Correctional Facility; LAKEISHA SHARP, Parole Board Member; STEPHEN HOLMES, Parole Board Member; CORE CIVIC; COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (C.B.I.); YVONNE WOODS; CHRIS SCHAEFER, Director of Colorado Bureau of Investigation; STAN HILKEY, Executive Director of Colorado Bureau of Investigation; CITY OF FORT COLLINS; LARIMER COUNTY;

No. 25-1444
(D.C. No. 1:25-CV-1038-LTB-RTG)
(D. Colo.)

GORDON MCLAUGHLIN, District Attorney of 8th Judicial District; MATT MAILLARO, Assistant Deputy Attorney; STATE OF COLORADO; GUI BOSCH, Warden of Crowley County Correctional Facility; COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; CENTENNIAL CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; ARKANSAS VALLEY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; MAJOR BIGGERS; MR. COX, SOTMP therapist; MRS. ARCHULETA; MR. HUDSON, SOTMP therapist; MRS. RICHARDS, SOTMP supervisor; MRS. TALLEY, SOTMP supervisor; SOTMP PROGRAM; TRINITY SERVICES GROUP,

Defendants - Appellees.

ORDER AND JUDGMENT*

Before **TYMKOVICH, MATHESON, and PHILLIPS**, Circuit Judges.

Chayce Aaron Anderson, a Colorado prisoner, filed claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against numerous defendants involved in his criminal prosecution and conviction, his imprisonment, or denials of parole.

* After examining the briefs and appellate record, this panel has determined unanimously that oral argument would not materially assist in the determination of this appeal. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2); 10th Cir. R. 34.1(G). The case is therefore ordered submitted without oral argument. This order and judgment is not binding precedent, except under the doctrines of law of the case, res judicata, and collateral estoppel. It may be cited, however, for its persuasive value consistent with Fed. R. App. P. 32.1 and 10th Cir. R. 32.1.

After twice ordering Mr. Anderson to amend his complaint, a magistrate judge concluded his second amended complaint should be dismissed because (1) it did not meet the pleading standards of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a); (2) seven of his twelve claims attacked the validity of his conviction and sentence and were therefore barred by *Heck v. Humphrey*, 512 U.S. 477, 486–87 (1994); and (3) he had not properly joined all defendants, given that he brought “claims against numerous defendants across disparate roles and facilities (e.g, correctional officers, administrators, and public and private facilities),” and his claims did “not arise from a single transaction or occurrence.” R. at 215. Reviewing the magistrate judge’s recommendation de novo, the district court overruled Mr. Anderson’s objections, adopted the recommendation, and dismissed Mr. Anderson’s complaint without prejudice.

Mr. Anderson timely appealed. We have jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1291. We construe his pro se filings liberally but do not act as his advocate. *See Adams v. Fed. Aviation Admin.*, 168 F.4th 1271, 1282 (10th Cir. 2026).

We review dismissal of a complaint based on non-compliance with Rule 8(a) for abuse of discretion. *See Nasious v. Two Unknown B.I.C.E. Agents*, 492 F.3d 1158, 1161 (10th Cir. 2007). “The abuse-of-discretion standard is deferential, and we will not disturb the trial court’s decision unless we have a definite and firm conviction that the lower court made a clear error of judgment or exceeded the bounds of permissible choice in the circumstances.” *Chieftain Royalty Co. v.*

EnerVest Energy Institutional Fund XIII-A, L.P., 166 F.4th 34, 40 (10th Cir. 2026) (internal quotation marks omitted).

Rule 8(a)(2) requires a complaint to provide “a short and plain statement of [each] claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.” This rule “serves the important purpose of requiring plaintiffs to state their claims intelligibly so as to inform the defendants of the legal claims being asserted.” *Mann v. Boatright*, 477 F.3d 1140, 1148 (10th Cir. 2007). A complaint therefore must give “enough factual detail to provide fair notice of what the claim is and the grounds upon which it rests.” *Jacobs v. Salt Lake City Sch. Dist.*, 154 F.4th 790, 804 (10th Cir. 2025) (ellipsis and internal quotation marks omitted). But a complaint that is “written more as a press release, prolix in evidentiary detail, yet without simplicity, conciseness and clarity as to whom plaintiffs are suing for what wrongs, fails to perform the essential functions of a complaint.” *Mann*, 477 F.3d at 1148 (internal quotation marks omitted). “[F]ailure to satisfy Rule 8 can supply a basis for dismissal” under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b). *Nasious*, 492 F.3d at 1161.

Reviewing Mr. Anderson’s second amended complaint, the magistrate judge explained that:

[The complaint’s] lengthy factual narrative contains substantial legal argument, repetitive language, and conclusory statements. Plaintiff also doesn’t explain each defendant’s involvement and often groups defendants together without clarifying who did what. Thus, the Court and Defendants are required to guess who did what to whom in violation of what right. As such, Plaintiff fails to allege in a clear, concise, and organized manner what each defendant personally did to him, when the defendant did it, how each defendant’s action (or inaction) harmed him, and what constitutional right each defendant is charged with violating. To further confuse matters,

Plaintiff's claims discuss overlapping subject matter across various prisons at multiple points in time, and Plaintiff doesn't provide well-pled facts to show how each defendant personally participated in violating his federal rights. As such, the Second Amended Prisoner Complaint does not meet the pleading standard imposed by Rule 8.

R. at 213–14 (citations omitted).

On appeal, Mr. Anderson has not shown any error or abuse of discretion in that ruling. Instead, he reiterates wide-ranging factual contentions related to alleged falsified or mishandled DNA evidence, jury tampering at his criminal trial, mistreatment and poor conditions while employed in prison kitchens, interference with educational opportunities while in prison, false statements that he is HIV-positive, a miscalculation of his sentence, the unavailability of sex-offender rehabilitation programming, and denials of parole.

But Mr. Anderson does not address the Rule 8(a) basis for the district court's ruling, and therefore fails to show how the district court committed any reversible error. *See Nixon v. City & Cnty. of Denver*, 784 F.3d 1364, 1366 (10th Cir. 2015) (“The first task of an appellant is to explain to us why the district court’s decision was wrong. Recitation of a tale of apparent injustice may assist in that task, but it cannot substitute for legal argument.”). He further fails to show how his complaint may be read to comply with Rule 8(a). We will not act as his advocate by searching the record on his behalf. *See Adams*, 168 F.4th at 1285–86; *United States v. City of Las Cruces*, 289 F.3d 1170, 1186 (10th Cir. 2002) (“This court declines to sift through the record to find support for the appellants’ contentions.” (internal quotation marks omitted)); Fed. R. App. P. 28(a)(8)(A).

Finally, Mr. Anderson argues *Heck v. Humphrey* does not apply to some of his claims, but the district court relied on *Heck* as only an alternative reason for dismissing certain claims. The failure to meet Rule 8(a)'s pleading requirements provided a complete basis for dismissing his complaint. We therefore need not address the *Heck* bar.

We affirm the district court's judgment. We grant Mr. Anderson's motion to proceed without prepaying costs or fees and remind him of his obligation to make partial payments until the filing fee is paid in full.

Entered for the Court

Scott M. Matheson, Jr.
Circuit Judge