

NONPRECEDENTIAL DISPOSITION

To be cited only in accordance with FED. R. APP. P. 32.1

United States Court of Appeals

For the Seventh Circuit

Chicago, Illinois 60604

Submitted September 18, 2023*

Decided September 22, 2023

Before

DIANE P. WOOD, *Circuit Judge*

MICHAEL B. BRENNAN, *Circuit Judge*

DORIS L. PRYOR, *Circuit Judge*

No. 22-3126

HANNIBAL EASON,
Plaintiff-Appellant,

v.

KWAME RAOUL, in his official
capacity, et al.,
Defendants-Appellees.

Appeal from the United States District
Court for the Northern District of Illinois,
Eastern Division.

No. 22-cv-00985

Andrea R. Wood,
Judge.

ORDER

Hannibal Eason, an Illinois prisoner, appeals the judgment dismissing his third amended complaint for failure to state a claim. Eason asserted that state and local officials conspired over the course of a decade to unlawfully convict him, provide him inadequate assistance in prison, and discriminate against him in myriad ways. The

* The appellees were not served with process and are not participating in this appeal. We have agreed to decide the case without oral argument because the appellant's brief and record adequately present the facts and legal arguments, and oral argument would not significantly aid the court. FED. R. APP. P. 34(a)(2)(C).

district court concluded that Eason's allegations did not support a conspiracy, and we affirm.

As set forth in his third amended complaint, the allegations of which we accept as true, *see Otis v. Demarasse*, 886 F.3d 639, 644 (7th Cir. 2018), Eason faced a litany of obstacles that he believed added up to a wide-ranging conspiracy against him. Among these concerns were his prison's biased grievance-review process, lack of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, inadequate medical care, and non-consensual disbursement of inmates' funds.

The district court dismissed Eason's complaint for failure to state a claim and entered a final judgment. It dismissed his conspiracy claims with prejudice, concluding that his allegations were speculative and wholly unsupported. The court, having twice warned Eason that he could not join unrelated claims against unrelated defendants in a single suit, refused to consider his "scattershot" strategy of pleading a conspiracy based on an assortment of disconnected events, the primary one being Eason's alleged inability to participate in his clemency hearing because he lacked a sign-language interpreter. To the extent that any other claims remained in Eason's complaint, the court dismissed those without prejudice.

Eason does not meaningfully challenge the basis of the district court's order, *see* FED. R. APP. P. 28(a)(8)(A), though we understand him mainly to reassert that the defendants took unlawful actions that amounted to a conspiracy against him. But a complaint alleging conspiracy needs to contain factual allegations suggesting that the defendants agreed to violate his rights, *see Cooney v. Rossiter*, 583 F.3d 967, 971 (7th Cir. 2009); *see also Walker v. Thompson*, 288 F.3d 1005, 1007–08 (7th Cir. 2002), and Eason's complaint does not. As the court explained, his complaint lacks any suggestion, beyond bare conclusions, that the disparate array of defendants was joined in a conspiracy.

Eason also contends that the court wrongly refused to recruit counsel for him. But the court acted within its discretion in so ruling. The court correctly denied his first request for assistance in recruiting counsel because he did not explain what effort he made to obtain counsel on his own. The court also appropriately denied his renewed request for counsel in his third amended complaint. As the court pointed out, he had not stated that he had tried to find counsel independently, and his prior submissions showed he understood, and could follow, the court's instructions to narrow the focus of his second amended complaint. *See Pruitt v. Mote*, 503 F.3d 647, 654–55 (7th Cir. 2007) (en banc).

AFFIRMED