

**NONPRECEDENTIAL DISPOSITION**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 June 23, 2026\*

Decided June 24, 2026

**Before**MICHAEL Y. SCUDDER, *Circuit Judge*AMY J. ST. EVE, *Circuit Judge*JOSHUA P. KOLAR, *Circuit Judge*

No. 24-2397

STANLEY BOCLAIR,  
*Plaintiff-Appellant,**v.*ROB JEFFREYS, et al.,  
*Defendants-Appellees.*Appeal from the United States District  
Court for the Southern District of  
Illinois.

No. 21-CV-00022-SPM

Stephen P. McGlynn,  
*Judge.***ORDER**

Stanley Bocclair, an Illinois prisoner, appeals the district court's grant of summary judgment to a prison nurse, who he claimed retaliated against him and denied him

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\* We have agreed to decide the case without oral argument because the briefs 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).

medical care, and to prison officials, who he claimed were deliberately indifferent to hazardous prison conditions. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 1983. We affirm.

We construe all facts and draw all reasonable inferences in Bocclair's favor, as the non-moving party. *See Arce v. Wexford Health Sources Inc.*, 75 F.4th 673, 678 (7th Cir. 2023). During the events giving rise to this lawsuit, Bocclair was incarcerated at Menard Correctional Center in Chester, Illinois. In October 2018, Bocclair filed a grievance against nurse Reva Engalage, alleging that she gave him an unnecessary tuberculosis test. He filed another grievance against Engalage in May 2019, objecting to Engalage's treatment of his skin condition and to the prison's response to his prior grievance. Members of Menard's health care unit responded to the grievances in June 2019. In both cases, they reviewed Bocclair's medical records and found no wrongdoing on Engalage's part. Nothing in the record indicates that officials discussed the grievances with Engalage.

Meanwhile, in early June 2019, the nearby Mississippi River flooded portions of Menard, and the prison entered a lockdown until July. According to Bocclair, there was no movement within the prison, the flood contaminated Menard's water supply, prisoners received moldy bread and rancid milk.

Bocclair fell ill shortly after the flood. Throughout June and early July, Bocclair experienced vomiting, stomach cramps, and fever. Prisoners at Menard could request to see a nurse by informing correctional staff or by filling out a sick call slip. Prison guidelines stipulated that the assigned cell-house nurse would review sick call slips daily and schedule a nurse visit, but Bocclair did not know who set the sick call schedule on any given day. In June, Bocclair handed a sick call slip to Engalage at least four times and briefly explained his symptoms to her. Despite filling out the slips, Bocclair was not scheduled for sick call or seen by medical staff.

During the flood-related lockdown, Director Rob Jeffreys, Warden Frank Lawrence, and Correctional Major David Eversizer toured Bocclair's gallery. On two occasions, Bocclair informed them that "the water is messed up," he was sick, and he was struggling to get medical attention. Bocclair did not provide details about the water or his illness because Jeffreys cut him off after a few seconds. Eventually, Eversizer told Bocclair that maintenance was aware of the water contamination. Bocclair did not inform any prison official about the issues with the food until he submitted a grievance in late July, after problems caused by the flooding had subsided. There is no evidence in the record that Menard's dietary manager, Lloyd Hanna, knew of Bocclair's concerns or was responsible for the quality of the food.

Bocclair sued in January 2021. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 1983. At summary judgment, Bocclair contended that Engalage denied him medical care in retaliation for his grievances against her, in violation of his rights under the First Amendment, and that the denial of care also amounted to a deprivation of his rights under the Eighth Amendment. He also argued that Jeffreys, Lawrence, Evelsizer, and Hanna were deliberately indifferent to his conditions of his confinement, in violation of his rights under the Eighth Amendment.<sup>1</sup> The district court awarded summary judgment to the defendants, concluding that Bocclair failed to put forward evidence from which a reasonable jury could infer a causal connection between his grievances and the alleged denial of medical care or that any defendant was deliberately indifferent to his medical condition or conditions of confinement. Alternatively, the court concluded that the defendants were entitled to qualified immunity.

On appeal, Bocclair contends that the district court ignored evidence in his favor, drew inferences against him, and failed to fault the defendants for not producing evidence of their own. We address first Bocclair's claim that Engalage refused to schedule him for sick call because he filed grievances against her. To make out a *prima facie* case that Engalage retaliated against him in violation of the First Amendment, Bocclair must show that he engaged in protected activity, that an adverse action was taken against him, and that his protected conduct was a factor that motivated the adverse action. *See Holleman v. Zatecky*, 951 F.3d 873, 878 (7th Cir. 2020).

On this record, a reasonable jury could not conclude that the protected conduct motivated Engalage to deny Bocclair medical care because there is no evidence that she knew of his grievances. Bocclair insists a jury could infer that Engalage was consulted about his grievances during the investigation, but "sheer speculation" that a defendant was informed of complaints against her is insufficient to create a genuine issue of fact. *See Consolino v. Towne*, 872 F.3d 825, 830 (7th Cir. 2017). Nothing in the record indicates that the officials who responded to Bocclair's grievances discussed the matter with Engalage or that investigators usually informed employees of grievances filed against them. *See id.* at 830–31 (no evidence that sheriff was told about testimony against him in a particular instance or as a matter of course). Bocclair also suggests that Engalage's refusal to schedule him for sick call was suspiciously close in time to the investigation of his grievances against her. But for a jury to infer retaliation from suspicious timing

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<sup>1</sup> Bocclair also sued Deputy Director Robert Mueller, who has since died. No one moved to substitute Mueller's estate, so the district court dismissed all claims against him. *See* FED. R. CIV. P. 25(a)(1).

alone, Bocclair would still have to produce evidence that Engalage knew about the grievances. *See Kidwell v. Eisenhower*, 679 F.3d 957, 966 (7th Cir. 2012).

We turn next to Bocclair's remaining claims that the defendants inflicted cruel and unusual punishment upon him in violation of the Eighth Amendment. Prisoners have a right to "humane conditions of confinement," including "adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care." *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 832 (1994). A prison official is liable under the Eighth Amendment "only if he knows that inmates face a substantial risk of serious harm and disregards that risk by failing to take reasonable measures to abate it." *Id.* at 847. Though Bocclair urges otherwise, as the plaintiff he bears the burden of producing evidence from which a reasonable jury could conclude that the defendants were deliberately indifferent. *See Est. of Simpson v. Gorbett*, 863 F.3d 740, 747 (7th Cir. 2017).

Even if we assume that Engalage knew that Bocclair's medical condition presented a serious risk, Bocclair has not presented evidence that Engalage was deliberately indifferent to his fever, vomiting, and stomach cramping. Bocclair suggests that a jury could reasonably infer that Engalage denied him medical care because he was not scheduled for sick call after handing his requests to her. In support of this argument, Bocclair points to a prison manual that states that the assigned cell-house nurse should schedule prisoners for a nurse visit the day after they fill out a sick call slip. But Bocclair produced no evidence that Engalage was the assigned cell-house nurse at the time he filled out any sick call slip, that she refused to pass along Bocclair's sick call requests, or that she was personally responsible for arranging his medical care. Indeed, Bocclair did not inquire about Engalage's job duties during discovery. Bocclair's speculation that Engalage was the gatekeeper to medical care, "without any evidence about what [she] may have done or not done," is insufficient to raise a genuine dispute of material fact. *Daugherty v. Page*, 906 F.3d 606, 611 (7th Cir. 2018).

Nor has Bocclair presented evidence suggesting that Lawrence, Evelsizer, Jeffreys, or Hanna were deliberately indifferent to the conditions at Menard.<sup>2</sup> We assume without deciding that the alleged food and water contamination was objectively serious. We also accept that Bocclair informed Evelsizer, Jeffreys, and Lawrence—at least

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<sup>2</sup> In the district court, Bocclair contended that Lawrence, Evelsizer, and Jeffreys also ignored his complaints about his illness and lack of medical treatment, but he does not press this argument on appeal and so has waived it. *See Bradley v. Village of University Park*, 59 F.4th 887, 897 (7th Cir. 2023).

in general terms—about the water contamination. But Bocclair did not produce evidence that the defendants failed to reasonably respond to that risk. To the contrary, Evellsizer informed Bocclair that maintenance was aware of the water contamination. Without evidence that the defendants caused the problem, increased the risk Bocclair faced, or interfered with other officials' response to the flooding, no reasonable jury could conclude that they were deliberately indifferent for permitting maintenance to address Bocclair's concerns. *See Burks v. Raemisch*, 555 F.3d 592, 595–96 (7th Cir. 2009) (“Bureaucracies divide tasks; no prisoner is entitled to insist that one employee do another’s job.”). Lastly, we note that Bocclair produced no evidence that Hanna, Jeffreys, or any other defendant knew about the moldy bread or rancid milk, and the defendants cannot be liable for a condition of which they were unaware. *See Daugherty*, 906 F.3d at 611.

We have reviewed Bocclair's other arguments, but none has merit. Accordingly, the judgment of the district court is AFFIRMED.