

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

MAGNOLIA COOPER, *et al.*, )  
 )  
 Plaintiffs, )  
 )  
 v. )  
 )  
 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, )  
 )  
 Defendant. )

Case: 1:17-cv-00460  
 Assigned To : Unassigned  
 Assign. Date : 3/14/2017  
 Description: Pro Se Gen. Civ. (F-DECK)

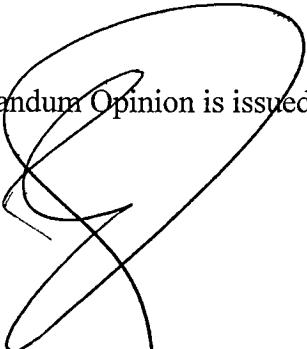
**MEMORANDUM OPINION**

This matter is before the Court on plaintiff’s application to proceed *in forma pauperis* and her *pro se* civil complaint. The application will be granted, and the complaint will be dismissed without prejudice.

The Court has reviewed plaintiff’s complaint, keeping in mind that complaints filed by *pro se* litigants are held to less stringent standards than those applied to formal pleadings drafted by lawyers. *See Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972). Even *pro se* litigants, however, must comply with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. *Jarrell v. Tisch*, 656 F. Supp. 237, 239 (D.D.C. 1987). Rule 8(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure requires that a complaint contain a short and plain statement of the grounds upon which the Court’s jurisdiction depends, a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief, and a demand for judgment for the relief the pleader seeks. Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a). The purpose of the minimum standard of Rule 8 is to give fair notice to the defendants of the claim being asserted, sufficient to prepare a responsive answer, to prepare an adequate defense and to determine whether the doctrine of *res judicata* applies. *Brown v. Califano*, 75 F.R.D. 497, 498 (D.D.C. 1977).

Plaintiff Magnolia Cooper mentions that she brought a civil action in the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, and that the action has been dismissed with prejudice. *See Cooper v. Minn. Dep't of Human Servs.*, No. 15-2682 (D. Minn. Aug. 8, 2016). The significance of this prior litigation is unclear, however. Plaintiff may intend to challenge the District of Minnesota's ruling, or she may intend to bring a new action against the same defendant or defendants under a new legal theory, or she may intend to bring a new claim (under the Federal Tort Claims Act, for example) against a new defendant. As drafted, the complaint does not give the defendant fair notice of the claim against that it, so that it may prepare a proper answer or an adequate defense.

An Order consistent with this Memorandum Opinion is issued separately.



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United States District Judge

DATE:

3/3/17