

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CARLYN WATTS,

Plaintiff,

v.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,

Defendant.

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Civil Action No. 17-1799 (UNA)

MEMORANDUM OPINION

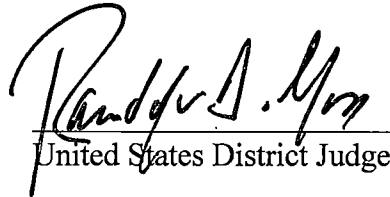
This matter is before the Court on plaintiff's application to proceed *in forma pauperis* and her *pro se* civil complaint. The application will be granted, and the complaint will be dismissed without prejudice.

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 demands legal representation and a trial, *see* Compl. at 1, but the underlying basis of her claim(s) is unclear. Thus, the Court cannot determine whether the complaint states a claim showing that plaintiff is entitled to relief. Nor does the complaint give the defendant fair notice of the claim against it, so that it may prepare a proper answer or an adequate defense.

The Court concludes that the complaint does not comply with Rule 8(a), and, therefore the complaint will be dismissed without prejudice. An Order consistent with this Memorandum Opinion is issued separately.

DATE: *Oct. 2, 2017*


United States District Judge