

Clerk, U.S. District & Bankruptcy  
Courts for the District of Columbia

Defendant.

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).

The plaintiff appears to bring this action against the attorney who represented him in a criminal matter. The complaint discusses legal ethics and the protections offered under the Fourth and Eighth Amendments to the United States Constitution, but does not articulate a legal claim against the defendant. As drafted, however, the complaint fails to comply with Rule 8(a). It fails to set forth a basis for this Court's jurisdiction or any factual allegations showing that the plaintiff is entitled to relief.

The Court will grant plaintiff's application to proceed *in forma pauperis*, and will dismiss the complaint and this civil action without prejudice. An Order consistent with this Memorandum Opinion is issued separately.

DATE: 4/5/13



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United States District Judge