

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
EASTERN DIVISION**

<b>TAJ OATIS,</b>	)	
	)	
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Case No. 17 C 0570
	)	
<b>CITIZEN BAR,</b>	)	
364 W. Erie	)	
Chicago, IL 60654,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

**MEMORANDUM ORDER**

This Court has always paid prompt attention to pro se filings in cases assigned to its calendar, both because of the lesson taught by Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519 (1972) and because it is well aware of the difficulty faced by nonlawyer litigants who are unfamiliar with litigation generally and with federal litigation in particular. This case is illustrative of that solicitude – just two days after the delivery to its chambers of the Judge's Copy of the Complaint of Employment Discrimination brought by Taj Oatis ("Oatis"), which was accompanied by two other Clerk's-Office-supplied forms,<sup>1</sup> this Court issued the attached January 27, 2017 memorandum order that granted Oatis' Application because of his demonstrated inability to pay the filing fee, but then went on to explain the deficiency in Oatis' Motion and, indeed, apprised him "of a Chicago-based organization that seeks to provide access to legal services for people who cannot afford to pay a lawyer -- its acronym is CARPLS, and it lists its free legal aid hotline telephone number as 312-738-9200."

---

<sup>1</sup> Those other forms comprised an In Forma Pauperis Application ("Application") and a Motion for Attorney Representation ("Motion").

Despite this Court's effort to assist Oatis in that respect, including the transmittal of a set of new Motion forms for him to fill out properly, Oatis has done nothing whatever to advance his lawsuit. In fact, just a few days after this Court's issuance of the January 27 order the Clerk's Office mailed him the USM 285 forms that were needed to enable the United States Marshals Service to execute the service of summons on Oatis' targeted defendant, his ex-employer Citizen Bar -- yet Oatis has obviously disregarded that, for the only ensuing docket entry in the case is dated fully two months later (Dkt. No. 9, entered April 3), in which the Marshals Service filed a return stating that it was unable to execute service without the USM 285 forms.

As desirous as this Court is to assist pro se litigants,<sup>2</sup> it has no responsibility to play nursemaid to a plaintiff who does not exercise reasonable diligence to pursue his own action. Accordingly, unless Oatis delivers to this Court's chambers on or before April 28 a paper Judge's Copy of a filing that he has made in the Clerk's Office explaining what steps he has taken toward moving this action forward, this action will be dismissed for want of prosecution.



---

Milton I. Shadur  
Senior United States District Judge

Date: April 18, 2017

---

<sup>2</sup> It should of course be understood that this Court has expressed no view as to the substantive viability or nonviability of Oatis' lawsuit.

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
EASTERN DIVISION**

<b>TAJ OATIS,</b>	)	
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Case No. 17 C 570
	)	
<b>CITIZEN BAR</b>	)	
364 W. Erie	)	
Chicago, IL 60654,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

**MEMORANDUM ORDER**

Taj Oatis ("Oatis") has just utilized the Clerk's-Office-supplied form of "Complaint of Employment Discrimination" to bring an action charging his ex-employer Citizen Bar with having terminated him in June 2014 based on his race (Oatis is African-American) and color. Because Oatis has brought suit within 90 days after his receipt of an EEOC right-to-sue letter, it poses no question of timeliness. Instead this sua sponte memorandum order is issued because of some other problems with Oatis' submitted documents.

To begin with, Oatis has misunderstood or misread some portions of the Complaint form. In that respect he mistakenly completed Complaint ¶ 7.2, which deals with defendants that are federal governmental agencies, although the information filled in there should have been provided in Complaint ¶ 8(b), which calls for the date of receipt of EEOC's right-to-sue letter. That hiccup will be ignored by this Court, which as already stated accepts the Complaint as timely filed.

Next, Oatis has accompanied his Complaint with two other Clerk's-Office-supplied forms: an In Forma Pauperis Application ("Application") and a Motion for Attorney

Representation ("Motion"). Because the Application confirms Oatis' inability to pay the filing fee for his action, it is granted. But the Motion is flawed, because Oatis has left blank the most important component of that form -- the answer to its Paragraph 2, which requires a movant to identify whatever attorneys or organizations he has attempted to obtain as his counsel, as well as the reason for his inability to find such an attorney (that information is required by our Court of Appeals as a precondition to a District Court's determination whether to grant such a motion). In that respect, although this Court does not involve itself directly in such requests, it has been made aware of a Chicago-based organization that seeks to provide access to legal services for people who cannot afford to pay a lawyer -- its acronym is CARPLS, and it lists its free legal aid hotline telephone number as 312-738-9200.

This Court is transmitting to Oatis, contemporaneously with a copy of this memorandum order, triplicate copies of the Motion form to be completed by him. Oatis must make the required effort to seek counsel, and if he is unsuccessful he should return two filled-out counterparts of the Motion to the District Court on or before February 17, 2017 -- one directed to the Clerk's Office<sup>1</sup> and the other to this Court's chambers.<sup>2</sup>



---

Milton I. Shadur  
Senior United States District Judge

Date: January 27, 2017

---

<sup>1</sup> Office of the Clerk  
United States District Court  
219 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60604.

<sup>2</sup> Honorable Milton Shadur  
United States District Court  
219 South Dearborn Street  
Suite 2388  
Chicago, Illinois 60604.