

NONPRECEDENTIAL DISPOSITION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 October 21, 2025*

Decided October 24, 2025

Before

CANDACE JACKSON-AKIWUMI, *Circuit Judge*

JOSHUA P. KOLAR, *Circuit Judge*

NANCY L. MALDONADO, *Circuit Judge*

No. 24-3179

DEANDRE A. HUGHES,
Plaintiff-Appellant,

v.

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS, et al.,
Defendants-Appellees.

Appeal from the United States District
Court for the Southern District of Indiana,
Evansville Division.

No. 3:23-cv-00228-RLY-CSW

Richard L. Young,
Judge.

ORDER

Deandre Hughes, an Indiana prisoner, appeals the judgment dismissing his civil rights suit. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 1983. We affirm.

* 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).

In his amended complaint, Hughes sued the Indiana Department of Corrections and several employees of Branchville Correctional Facility for (1) tampering with his mail, 18 U.S.C. §§ 1701, 1702; (2) discriminating against him with respect to employment, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2; and (3) depriving him of due process when reviewing his security classification, U.S. Const. amend. XIV, § 1. Hughes adds that his inability to overturn his security classification rendered him ineligible for work-release.

The district court screened Hughes's complaint, *see* 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b), and dismissed it for failure to state a claim. The court explained first, with regard to the mail-obstruction claim, that Hughes lacked standing to bring this claim because private persons generally have no right to enforce criminal statutes. Next, the court ruled that Hughes could not state a claim of employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2, because that statute prohibits discrimination by employers, and none of the defendants here was his employer or potential employer. Hughes also could not state a due process claim based on his classification status, the processing or outcome of his classification appeals, or his inability to participate in a work-release program because he had no liberty or property interest in his custody classification or work release. And Hughes could not state an equal protection claim because he failed to allege facts to support his suggestion that he was being treated differently because of his race.

On appeal, Hughes challenges only the dismissal of his obstruction-of-mail claim and does so only in a general sense. His claim fails on that basis alone. *Argyropoulos v. City of Alton*, 539 F.3d 724, 738 (7th Cir. 2008) ("perfunctory and undeveloped" arguments are waived). In any event, the district court's analysis of that claim was correct. Neither of the two criminal statutes that Hughes relies on specifies personal entitlements or civil remedies or otherwise implies a private right of action. *See Central Bank of Denver, N.A. v. First Interstate Bank of Denver, N.A.*, 511 U.S. 164, 190 (1994) ("We have been quite reluctant to infer a private right of action from a criminal prohibition alone ... And we have not suggested that a private right of action exists for all injuries caused by violations of criminal prohibitions."); *Chapa v. Adams*, 168 F.3d 1036, 1038 (7th Cir. 1999) ("Criminal statutes, which express prohibitions rather than personal entitlements and specify a particular remedy other than civil litigation, are accordingly poor candidates for the imputation of private rights of action.").

Hughes did not challenge the district court's dismissal of any of his other claims in his opening brief, so he has abandoned them on appeal. *White v. United States*, 8 F.4th

547, 552 (7th Cir. 2021) (“A party that omits from its opening appellate brief any argument in support of its position waives or abandons that party’s claim on appeal.”).

AFFIRMED