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Ohio Fifth District Court of Appeals Case Summaries

Case Caption	Case No(s)	Character of Proceeding	Judgment	Topics and Issues	Author	Date of Judgment Entry
State v. Williams	2025 CA 00045	Appeal from the Licking County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2024 CR 00830	Vacated and Remanded	Consecutive sentence finding required by trial judge Defendant-appellant Carl S. Williams appealed his eight-year aggregate prison sentence, arguing the trial court improperly imposed consecutive sentences without making the findings required by R.C. 2929.14(C)(4). Williams had pled guilty to multiple counts of receiving stolen property, forgery, and breaking and entering, committed while on post-release control, and was sentenced to consecutive eight-month terms plus an additional two years for the post-release control violation. The appellate court agreed in part, finding that although the trial court made some statutory findings, it failed to explicitly determine that consecutive sentences were necessary to protect the public or to punish the offender, as required by statute. This omission constituted plain error, rendering the consecutive sentences contrary to law, and the court therefore sustained Williams's first two assignments of error, vacated the sentence, and remanded for resentencing. However, the court rejected Williams's third assignment of error, holding that the trial court properly imposed a prison term for the post-release control violation after considering the relevant statutory factors.	Montgomery	4/20/2026
State v. Amos	2025 CA 008	Appeal from the Holmes County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 24CR062	Affirmed	Manifest weight; Sufficiency Kelsey Amos appealed his conviction for theft following a bench trial in the Holmes County Court of Common Pleas, arguing that the evidence was insufficient and that the conviction was against the manifest weight of the evidence. The case arose after a victim's e-bike and trailer were stolen outside a store, with surveillance footage showing a co-defendant, K.B., taking the bike after arriving in a vehicle driven by Amos. Although K.B. testified that Amos had no involvement, the State proceeded under a complicity theory, presenting evidence that Amos drove K.B. to the scene, interacted with him before the theft, followed him afterward, and was later seen with him. The appellate court held that the trial court, as factfinder, was entitled to assess witness credibility and reject K.B.'s testimony, and that sufficient evidence supported the conclusion that Amos aided and abetted the theft. Finding no manifest miscarriage of justice or lack of evidence, the court overruled both assignments of error and affirmed the conviction.	Baldwin	4/20/2026
State v. Phelps	2025 CA 00036	Appeal from the Fairfield County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2019 CR 00499	Affirmed	Anders - Judicial Release - Recusal of Trial Judge Robert Phelps appealed the Fairfield County Common Pleas Court's purported denial of judicial release following his earlier guilty pleas to multiple drug trafficking offenses and engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, for which he received a jointly recommended 15-year sentence. On appeal, counsel filed an Anders brief asserting the appeal was frivolous, raising only the issue that the trial court mischaracterized a motion for recusal as a motion for judicial release and failed to properly rule on recusal. The appellate court found that even if such an entry existed, a denial of judicial release is not a final, appealable order, depriving the court of jurisdiction, and further determined that any recusal issue was implicitly denied and not subject to appellate review under Ohio law. Concluding that no meritorious issues existed after an independent review, the court granted counsel's request to withdraw and affirmed the trial court's judgment.	Hoffman	4/20/2026
Mahadev Logistics, L.L.C. v. Columbus Truck & Equip. Ctrs., L.L.C.	25 CAE 10 0092	Appeal from the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 25 CV C 04 0490	Affirmed in part; Reversed in part; and Remanded	Damages - Breach of Bailment Mahadev Logistics LLC appealed a trial court decision that granted default judgment against Columbus Truck & Equipment Centers, LLC but awarded only \$1,447.94 in damages after a stolen truck was recovered in damaged condition. The appellate court agreed that the trial court properly found liability for breach of a bailment but held that the damages calculation was incomplete and unclear, particularly regarding repair costs and replacement parts, and remanded for further proceedings to determine appropriate compensation. The court affirmed the denial of damages for replacement keys but found that some towing costs were recoverable, while storage fees were only partially recoverable up to the point the owner was notified of the truck's recovery. The court also rejected the claim for lost profits due to insufficient evidence and lack of certainty, concluding that while the trial court correctly denied some damages, further fact-finding was necessary, leading the appellate court to affirm in part, reverse in part, and remand the case.	Hoffman	4/20/2026



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Columbus Zoological Park Assn. v. Fingerhut	25 CAE 11 0100	Appeal from the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 25 CVE 02 0213	Affirmed	Foreclosure; Fractional interest; Judgment lien; Joint tenants with rights of survivorship; R.C. 2329.02; R.C. 5302.20; R.C. Chapter 2323 This case involves a foreclosure action on a jointly owned residential property in Delaware County, Ohio, where the Columbus Zoological Park Association obtained a judgment lien against Peter Fingerhut following his criminal convictions and sought to enforce it through foreclosure. Although the lien applied only to Mr. Fingerhut's half-interest, the trial court granted summary judgment to the Zoo and ordered the sale of the entire property, rejecting Joni Fingerhut's argument that only her husband's fractional interest could be sold under R.C. 5302.20(C)(4). On appeal, the court affirmed, holding that the statute does not limit creditors to selling only the debtor's partial interest and instead permits foreclosure of the entire property, provided the non-debtor co-owner's share is protected in the distribution of proceeds. The court emphasized that the statutory language is permissive, not mandatory, and that longstanding Ohio law allows judgment liens to be enforced through foreclosure actions. Because the Zoo had a valid lien and followed proper procedures, and because Joni Fingerhut's financial interest would be preserved from the sale proceeds, the trial court did not err in granting foreclosure or summary judgment.	Montgomery	4/21/2026
State v. Jones	2025 CA 0074, 2025 CA 0075, 2025 CA 0076, 2025 CA 0077, 2025 CA 0078, 2025 CA 0079	Appeal from the Richland County Court of Common Pleas Case Nos. 2022 CR 0842 R, 2022 CR 0843 R, 2022 CR 0844 R, 2023 CR 0233 R, 2023 CR 0243 R, 2023 CR 0424 R	Affirmed	Post-conviction relief Defendant-Appellant Jody Jones appealed the denial of her petitions for postconviction relief following her guilty pleas in six consolidated drug-related cases, for which she received an aggregate sentence of 12 to 14.5 years. Jones argued the trial court erred by denying her petitions without an evidentiary hearing and by finding her claims barred by res judicata, asserting ineffective assistance of counsel and various constitutional violations. The appellate court affirmed, holding that her claims were either barred because they could have been raised on direct appeal or were unsupported by sufficient evidence outside the record. The court found her affidavit—alleging counsel failed to share discovery—was self-serving and insufficient to warrant a hearing, especially given no objection was raised at the plea stage and no motion to withdraw her pleas was filed. Additionally, her guilty pleas waived challenges to the sufficiency of the evidence, and she failed to demonstrate prejudice under the Strickland standard. Concluding the trial court did not abuse its discretion, the appellate court upheld the denial of postconviction relief without a hearing.	King	4/21/2026
State v. Feagin	2025 CA 0055	Appeal from the Richland County , Ohio, Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2024 CR 0562N	Affirmed	Review of suppression hearing; Probable cause to stop Law enforcement conducted surveillance on the defendant-appellant Feagin for suspected drug activity and initiated a traffic stop based on a marked-lanes violation observed by an officer, leading to a twelve-count indictment for multiple drug trafficking, possession, and criminal tools offenses. The trial court denied the appellant's motion to suppress, accepted no-contest pleas, merged certain counts, and imposed consecutive sentences totaling 37 to 42.5 years in prison. On appeal, the appellant challenged the validity of the traffic stop, the scope and duration of the stop, the imposition of consecutive sentences, and the effectiveness of counsel. The appellate court affirmed, holding that the trial court properly relied on credible officer testimony to establish a traffic violation even without video evidence, and that the appellant failed to preserve additional suppression arguments by not raising them below. The court also found the record supported the required statutory findings for consecutive sentencing and rejected the ineffective assistance claim as unsupported and conclusory. Accordingly, all assignments of error were overruled, and the conviction and sentence were upheld.	Montgomery	4/21/2026
Karr v. Estate of Sayre	2025 CA 00080	Appeal from the Licking County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2025 CV 00997	Affirmed	12(B)(6) dismissal of complaint Appellant Ryan Karr appealed the trial court's dismissal of his pro se complaint against the Dianna Sayre Estate and Joseph Aaron Sayre, which alleged perjury, false statements, abuse of a disabled person, and emotional distress stemming largely from a civil protection order that prevented him from attending a family funeral. The trial court granted the appellees' Civ.R. 12(B)(6) motion, finding the complaint failed to present clear, concise claims or satisfy Ohio's notice-pleading requirements under Civ.R. 8(A). On appeal, the court affirmed, noting Karr's complaint consisted of a lengthy, disorganized narrative lacking identifiable causes of action, supporting facts, or necessary elements, and failed to provide dates or sufficient detail to give notice of claims. The appellate court also found Karr's brief noncompliant with App.R. 16(A)(7), as it contained no coherent legal arguments or supporting authority, allowing the court to disregard his assignments of error. Even considering the merits, the court held the complaint did not meet minimal pleading standards and improperly relied on references to outside proceedings. Accordingly, the appellate court overruled all assignments of error and affirmed the dismissal.	Baldwin	4/23/2026



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State v. Holloman	25 CAA 08 0068	Appeal from the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 25 CR 1 05 0337	Affirmed	Duress Defendant-appellant Martin Holloman appealed his convictions following a jury trial in Delaware County, arguing the trial court erred by refusing to instruct the jury on the affirmative defense of duress. The evidence showed Holloman committed multiple thefts at a Walmart and later fled from police, leading officers on a high-speed, multi-jurisdictional chase before being apprehended. At trial, Holloman claimed he fled out of fear after an officer allegedly used force against him, asserting he acted under duress due to perceived imminent harm. The appellate court affirmed the convictions, holding the trial court did not abuse its discretion because the evidence did not support a duress instruction. Specifically, Holloman was at fault in creating the situation, any alleged threat was neither constant nor imminent, and his fear—particularly that the officer might harm him later—amounted to fear of future harm, which is insufficient to establish duress under Ohio law. Accordingly, the court overruled his assignment of error and upheld the judgment.	Popham	4/23/2026
State v. McRae	2025 CA 0082	Appeal from the Richland County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2022-CR0800N	Affirmed	Untimely petition for post-conviction relief Appellant Charles McRae appealed the trial court's denial of his motion for leave to file an untimely petition for postconviction relief following his convictions for aggravated burglary, kidnapping, and felonious assault arising from a violent attack on his sister. After prior appeals affirmed his convictions and sentence, McRae filed a late postconviction petition raising claims of ineffective assistance of counsel, procedural errors, and lack of jurisdiction. The appellate court affirmed the denial, holding the petition was untimely under R.C. 2953.21 and that McRae failed to satisfy the jurisdictional requirements of R.C. 2953.23 because he did not show he was unavoidably prevented from discovering the facts underlying his claims or rely on a new retroactive constitutional right. The court further found his claims were barred by res judicata because they were or could have been raised on direct appeal, and that he failed to support his allegations with evidentiary materials or operative facts warranting a hearing. Accordingly, all assignments of error were overruled, and the trial court's judgment was affirmed.	Popham	4/23/2026
State v. Redmond	2025CA00107	Appeal from the Stark County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2025-CR-0888	Affirmed	Felonious Assault - Jury Instruction on Accident - Opening Statement - Manifest Weight of the Evidence Defendant-appellant Tonya Redmond appealed her conviction for felonious assault with a firearm specification, arguing the trial court improperly limited her opening statement, erred in instructing the jury on accident, and that the verdict was against the manifest weight of the evidence. The case arose after Redmond shot a 62-year-old man with whom she lived during an argument, causing severe facial injuries. At trial, Redmond claimed the shooting was accidental, but the jury found her guilty and she was sentenced to seven to nine years in prison. On appeal, the court affirmed, holding first that the trial court did not abuse its discretion in preventing counsel from displaying a written definition of "knowingly" during opening statements, as she was still able to argue her theory of accident. Second, although the trial court erred by failing to explicitly instruct that accident could negate the mental state of "knowingly," the error was harmless because the jury was otherwise properly instructed and the defense argued the point. Finally, the court found the conviction was not against the manifest weight of the evidence, noting inconsistencies in Redmond's account and evidence suggesting a knowing shooting. Accordingly, all assignments of error were overruled and the conviction was affirmed.	Hoffman	4/23/2026
Hamilton v. Ameristone, L.L.C.	2025CA00127	Appeal from the Stark County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2025CV00762	Affirmed	Appellate review of judgment on the pleadings and leave to amend complaint Plaintiff-appellant Shawn Hamilton appealed the trial court's decision granting judgment on the pleadings in favor of his employer, Ameristone LLC, American Countertops, Inc., and Noah Troyer, and denying his motion to amend his complaint after he was injured by a forklift at work. Hamilton alleged negligence and negligence per se, arguing the defendants acted with "substantial certainty" of causing injury, but the appellate court affirmed the dismissal, holding his claims were barred by Ohio's workers' compensation statutes, which provide employers and co-employees immunity from negligence suits when the injury is compensable through workers' compensation. The court found Hamilton failed to sufficiently plead an employer intentional tort under R.C. 2745.01 because he did not allege deliberate intent to injure. The court also upheld the denial of his motion to amend, concluding the proposed amended complaint contained the same factual allegations and did not cure the deficiencies, making amendment futile. Accordingly, both assignments of error were overruled and the trial court's judgment was affirmed.	Montgomery	4/23/2026



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State v. Saunders	25 CA 27	Appeal from the Court of Common Pleas of Guernsey County , Case No. 25 CR 62	Affirmed	When a criminal defendant who is already serving a prison term enters a guilty or no-contest plea to one or more additional felony charges, nothing in Criminal Rule 11(C)(2)(a) requires the trial judge at the plea-change hearing to explain that any prison terms in the newer case could be imposed consecutively to the prison term that the defendant is already serving. Defendant Michelle Saunders appealed her convictions on two second-degree felony drug charges, arguing that her guilty pleas were not knowing, intelligent, and voluntary because the trial court failed to inform her that her sentences in the Guernsey County case could be ordered to run consecutively to prison terms she was already serving in Union County. The appellate court rejected this argument, explaining that under Criminal Rule 11(C)(2)(a), a trial court is only required to advise a defendant of the maximum penalty for each individual offense, not the possibility of consecutive sentencing unless it is mandatory or involves specific circumstances like post-release control. The court found that the trial judge substantially complied with the rule by properly explaining the penalties for each charge and noting that consecutive sentencing between the two counts in the case was possible. It further held that precedent cited by Saunders, including State v. Bishop, was inapplicable because she was incarcerated rather than on post-release control at the time of her plea. Concluding that the trial court had no obligation to explain the potential for consecutive sentences across separate cases in different counties, the appellate court affirmed the judgment.	Gormley	4/24/2026
Shidaker v. Shidaker	25 CAF 11 0098	Appeal from the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations Division, Case No. 20 DRB 03 0128	Affirmed	60(B) as substitute for appeal; Appeal to be filed within 30 days Defendant-Appellant Lynette L. Shidaker appealed the trial court's denial of her post-judgment motions seeking to reopen her divorce case, obtain relief under Civil Rule 60(B), correct alleged errors, and impose sanctions. The appellate court affirmed, finding no abuse of discretion. It held that although her 60(B) motion was filed within one year of the divorce decree, it was not filed within a "reasonable time," as she was aware of the alleged issues earlier and failed to justify the delay; thus, the trial court was not required to hold a hearing. The court also rejected her claim under Civil Rule 60(A), concluding she sought substantive changes to spousal support rather than correction of a clerical error. Additionally, her remaining arguments—alleging procedural errors, bias, and failure to impose sanctions—were deemed improper attempts to challenge the original 2023 divorce judgment, which she did not timely appeal. Because those claims were outside the appellate court's jurisdiction, all assignments of error were overruled and the trial court's judgment was affirmed.	Montgomery	4/24/2026
State v. Baffoe	25 CAC 10 0086	Appeal from the Delaware County Delaware Municipal Court, Case No. 24CRB00365	Affirmed	Trial Court did not abuse its discretion in failing to order competency evaluation Defendant-appellant Samuel Baffoe appealed his conviction for menacing by stalking following a bench trial in the Delaware Municipal Court, arguing that the trial court erred by failing to order a competency evaluation. Throughout the proceedings, Baffoe refused to recognize himself as the defendant, questioned the court's authority, declined counsel despite standby counsel being appointed, and repeatedly disrupted the trial, while also claiming he did not feel "competent" due to recent health issues. The appellate court held that the trial court did not abuse its discretion in declining to order a competency evaluation, noting that Baffoe is presumed competent and his statements related only to his physical condition rather than an inability to understand the proceedings or assist in his defense. The court further found that his behavior reflected defiance rather than incompetence, and that neither his actions nor standby counsel's failure to raise competency concerns provided reasonable cause for such an evaluation. Accordingly, the court overruled his sole assignment of error and affirmed the conviction and sentence.	Hoffman	4/24/2026
State v. Sanchez	2025 CA 00134	Appeal from the Court of Common Pleas of Stark County , Case No. 2016CR0957	Affirmed	The trial court did not abuse its discretion when it denied a criminal defendant's motion to withdraw his guilty pleas years after he was sentenced. Defendant Anthony Sanchez appealed the denial of his post-sentence motion to withdraw his guilty pleas, arguing ineffective assistance of counsel based on allegedly withheld discovery and misrepresentations about the evidence. The appellate court affirmed, holding that his second motion was barred by the doctrine of res judicata because he had already raised ineffective-assistance claims in a prior 2022 motion and could have raised these additional arguments earlier, particularly since the evidence he relied on existed at the time of his plea. The court also found that the materials he later obtained did not qualify as newly discovered evidence and that his claims were unsupported by anything beyond self-serving affidavits and unauthenticated documents. Moreover, his allegations were contradicted by the record, including his prior statements at the plea hearing expressing satisfaction with counsel. The court concluded that Sanchez failed to demonstrate a manifest injustice or entitlement to a hearing, and therefore the trial court did not abuse its discretion in denying the motion.	Gormley	4/24/2026



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State v. Goodson	2025 CA 00034	Appeal from the Fairfield County Municipal Court, Case No. TRC2500307	Affirmed	Though a criminal defendant's trial counsel provided deficient performance by filing a motion to suppress more than three months after the deadline for doing so, the defendant's ineffective-assistance claim comes up short where she cannot show that she was prejudiced or harmed by her attorney's deficient performance. The defendant had no reasonable probability of success on some issues raised in the tardy suppression motion, and she had no reasonable probability of winning at trial even had she succeeded on the other arguments in that motion. Defendant Tangie Goodson appealed her OVI conviction, arguing she received ineffective assistance of counsel because her attorney filed an untimely motion to suppress, which the trial court denied without a hearing before she entered a no-contest plea. The appellate court agreed that counsel's performance was deficient due to the late filing but found that Goodson failed to demonstrate prejudice as required under Strickland. Specifically, the court determined there was no reasonable probability the suppression motion would have succeeded or changed the outcome, as the traffic stop was justified by a stop-bar violation, the officer had reasonable suspicion to conduct field sobriety tests based on signs of intoxication, and substantial evidence—such as her slurred speech, odor of alcohol, poor balance, and admission to drinking—would have remained admissible even if certain test results were excluded. Additionally, the breath-test evidence was not necessary to sustain her conviction for operating a vehicle under the influence. Because Goodson could not show that the result of the case would have been different absent counsel's error, the court affirmed the trial court's judgment.	Gormley	4/24/2026