

THIRD DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL OF FLORIDA

Damian L. Kelly v. State of Florida

No. 3D25-2085 (Fla. 3d DCA June 10, 2026) · No. No. 3D25-2085 · Decided June 10, 2026

SUMMARY

The Third District Court of Appeal affirmed the summary denial of Damian L. Kelly’s Florida Rule of Criminal Procedure 3.800 postconviction motion challenging the consecutive nature of his sentences under Florida’s 10-20-Life statute. The court held that Kelly’s claim had already been rejected in prior appeals and was barred from relitigation. The court also cautioned that further self-represented filings raising the same issue could result in restrictions on future filings.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Third District Court of Appeal of Florida
WRITING FOR THE COURT	SCALES, C.J.; MILLER, J.; BOKOR, J.
JURISDICTION	Third District Court of Appeal of Florida
DECIDED	June 10, 2026
DOCKET	No. 3D25-2085
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Appeal under Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.141(b)(2) from the circuit court’s summary denial of a Florida Rule of Criminal Procedure 3.800 postconviction motion challenging the legality of consecutive sentences.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	De novo review of the legal issue presented by a Rule 3.800 motion and the summary denial of postconviction relief.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published
PARTIES	Damian L. Kelly v. State of Florida

TOPICS

- post-conviction relief
- appellate procedure
- sentencing
- criminal procedure
- statutory interpretation

PRACTICE AREAS

- criminal procedure
- post-conviction relief
- appellate procedure
- sentencing
- statutory interpretation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Kelly could relitigate in a Rule 3.800 postconviction motion his claim that consecutive sentences imposed under the 10-20-Life statute were illegal after this Court had rejected the same claim on plenary appeal and in a prior postconviction appeal.
2. Whether a 2025 amendment to the 10-20-Life statute eliminating the consecutive-sentencing requirement for a non-qualifying offense applied retroactively to Kelly's 2007 sentence.

HOLDINGS

1. Kelly's repeated challenge to the consecutive nature of his sentence is barred because this Court previously rejected the same claim; the court therefore affirmed the summary denial of his Rule 3.800 motion.
2. Kelly was not entitled to the retroactive benefit of the 2025 amendment eliminating the requirement that a sentence for a non-qualifying offense run consecutively to the qualifying offense's mandatory minimum sentence.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"This Court has twice previously rejected Kelly's arguments that his consecutive sentencing was illegal, and we do so now for the third time on the same grounds." (at 2)

"We will likely not be doing so a fourth time, however, because we caution Kelly that further self-represented filings with this Court challenging the consecutive nature of Kelly's sentence will result in this Court entering an order requiring Kelly to show cause as to why he should not be precluded from self-represented filings in this case." (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Kelly was sentenced in 2007 under Florida's 10-20-Life statute after convictions for aggravated battery with a firearm and shooting a deadly missile into a vehicle. He contended that the sentencing court mistakenly believed consecutive sentences were mandatory. The postconviction court concluded that the statutory framework then in effect required consecutive sentencing because the convictions included both a qualifying and a non-qualifying offense.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Kelly was sentenced in 2007 for aggravated battery with a firearm and shooting a deadly missile into a vehicle. After this Court rejected his sentencing argument on plenary appeal and again in a later postconviction appeal, Kelly filed the same challenge in an April 29, 2022 Rule 3.800 motion. The Miami-Dade County Circuit Court summarily denied the motion on September 28, 2025, and Kelly appealed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Kelly v. State, 3 So. 3d 1263 (Fla. 3d DCA 2009) (table)
- Kelly v. State, 27 So. 3d 729 (Fla. 3d DCA 2010)
- State v. McBride, 848 So. 2d 287, 291 (Fla. 2003)
- White v. State, 651 So. 2d 726, 726 (Fla. 5th DCA 1995)
- Pappas v. State, 346 So. 3d 1200, 1203 (Fla. 1st DCA 2022)

OPINION

Damian L. Kelly v. State of Florida

PER CURIAM.

Third District Court of Appeal State of Florida Opinion filed June 10, 2026. Not final until disposition of timely filed motion for rehearing. _____ No. 3D25-2085 Lower Tribunal No. F06-21706 _____ Damian L. Kelly, Appellant, vs. State of Florida, Appellee. An Appeal under Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.141(b)(2) from the Circuit Court for Miami-Dade County, Miguel Manuel de la O, Judge. Damian L. Kelly, in proper person. James Uthmeier, Attorney General, and Haccord J. Curry, Assistant Attorney General, for appellee. Before SCALES, C.J., and MILLER and BOKOR, JJ. PER CURIAM. Self-represented appellant Damian L. Kelly appeals the trial court's September 28, 2025 order summarily denying his April 29, 2022 postconviction motion brought pursuant to Florida Rule of Criminal Procedure 3.800. As in his postconviction motion, Kelly argues on appeal that his sentence is illegal because, when Kelly was sentenced in 2007, under the 10-20-Life statute,¹ the trial court allegedly was under the mistaken belief that the sentences for Kelly's convictions for aggravated battery and shooting a deadly missile into a vehicle were required to run consecutively. Kelly made this identical argument which this Court rejected on plenary appeal. Kelly v. State, 3 So. 3d 1263 (Fla. 3d DCA 2009) (table). Kelly again made this argument unsuccessfully in a July 2009 postconviction motion and a subsequent appeal of the trial court's order denying that motion. Kelly v. State, 27 So. 3d 729 (Fla. 3d DCA 2010). Undeterred, Kelly made the same assertion in his April 2022 postconviction motion. In its detailed order denying Kelly's motion, the postconviction court carefully explained why the trial court did not reversibly err when it sentenced Kelly to consecutive, rather than concurrent, terms. In 1 This statute provides for enhanced penalties when, during the commission of certain enumerated criminal offenses, one possesses or discharges a firearm or destructive device. See § 775.087(2), Fla. Stat. (2007). 2 sum, the trial court concluded that, in 2007,² when Kelly was sentenced, the relevant statutory framework of the 10-20-Life statute required the trial court to sentence Kelly consecutively because Kelly was convicted of both a qualifying offense (aggravated battery with a firearm) and a non-qualifying offense (shooting a deadly missile into a vehicle).³ This Court has twice previously rejected Kelly's arguments that his consecutive sentencing was illegal, and we do so now for the third time on the same grounds. See State v. McBride, 848 So. 2d 287, 291 (Fla. 2003) (holding that collateral

estoppel bars re-litigation of a claim in a postconviction context); *White v. State*, 651 So. 2d 726, 726 (Fla. 5th DCA 1995) (holding that the law of the case doctrine prevents a defendant from challenging his sentence in a rule 3.800 motion after failing to prevail on the same issue in his plenary appeal). We will likely not be doing so a fourth 2 The trial court inadvertently identified the date of sentencing as occurring in 2010. 3 The trial court noted that, in 2025, the 10-20-Life statute was amended to eliminate the requirement that a sentence for a non-qualifying offense be imposed consecutive to the qualifying offense's mandatory minimum sentence. We reject the assertion that Kelly is somehow entitled to a retroactive benefit of this statutory change occurring fifteen years after Kelly was initially sentenced. See *Pappas v. State*, 346 So. 3d 1200, 1203 (Fla. 1st DCA 2022) (holding that, to apply a criminal statute retroactively (in this instance, a 2016 amendment to section 775.087), there must be clear intent of retroactive application in the statutory amendment). 3 time, however, because we caution Kelly that further self-represented filings with this Court challenging the consecutive nature of Kelly's sentence will result in this Court entering an order requiring Kelly to show cause as to why he should not be precluded from self-represented filings in this case. Affirmed; defendant cautioned. 4