

CONNECTICUT APPELLATE COURT

Wilson v. Commissioner of Correction

AC 48311 (Conn. App. June 30, 2026) · No. AC 48311 · Decided June 30, 2026

SUMMARY

The Connecticut Appellate Court held that the habeas court abused its discretion by denying certification to appeal after dismissing Bryant Wilson’s amended habeas petition as moot. The petition raised a separate claim challenging Wilson’s guilty plea and conviction arising from the Maple Street shooting, distinct from claims concerning his murder conviction that had been reversed. The judgment was reversed and the case was remanded for further proceedings.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Connecticut Appellate Court
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Elgo, J.; Cradle, C. J.; Westbrook, J.
JURISDICTION	Connecticut Appellate Court
DECIDED	June 30, 2026
DOCKET	AC 48311
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The petitioner appealed from the habeas court's denial of certification to appeal following dismissal of his amended petition for a writ of habeas corpus. The habeas court dismissed the petition on the ground that it lacked subject matter jurisdiction because the petition had become moot after the Connecticut Appellate Court reversed the petitioner's murder and firearm conviction and remanded that case for a new trial.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the denial of certification for abuse of discretion. It reviewed the habeas court's dismissal of the petition and interpretation of the pleadings de novo or plenary because those matters presented questions of law. In determining whether certification was properly denied, the court considered whether the petitioner raised an issue debatable among jurists of reason, capable of resolution in a different manner, or adequate to deserve encouragement to proceed further.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Connecticut Appellate Court opinion
PARTIES	Bryant Wilson v. Commissioner of Correction

TOPICS

state post-conviction relief

mootness

appellate procedure

appellate jurisdiction

ineffective assistance

PRACTICE AREAS

habeas corpus

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criminal procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the habeas court abused its discretion in denying certification to appeal.
2. Whether the amended habeas petition raised a separate and distinct challenge to Wilson's Maple Street guilty plea and conviction that remained justiciable after reversal of his murder and firearm conviction.
3. Whether reversal of the murder conviction rendered the entire habeas petition moot.

HOLDINGS

1. The habeas court abused its discretion in denying certification to appeal because Wilson raised an issue that could be resolved in a different manner and was adequate to deserve encouragement to proceed further.
2. The petition was not wholly moot because the amended petition separately challenged Wilson's Maple Street guilty plea and conviction, and that claim remained capable of providing practical relief.
3. Reversal of the murder and firearm conviction did not moot the separate claim challenging the Maple Street conviction.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A petitioner may establish an abuse of discretion by demonstrating that the issues are debatable among jurists of reason . . . [a] court could resolve the issues [in a different manner] . . . or . . . the questions are adequate to deserve encouragement to proceed further.”

“In determining mootness, the dispositive question is whether a successful appeal would benefit the [petitioner] in any way.”

“We therefore conclude that the petitioner’s amended habeas petition raised a separate and distinct claim challenging his conviction in the Maple Street shooting.”

“Although the petitioner’s murder conviction has been reversed, the remaining claim regarding the Maple Street shooting prevents us from concluding that the case before us is moot.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Wilson pleaded guilty to attempt to commit assault in the first degree arising from the Maple Street shooting and to reckless endangerment arising from the Prospect Street shooting. He later faced and was convicted of murder and carrying a pistol without a permit in a separate case. His amended habeas petition alleged that trial counsel were ineffective in advising him to plead guilty in the Maple Street case and in failing to ensure that the plea

would not be admitted against him at the murder trial; after the murder conviction was reversed, the habeas court dismissed the habeas petition as moot.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Wilson pleaded guilty to offenses arising from the Maple Street and Prospect Street shootings and was later convicted by a jury of murder and carrying a pistol without a permit in a separate case. He filed an amended habeas petition alleging, among other things, that counsel were ineffective in advising him to plead guilty in the Maple Street case and in failing to prevent that plea from being used in the murder trial. After the Appellate Court reversed the murder conviction and remanded for a new trial, the habeas court dismissed the amended petition as moot and denied certification to appeal. The Appellate Court reversed and remanded.

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The case was remanded for further proceedings consistent with the opinion. The respondent may renew on remand the alternative challenge that the petition failed to state a claim under Practice Book § 23-29 (2).

CASES CITED

- Taylor v. Commissioner of Correction, 216 Conn. App. 570, 573 n.4, 286 A.3d 449 (2022)
- State v. Wilson, 209 Conn. App. 779, 782–88, 267 A.3d 958 (2022)
- Simms v. Warden, 230 Conn. 608, 612, 646 A.2d 126 (1994)
- Dixon v. Commissioner of Correction, 233 Conn. App. 851, 856, 342 A.3d 260, cert. denied, 353 Conn. 918, 345 A.3d 808 (2025)
- Vega v. Commissioner of Correction, 224 Conn. App. 652, 658, 312 A.3d 1142 (2024), aff'd, 354 Conn. 437, 354 A.3d 151 (2026)
- Khan v. Commissioner of Correction, 234 Conn. App. 851, 858–59, 344 A.3d 1234 (2025)
- Richards v. Commissioner of Correction, 164 Conn. App. 862, 865, 138 A.3d 440 (2016)
- Woods v. Commissioner of Correction, 197 Conn. App. 597, 607, 232 A.3d 63 (2020), appeal dismissed, 341 Conn. 506, 267 A.3d 193 (2021)
- Finney v. Commissioner of Correction, 207 Conn. App. 133, 143, 261 A.3d 778, cert. denied, 339 Conn. 915, 262 A.3d 134 (2021)
- Ross v. Commissioner of Correction, 217 Conn. App. 286, 322–29, 288 A.3d 1055, cert. denied, 346 Conn. 915, 290 A.3d 374 (2023)
- Godfrey v. Commissioner of Correction, 202 Conn. App. 684, 697 n.11, 246 A.3d 1032, cert. denied, 336 Conn. 931, 248 A.3d 2 (2021)
- Papantoniou v. Commissioner of Correction, 235 Conn. App. 674, 691 n.15, 346 A.3d 985, cert. granted, 354 Conn. 926, 353 A.3d 846 (2026)

- Vazquez v. Commissioner of Correction, 232 Conn. App. 244, 261, 335 A.3d 487, cert. denied, 352 Conn. 958, 336 A.3d 1249 (2025)

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