

LOUISIANA COURT OF APPEAL, FOURTH CIRCUIT

State of Louisiana in the Interest of A.N.

No. 2025-CA-0566 (La. Ct. App. 4th Cir. Dec. 3, 2025) · No. 2025-CA-0566 · Decided December 3, 2025

SUMMARY

The Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal affirmed a juvenile court judgment dismissing a delinquency petition against A.N. for failure to timely prosecute under Louisiana Children's Code article 877. The court held that the absence of a court reporter did not constitute good cause to extend the mandatory adjudication deadline and that A.N.'s prior waivers and acquiescence did not waive the statutory limitation period altogether.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Judge Rachael D. Johnson; Chief Judge Roland L. Belsome; Judge Paula A. Brown
JURISDICTION	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit
DECIDED	December 3, 2025
DOCKET	2025-CA-0566
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The State appealed the juvenile court's judgment granting A.N.'s motion to dismiss a delinquency petition for failure to timely prosecute under Louisiana Children's Code article 877.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Abuse of discretion
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published and precedential
PARTIES	State of Louisiana v. A.N.

TOPICS

- appellate procedure
- criminal procedure
- statutory interpretation
- standard of review
- preservation of error

PRACTICE AREAS

- juvenile law
- criminal procedure
- appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the juvenile court abused its discretion by dismissing the delinquency petition for failure to commence the adjudication hearing within the ninety-day period required by Louisiana Children's Code article 877(B).
2. Whether a juvenile's prior requests for continuances, acquiescence to hearing dates beyond the statutory period, or waivers of article 877 deadlines waives the statutory limitation period altogether.
3. Whether the absence of a court reporter constituted good cause under article 877(D) to extend the adjudication deadline.

HOLDINGS

1. The juvenile court did not abuse its discretion in dismissing the delinquency petition because at least ninety days had elapsed without a timely adjudication hearing or a valid good-cause extension obtained before the statutory period expired.
2. A juvenile's acquiescence to or request for one or more continuances does not waive the article 877 limitation period altogether; the period may be extended only for good cause.
3. The absence of a court reporter, when attributable to the court's internal operating procedures or availability, did not constitute sufficient good cause to extend the mandatory article 877 adjudication period.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Accordingly, the 90-day limitation period can only be extended for “good cause”, not waived.” (10)

“The court system cannot excuse itself from affording an accused a trial within the delay required by law, simply by relying upon internal operating procedures which result in noncompliance with the statutory mandate.” (9)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The State charged A.N. in a juvenile delinquency petition with domestic abuse battery and simple criminal damage to property. A.N. answered the petition on May 3, 2023, and the matter was repeatedly continued based on defense requests, waivers, court closures, court availability, and the unavailability of a State witness. The adjudication hearing was ultimately continued from April 2, 2025, to June 17, 2025, because no court reporter was present. A.N. moved to dismiss before the hearing, and the juvenile court determined that the statutory ninety-day period had expired.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The State filed a juvenile delinquency petition against A.N. in April 2023. After numerous continuances, waivers, and extensions, the juvenile court set adjudication for June 17, 2025. A.N. moved to dismiss on June 12, 2025, asserting that the ninety-day prosecution period had expired. The juvenile court granted the motion on July 10, 2025, and the Court of Appeal affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- State v. Roberson, 14-1996, p. 4 (La. 10/14/15), 179 So. 3d 573, 576
- State in Interest of R.D.C., Jr., 93-1865 (La. 2/28/94), 632 So. 2d 745, 748-49
- State in Interest of Franklin, 95-0423, p. 3 (La. App. 4 Cir. 7/26/95), 659 So. 2d 537, 538
- State ex rel. J.B. & G.M., 03-0587, p. 3 (La. App. 4 Cir. 12/10/03), 863 So. 2d 669, 671
- State ex rel. S.D., 09-1113, p. 3 (La. App. 4 Cir. 12/9/09), 28 So. 3d 1160, 1161
- State in Int. of L.D., 24-0784, 24-0786, pp. 3-4 (La. App. 4 Cir. 2/17/25), 409 So. 3d 265, 267-68
- State in the Int. of R.W., 18-0069, p. 6 (La. App. 4 Cir. 5/23/18), 246 So. 3d 619, 622
- State in the Interest of K.K., 14-479, p. 5, n. 4 (La. App. 3 Cir. 12/17/14), 153 So. 3d 1280, 1283
- State in the Interest of J.M., 156 So. 3d 1161
- State in the Int. of C.G., 19-01653 (La. 11/5/19), 281 So. 3d 657, 657-58
- State in the Interest of L.D., 2014-1080 (La. 10/15/14), 149 So. 3d 763, 765
- State v. Driever, 347 So. 2d 1132, 1134