

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE

State v. Williams

Williams · No. I.D. No. 2404009032 · Decided January 28, 2026

SUMMARY

The Delaware Superior Court denied Tyheir V. Williams’s motion for post-conviction relief following his guilty pleas to carrying a concealed dangerous instrument and illegal possession of a controlled substance. The Court held that several claims were procedurally barred, that the guilty-plea and ineffective-assistance claims were previously adjudicated or successive, and that the motion did not establish a basis for relief. The Court also denied Williams’s request for appointment of counsel.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Superior Court of the State of Delaware
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sheldon K. Rennie
JURISDICTION	Delaware Superior Court
DECIDED	January 28, 2026
DOCKET	I.D. No. 2404009032
DISPOSITION	denied
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant moved for post-conviction relief under Delaware Superior Court Criminal Rule 61, appointment of counsel, suppression of evidence, and related relief after pleading guilty. The Superior Court denied the motions on procedural-bar grounds and because the ineffective-assistance claim was not substantial.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court applied Delaware Superior Court Criminal Rule 61’s procedural bars, including time limitation, failure to raise claims below, former adjudication, and successive-motion restrictions. It declined to reach the merits of claims subject to a procedural bar and rejected conclusory or unsubstantiated post-conviction claims.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Delaware Superior Court order; precedential effect is not otherwise specified in the source.
PARTIES	State of Delaware v. Tyheir V. Williams

TOPICS

state post-conviction relief

successive petitions

ineffective assistance

plea bargaining

suppression of evidence

PRACTICE AREAS

criminal procedure

post-conviction relief

guilty pleas

ineffective assistance of counsel

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Williams's Rule 61 motion was timely and remained justiciable after his release from probation.
2. Whether the claims concerning the traffic stop and search, charging defect, discovery, birthdate inaccuracies, and other matters were procedurally barred because they were not raised on direct appeal or below.
3. Whether the challenge to the voluntariness of Williams's guilty plea was barred by former adjudication.
4. Whether Williams's ineffective-assistance claims were barred as successive and waived by his guilty plea.
5. Whether Williams was entitled to appointment of counsel under Superior Court Criminal Rule 61(e)(3).

HOLDINGS

1. The motion was timely because it was filed within one year after the judgment of conviction became final, and Williams's release from custody did not moot the motion because he could potentially demonstrate continuing collateral consequences from his felony conviction and firearm restriction.
2. Claims that could have been raised on direct appeal or in the proceedings below are procedurally barred under Rule 61(i)(3) unless the defendant establishes cause and prejudice; Williams failed to establish cause for his unconstitutional-stop, charging, discovery, and birthdate-related claims.
3. Ineffective-assistance claims are not barred under Rule 61(i)(3) merely because they were not raised earlier, because such claims generally cannot be raised in the proceedings leading to conviction and are properly brought in a post-conviction motion.
4. Williams's claim that his guilty plea was not knowing, intelligent, or voluntary was barred by former adjudication because the court had previously reviewed and rejected the same contention.
5. Williams's additional ineffective-assistance theories were barred as successive under Rule 61(i)(2) because they were known or should have been known when he filed his first post-conviction petition.
6. Williams was not entitled to appointment of counsel under Rule 61(e)(3) because he failed to present a substantial ineffective-assistance claim that could warrant vacatur of his conviction.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“a defendant who files a timely postconviction motion while in custody . . . but is released from custody before the motion is resolved, is not divested of standing if the defendant can demonstrate that he continues to suffer collateral consequences because of his conviction.” (at 5)

“Simply put, ineffective-assistance claims are not subject to Rule 61(i)(3)’s bar because they cannot be asserted in the proceeding leading to judgment of conviction under the Superior Court’s rules and this Court’s precedent.” (at 7)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Williams pleaded guilty to carrying a concealed dangerous instrument and illegal possession of a controlled substance. He received an aggregate sentence of one year and six months at Level V supervision, suspended for one year at Level II, and was prohibited from possessing a deadly weapon for five years. He later filed multiple motions challenging his guilty plea, the traffic stop and search, the charging document, discovery, his counsel's performance, and inaccuracies in his birthdate. He was discharged from probation on January 12, 2026, but the court found that alleged collateral consequences could preserve standing for his timely post-conviction motion.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Williams pleaded guilty on January 13, 2025, to carrying a concealed dangerous instrument and illegal possession of a controlled substance and received suspended Level V sentences. He did not file a direct appeal, but filed multiple motions seeking to withdraw his guilty plea and later filed several post-conviction motions. The court previously rejected his plea-withdrawal arguments, and in this proceeding treated his December 2025 filing as the governing Rule 61 motion. The court denied post-conviction relief and appointment of counsel.

DISPOSITION

denied

CASES CITED

- State v. Evans, 2024 WL 3691510, at *1 (Del. Super. Aug. 7, 2024)
- Younger v. State, 580 A.2d 552, 554, 556 (Del. 1990)
- Bradley v. State, 135 A.3d 748, 757-58 (Del. 2016)
- Martin v. State, 306 A.3d 50, 57, 65 (Del. 2023)
- State v. Prince, 2022 WL 211704, at *4 (Del. Super. Jan. 24, 2022)
- State v. White, 278 A.3d 680, 685, 688 (Del. Super. 2022)
- State v. Smith, 2018 WL 5279569, at *1 (Del. Super. Oct. 1, 2018)
- McGriff v. State, 326 A.3d 653 (TABLE), 2024 WL 3770733, at *2 (Del. Aug. 12, 2024)
- Green v. State, 238 A.3d 160, 175 (Del. 2020)
- State v. Daniels, 2018 WL 3853534, at *4 (Del. Super. Aug. 9, 2018)
- State v. Watson, 2004 WL 282806, at *2 (Del. Super. Apr. 28, 2004)
- Evans v. State, 341 A.3d 1005 (TABLE), 2025 WL 1565409, at *1 (Del. June 2, 2025)
- Thomas v. State, 337 A.3d 1215 (TABLE), 2024 WL 5135491, at *3 (Del. Dec. 16, 2024)

