

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, APPELLATE DIVISION,
FOURTH JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

People v. Laws

2026 NY Slip Op 00652 · No. 2 KA 23-01489 · Decided February 11, 2026

SUMMARY

The New York Appellate Division, Fourth Department, unanimously affirmed a judgment convicting Ryan Laws upon his guilty plea to assault in the second degree. The court held that Laws knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently waived his right to appeal, and that the valid waiver precluded review of his challenge to the severity of the sentence.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Division, Fourth Judicial Department
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Whalen, P.J.; Curran, J.; Montour, J.; Smith, J.; Greenwood, J.
JURISDICTION	Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Division, Fourth Judicial Department
DECIDED	February 11, 2026
DOCKET	2 KA 23-01489
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant appealed from a judgment of Wayne County Court convicting him upon his guilty plea of assault in the second degree.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published opinion
PARTIES	Ryan Laws v. The People of the State of New York

TOPICS

- appellate procedure
- criminal procedure
- sentencing
- plea bargaining

PRACTICE AREAS

- criminal procedure
- appellate procedure
- sentencing

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

- Whether defendant knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently waived his right to appeal.

2. Whether the oral colloquy improperly characterized the waiver as an absolute bar to a first-tier direct appeal.
3. Whether the oral colloquy cured any alleged defects in defendant's written appeal-waiver form.
4. Whether a valid waiver of the right to appeal precluded appellate review of defendant's challenge to the severity of his sentence.

HOLDINGS

1. The record established that defendant knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently waived his right to appeal.
2. Any alleged defects in the written appeal-waiver form were cured by the proper oral colloquy.
3. Defendant's valid waiver of the right to appeal precluded appellate review of his challenge to the severity of the sentence.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Contrary to defendant's contention, the record establishes that he knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently waived his right to appeal” ([*1])

“County Court's oral colloquy did not mischaracterize the waiver of the right to appeal as "an absolute bar to the taking of a first-tier direct appeal"” ([*1])

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Ryan Laws pleaded guilty to assault in the second degree under Penal Law § 120.05(3). During the plea proceedings, County Court conducted an oral colloquy concerning defendant's waiver of the right to appeal, and defendant also executed a written waiver form. On appeal, defendant argued that the waiver was invalid or that the written waiver was defective, and challenged the severity of his sentence.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Wayne County Court entered judgment on August 2, 2023, after defendant pleaded guilty to assault in the second degree. Defendant appealed, challenging the validity of his waiver of the right to appeal and the severity of his sentence. The Appellate Division unanimously affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- People v. Williams, 228 A.D.3d 1316, 1316-1317 (4th Dep't 2024), lv. denied, 42 N.Y.3d 972 (2024), reconsideration denied, 42 N.Y.3d 1055 (2024)
- People v. Thomas, 34 N.Y.3d 545, 558-564 (2019), cert. denied, 140 S. Ct. 2634 (2020)
- People v. Lopez, 6 N.Y.3d 248, 255-256 (2006)

- People v. Figueroa, 230 A.D.3d 1581, 1582 (4th Dep't 2024), lv. denied, 42 N.Y.3d 1079 (2025)
- People v. Hoose, 236 A.D.3d 1294, 1295 (4th Dep't 2025), lv. denied, 44 N.Y.3d 993 (2025)
- People v. Tandle, 238 A.D.3d 1503, 1504 (4th Dep't 2025), lv. denied, 43 N.Y.3d 1059 (2025)

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