

LOUISIANA COURT OF APPEAL, SECOND CIRCUIT

State of Louisiana v. Amin Barkatali Virani

No. 56,781-KA · No. 56,781-KA · Decided April 8, 2026

SUMMARY

The Louisiana Second Circuit Court of Appeal reviewed Amin Barkatali Virani’s conviction for attempted second degree murder arising from the shooting of Matthew Meadows. The court held that the evidence was sufficient to support the conviction and that Virani’s challenges to the admission of his statements were procedurally barred because he did not timely file a motion to suppress. The court affirmed the conviction, vacated the sentence, and remanded for resentencing.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Cox, J.; Pitman, J.; Hunter, J.
JURISDICTION	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit
DECIDED	April 8, 2026
DOCKET	56,781-KA
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant appealed his unanimous-jury conviction for attempted second degree murder and his 25-year sentence. The court affirmed the conviction, vacated the sentence based on an error patent concerning the statutory delay before sentencing, and remanded for resentencing.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Jackson v. Virginia, the evidence is reviewed in the light most favorable to the prosecution to determine whether any rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements proven beyond a reasonable doubt. The appellate court does not reweigh evidence or assess witness credibility and gives great deference to the factfinder unless its credibility determination lacks a rational basis. Ineffective-assistance claims are generally deferred to post-conviction proceedings unless the record is sufficient for resolution on direct appeal. Sentencing compliance was reviewed for error patent.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published; precedential
PARTIES	Amin Barkatali Virani v. State of Louisiana

TOPICS

criminal procedure

appellate procedure

standard of review

sentencing

right to counsel

PRACTICE AREAS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the evidence was sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Virani was the shooter and had the specific intent to kill Meadows.
2. Whether Virani could challenge the admission of statements made after he invoked his rights when he failed to file a timely motion to suppress.
3. Whether Virani's ineffective-assistance-of-counsel claims should be decided on direct appeal.
4. Whether the sentence was legally valid when imposed immediately after denial of the JNOV motion without the required statutory delay or an express waiver.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence was sufficient to support Virani's conviction because, viewed in the light most favorable to the prosecution, it established that he fired at Meadows with the specific intent to kill him and committed an overt act toward accomplishing the killing.
2. Virani was barred from objecting at trial to the admissibility of his statements on constitutional suppression grounds because he knew of the statements and the State's intent to use them but did not file a timely motion to suppress.
3. The court declined to decide Virani's ineffective-assistance claims on direct appeal because they were more appropriately addressed through an application for post-conviction relief and an evidentiary hearing in the trial court.
4. The sentence had to be vacated because the trial court imposed it immediately after denying the JNOV motion without observing the required delay under La. C. Cr. P. art. 873 and without obtaining Virani's waiver.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"We affirm Virani's conviction." (13)

"We make no ruling on the admissibility of his statement had he properly challenged its use." (15)

"Accordingly, we are required to vacate his sentence and remand this matter for resentencing for compliance with La. C. Cr. P. art. 873." (18)

"CONVICTION AFFIRMED; SENTENCE VACATED; REMANDED FOR RESENTENCING." (19)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Matthew Meadows was shot at close range while at Rachel Meadows's residence, sustaining a gunshot wound to his arm. Physical evidence showed that bullets and casings came from a .380 pistol associated with Rachel, while Meadows's 9 mm firearm was fully loaded; investigators also found vehicle and cell-phone evidence linking Virani to the shooting and travel from the scene. Rachel ultimately testified that she recruited Virani to shoot Meadows in exchange for life-insurance proceeds, although she had initially given investigators conflicting accounts. Virani denied the offense, and Meadows was uncertain about an earlier photographic identification of Virani's relative, Zaheer.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Virani was charged by bill of information on August 4, 2016, with attempted second degree murder. Following a trial beginning September 13, 2024, a jury found him guilty, and the trial court sentenced him to 25 years at hard labor without benefits. The trial court denied his pro se JNOV motion and his motion to reconsider sentence. On appeal, the court affirmed the conviction but vacated the sentence because sentencing occurred immediately after denial of the JNOV motion without the required delay or waiver.

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

Vacate the sentence and remand to the trial court for resentencing in compliance with La. C. Cr. P. art. 873.

CASES CITED

- Jackson v. Virginia, 443 U.S. 307 (1979)
- State v. Tate, 01-1658 (La. 5/20/03), 851 So. 2d 921
- State v. Pigford, 05-0477 (La. 2/22/06), 922 So. 2d 517
- State v. Dotie, 43,819 (La. App. 2 Cir. 1/14/09), 1 So. 3d 833
- State v. Washington, 50,424 (La. App. 2 Cir. 3/16/16), 188 So. 3d 350
- State v. Mussall, 523 So. 2d 1305 (La. 1988)
- State v. Price, 48,986 (La. App. 2 Cir. 5/15/14), 140 So. 3d 1212
- State v. Williams, 32,631 (La. App. 2 Cir. 12/8/99), 747 So. 2d 1256
- State v. Hill, 42,025 (La. App. 2 Cir. 5/9/07), 956 So. 2d 758
- State v. Gilliam, 36,118 (La. App. 2 Cir. 8/30/02), 827 So. 2d 508
- State v. Smith, 94-3116 (La. 10/16/95), 661 So. 2d 442
- State v. Eason, 43,788 (La. App. 2 Cir. 2/25/09), 3 So. 3d 685
- State v. Brady, 414 So. 2d 364 (La. 1982)
- State v. Brown, 51,352 (La. App. 2 Cir. 5/2/17), 223 So. 3d 88
- State v. Brock, 37,487 (La. App. 2 Cir. 9/26/03), 855 So. 2d 939
- State v. Bishop, 01-2548 (La. 1/14/03), 835 So. 2d 434

- State v. Minor, 52,091 (La. App. 2 Cir. 9/26/18), 254 So. 3d 1278
- State v. Henderson, 56,225 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/9/25), 409 So. 3d 1069
- State v. McGee, 18-1052 (La. 2/25/19), 264 So. 3d 445
- State v. Frost, 53,312 (La. App. 2 Cir. 3/4/20), 293 So. 3d 708
- Strickland v. Washington, 466 U.S. 668 (1984)
- State v. Moore, 48,769 (La. App. 2 Cir. 2/26/14), 134 So. 3d 1265
- State v. Hilliard, 52,652 (La. App. 2 Cir. 8/14/19), 278 So. 3d 1065
- State v. Grant, 54,847 (La. App. 2 Cir. 12/14/22), 352 So. 3d 179

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