

INTERMEDIATE COURT OF APPEALS OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I

Iriarte v. Reyes

Iriarte · No. CAAP-23-0000095 · Decided November 21, 2025

SUMMARY

The Hawai‘i Intermediate Court of Appeals dismissed Matthew Reyes's appeal as moot. The court held that the expiration of the 20-year lease in July 2024 eliminated any effective remedy concerning the writ and judgment for possession entered in December 2022, and that no exception to mootness applied.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Intermediate Court of Appeals of the State of Hawai‘i
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Katherine G. Leonard, Presiding Judge; Clyde J. Wadsworth, Associate Judge; Kimberly T. Guidry, Associate Judge
JURISDICTION	Intermediate Court of Appeals of the State of Hawai‘i
DECIDED	November 21, 2025
DOCKET	CAAP-23-0000095
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant-Appellant Matthew Reyes appealed from the District Court of the First Circuit's Writ of Possession and Judgment for Possession entered in favor of Plaintiff-Appellee Peter Iriarte.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the appeal and mootness issue based on the record and briefs; no separate standard of review was stated for the challenged trial-court rulings.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Matthew Reyes v. Peter Taisipic Iriarte

TOPICS

- mootness
- appellate procedure
- eviction
- landlord tenant

PRACTICE AREAS

- appellate procedure
- landlord-tenant law
- real estate
- contracts

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the appeal challenging the District Court's order conforming the pleadings to the evidence and issuance of a Writ of Possession became moot after the underlying lease expired.
2. Whether any exception to the mootness doctrine applied.

HOLDINGS

1. The appeal was moot because the 2004 Lease expired in July 2024, Reyes's interest in the tenancy ended, and no effective remedy remained available to restore the tenancy under the expired lease.
2. No exception to mootness applied because the appeal involved only the limited issues concerning termination of the expired lease and possession.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A case is moot if it has lost its character as a present, live controversy of the kind that must exist if courts are to avoid advisory opinions on abstract propositions of law.” (at 2)

“As the 2004 Lease has expired, there is no effective remedy available to restore Reyes's tenancy under the lease.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The tenancy arose from a 20-year lease entered into by Reyes and Iriarte's predecessor-in-interest, beginning July 16, 2004, and ending July 16, 2024. The District Court entered a Writ of Possession and Judgment for Possession in Iriarte's favor on December 27, 2022. Because the lease expired while the appeal was pending, Reyes no longer had a present interest in the tenancy and could not obtain restoration of the tenancy under the expired lease.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The District Court of the First Circuit, Wai‘anae Division, entered a Writ of Possession and Judgment for Possession on December 27, 2022. Reyes appealed, challenging the court's order conforming the pleadings to the evidence and its issuance of the Writ of Possession. During the appeal, the lease underlying the tenancy expired in July 2024, and the Intermediate Court of Appeals dismissed the appeal as moot.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- For Our Rights v. Ige, 151 Hawai‘i 1, 12, 507 P.3d 531, 542 (App. 2022)
- Lathrop v. Sakatani, 111 Hawai‘i 307, 313, 141 P.3d 480, 486 (2006)
- Int’l Market Place Corp. v. Liza, Inc., 1 Haw. App. 491, 494, 620 P.2d 765, 768 (1980)

