

SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

Humphrey v. Bracy

2021 Ohio 3836 (Ohio 2021) · No. 2021-0116 · Decided November 2, 2021

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Ohio affirmed the grant of summary judgment to the warden in Lavelle Humphrey's habeas corpus action. The court held that the evidence established the adult trial court acquired jurisdiction through a juvenile-court bindover. To the extent Humphrey challenged defects or findings in the bindover proceedings, the court held that he had an adequate remedy through appeal rather than habeas corpus.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Ohio
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per Curiam; Maureen O'Connor, C.J.; Maureen O'Connor; Maureen E. Kennedy; William M. Fischer; Patrick F. DeWine; Michael P. Donnelly; Melody J. Stewart; Jennifer Brunner
JURISDICTION	Ohio
DECIDED	November 2, 2021
DOCKET	2021-0116
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Humphrey appealed as of right from the Eleventh District Court of Appeals' grant of summary judgment to the warden and dismissal of his habeas corpus petition.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The Supreme Court of Ohio reviewed the court of appeals' grant of summary judgment in a habeas corpus action de novo. Summary judgment is proper when no genuine issue of material fact exists and the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Supreme Court opinion; precedential
PARTIES	Lavelle Humphrey v. Charmaine Bracy, Warden, LaShann Eppinger, former Warden, Douglas Fender, Warden

TOPICS

- habeas corpus
- post-conviction relief
- criminal procedure
- appellate procedure
- standard of review

PRACTICE AREAS

Habeas corpus

Criminal procedure

Juvenile bindover

Summary judgment

Appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the evidence established that the Cuyahoga County common pleas court acquired subject-matter jurisdiction over Humphrey's 1984 offenses through a juvenile-court bindover.
2. Whether alleged defects or discrepancies in the juvenile-court bindover proceedings entitled Humphrey to extraordinary relief in habeas corpus.
3. Whether genuine issues of material fact precluded summary judgment for the warden.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence established that the juvenile court conducted bindover proceedings and transferred jurisdiction over Humphrey's case to the general division of the common pleas court; therefore, the adult trial court had subject-matter jurisdiction over the 1984 convictions.
2. Alleged errors in the juvenile court's bindover proceedings do not support habeas corpus relief when the adult court received the case through a bindover; such errors must be raised through an appeal in the ordinary course of law.
3. Summary judgment for the warden was proper because the record established the occurrence of a juvenile-court bindover and did not present a genuine issue of material fact concerning jurisdiction.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To be entitled to a writ of habeas corpus, Humphrey must show that he is being unlawfully imprisoned and that he is entitled to immediate release from prison.” (¶ 8)

“But nonjurisdictional defects in the juvenile court’s bindover proceedings do not give rise to habeas corpus relief and are instead subject to review on appeal in the ordinary course of the law.” (¶ 10)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Humphrey committed aggravated burglary and aggravated robbery at age 17 and pleaded guilty in adult court in 1984. The record contained juvenile-delinquency complaints, a transfer of one complaint from Summit County to Cuyahoga County, and an April 1984 Cuyahoga County juvenile-court order binding him over to the general division of the common pleas court. In 2020, while incarcerated, Humphrey sought habeas relief, claiming that the 1984 convictions were void and that the maximum sentences for his later convictions had expired.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Humphrey filed a habeas petition alleging that his 1984 adult-court convictions were void because he had not been properly bound over from juvenile court. The court of appeals granted the warden's motion for summary judgment after considering delinquency complaints, transfer records, and the juvenile-court bindover order. The Supreme Court of Ohio affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- State ex rel. Oliver v. Turner, 153 Ohio St.3d 605, 2018-Ohio-2102, 109 N.E.3d 1204
- Jurek v. McFaul, 39 Ohio St.3d 42, 528 N.E.2d 1260 (1988)
- State ex rel. Holman v. Collins, 159 Ohio St.3d 537, 2020-Ohio-874, 152 N.E.3d 238
- State ex rel. Cannon v. Mohr, 155 Ohio St.3d 213, 2018-Ohio-4184, 120 N.E.3d 776
- Leyman v. Bradshaw, 146 Ohio St.3d 522, 2016-Ohio-1093, 59 N.E.3d 1236
- Stever v. Wainwright, 160 Ohio St.3d 139, 2020-Ohio-1452, 154 N.E.3d 55
- Kneuss v. Sloan, 146 Ohio St.3d 248, 2016-Ohio-3310, 54 N.E.3d 1242
- State v. Wilson, 73 Ohio St.3d 40, 652 N.E.2d 196 (1995)
- Smith v. May, 159 Ohio St.3d 106, 2020-Ohio-61, 148 N.E.3d 542

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