

INDIANA SUPREME COURT

In the Matter of the Civil Commitment of A.D. v. Community
Fairbanks Behavioral Health

No. 26S-MH-65 (Ind. Feb. 27, 2026) · No. 26S-MH-65 · Decided February 27, 2026

SUMMARY

The Indiana Supreme Court granted expedited transfer in an involuntary civil commitment appeal involving A.D. and Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health. The court disapproved language suggesting that a commitment order must be affirmed whenever a reasonable person could have reached the trial court’s conclusion, but summarily affirmed the Court of Appeals’ decision because sufficient evidence supported the commitment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Indiana Supreme Court
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per curiam; Chief Justice Rush; Justice Massa; Justice Slaughter; Justice Goff; Justice Molter
JURISDICTION	Indiana Supreme Court
DECIDED	February 27, 2026
DOCKET	26S-MH-65
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A.D. petitioned for expedited transfer after the Indiana Court of Appeals affirmed an involuntary civil-commitment order. The Indiana Supreme Court granted transfer and summarily affirmed the Court of Appeals opinion except for specified language, which it vacated.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	An appellate court affirms a civil commitment when, considering only the probative evidence and reasonable inferences supporting it, without reweighing evidence or assessing witness credibility, a reasonable factfinder could find the required elements proven by clear and convincing evidence.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published and precedential Indiana Supreme Court opinion
PARTIES	A.D. v. Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health

TOPICS

standard of review

appellate procedure

health law

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

mental health law

civil commitment

appellate procedure

health law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. What is the proper appellate standard of review for an involuntary civil commitment?
2. Whether Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health proved by clear and convincing evidence that A.D. had a mental illness as required by Indiana Code section 12-26-2-5(e).

HOLDINGS

1. Appellate courts must review the probative evidence and reasonable supporting inferences without weighing evidence or assessing witness credibility, and must affirm if a reasonable factfinder could find the necessary commitment elements proven by clear and convincing evidence. The alternative formulation that an order must be affirmed whenever it represents a conclusion a reasonable person could have drawn is improper because it dilutes the clear-and-convincing burden.
2. Sufficient evidence supported A.D.'s temporary civil commitment despite the Court of Appeals' misstated standard of review.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Appellate courts will affirm a civil commitment ‘if, ‘considering only the probative evidence and the reasonable inferences supporting it, without weighing evidence or assessing witness credibility, a reasonable trier of fact could find [the necessary elements] proven by clear and convincing evidence.’” (2)

“We expressly disapproved of this language in Commitment of T.K., 27 N.E.3d at 274, as it dilutes the petitioner’s “clear-and-convincing” burden of proof in the trial court.” (2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Following an evidentiary hearing, the Marion County Probate Court found that A.D. had a mental illness—schizoaffective disorder, bipolar type—and was gravely disabled. The court ordered A.D. committed to Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health for no more than ninety days. The Indiana Supreme Court concluded that sufficient evidence supported the temporary commitment.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

After an evidentiary hearing, the Marion County Probate Court found that A.D. had schizoaffective disorder, bipolar type, and was gravely disabled, and ordered her committed to Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health for no more than ninety days. The Court of Appeals affirmed in a published opinion. On expedited transfer, the Indiana Supreme Court agreed that the Court of Appeals misstated the appellate standard of review but held that the evidence was nevertheless sufficient to support the temporary commitment.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Appellate Rule 57
- In re Marion Cnty. Expedited Mental Health Appeals Pilot Project, No. 24S-MS-190 (Ind. July 16, 2024)
- A.D. v. Cmty. Fairbanks Behav. Health, unpublished reporter citation not available in source (Ind. Ct. App. Feb. 3, 2026)
- J.W. v. Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health, 260 N.E.3d 946, 951 (Ind. 2025)
- Commitment of T.K., 27 N.E.3d 271, 273-74 (Ind. 2015)
- Bud Wolf Chevrolet, Inc. v. Robertson, 519 N.E.2d 135, 137 (Ind. 1988)
- Galloway v. State, 938 N.E.2d 699, 711 (Ind. 2010)
- Commitment of B.J. v. Eskenazi Hosp./Midtown CMHC, 67 N.E.3d 1034, 1038 (Ind. Ct. App. 2016)
- Commitment of Heald, 785 N.E.2d 605, 613 (Ind. Ct. App. 2003)
- Commitment of J.M., 62 N.E.3d 1208, 1211 (Ind. Ct. App. 2016)
- E.F. v. St. Vincent Hosp. & Health Care Ctr., 194 N.E.3d 1130, 1135 (Ind. Ct. App. 2022)
- K.S. v. St. Vincent Hosp. & Health Care Ctr., No. 23A-MH-2712, at *4 (Ind. Ct. App. Apr. 24, 2024) (mem.)
- N.H. v. Indiana University Health Methodist Hosp., No. 23A-MH-2828, at *4 (Ind. Ct. App. May 16, 2024) (mem.)
- K.C. v. St. Vincent Hosp. & Health Care Ctr., No. 24A-MH-2336, at *3 (Ind. Ct. App. Oct. 24, 2024)

OPINION

Commitment of A D

PER CURIAM.

IN THE

Indiana Supreme Court

FILED

Supreme Court Case No. 26S-MH-65 Feb 27 2026, 1:37 pm

CLERK

Indiana Supreme Court In the Matter of the Civil Commitment of A.D., Court of Appeals and Tax Court Appellant-Respondent, –v– Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health, Appellee-Petitioner. Decided: February 27, 2026 Appeal from the Marion Superior Court No. 49D08-2512-MH-58042 The Honorable David J. Certo, Judge On Petition to Transfer from the Indiana Court of Appeals No. 25A-MH-3292 Per Curiam Opinion Chief Justice Rush and Justices Massa, Slaughter, Goff, and Molter concur. Per curiam. This matter is before the Indiana Supreme Court on A.D.’s expedited transfer petition. See Appellate Rule 57; In re Marion Cnty. Expedited Mental Health Appeals Pilot Project, No. 24S-MS-190 (Ind. July 16, 2024). Following an evidentiary hearing, the Marion County Probate Court entered an order on December 22, 2025, finding A.D. has a mental

illness—namely, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar type—and is gravely disabled. The court committed A.D. to Community Fairbanks Behavioral Health (“Community”) for no more than 90 days of treatment. A.D. appealed her involuntary commitment, and the Court of Appeals affirmed in a published opinion. See *A.D. v. Cmty. Fairbanks Behav. Health*, - - N.E.3d ---- (Ind. Ct. App. Feb. 3, 2026). On transfer, A.D. argues that (1) the Court of Appeals misstated the standard of review for involuntary commitments; and (2) Community failed to prove by clear and convincing evidence that she has a mental illness, as I.C. § 12-26-2-5(e) requires. While we agree with A.D. on her first assertion, we find sufficient evidence to support her temporary commitment. We reiterated the standard of review in these cases as recently as last year in *J.W. v. Comty. Fairbanks Behav. Health*: Appellate courts will affirm a civil commitment “if, ‘considering only the probative evidence and the reasonable inferences supporting it, without weighing evidence or assessing witness credibility, a reasonable trier of fact could find [the necessary elements] proven by clear and convincing evidence.’” *Commitment of T.K.*, 27 N.E.3d [271,] 273 [(Ind. 2015)] (quoting *Bud Wolf Chevrolet, Inc. v. Robertson*, 519 N.E.2d 135, 137 (Ind. 1988)). Probative evidence is that which “tends to prove or disprove a point in issue.” *Galloway v. State*, 938 N.E.2d 699, 711 (Ind. 2010) (quoting *Black’s Law Dictionary* 639 (9th ed. 2009)). And “[i]n order to be clear and convincing, the existence of a fact must be highly probable.” *Commitment of B.J. v. Eskenazi Hosp./Midtown CMHC*, 67 N.E.3d 1034, 1038 (Ind. Ct. App. 2016). 260 N.E.3d 946, 951 (Ind. 2025). Indiana Supreme Court | Case No. 26S-MH-65 | February 27, 2026 Page 2 of 3 Yet, the Court of Appeals—in this case and in others¹—has also stated, “If the trial court’s commitment order represents a conclusion that a reasonable person could have drawn, the order must be affirmed, even if other reasonable conclusions are possible.” Slip Op. at *3, ¶ 11 (citing *Commitment of Heald*, 785 N.E.2d 605, 613 (Ind. Ct. App. 2003)). We expressly disapproved of this language in *Commitment of T.K.*, 27 N.E.3d at 274, as it dilutes the petitioner’s “clear-and-convincing” burden of proof in the trial court. And we continue to disapprove of it here. Accordingly, we grant transfer and summarily affirm the Court of Appeals opinion per Appellate Rule 58(A)(2), with the exception of the cited language from *Heald* in paragraph 11, which is hereby vacated. Rush, C.J., and Massa, Slaughter, Goff, and Molter, JJ., concur.

ATTORNEYS FOR APPELLANT

Talisha R. Griffin Marion County Public Defender Agency, Appellate Division Indianapolis,
Indiana Joel M. Schumm Indianapolis, Indiana

ATTORNEYS FOR APPELLEE

Jenny R. Buchheit Abby V. DeMare Rani B. Amani Ice Miller, LLP Indianapolis, Indiana ¹See also *Commitment of J.M.*, 62 N.E.3d 1208, 1211 (Ind. Ct. App. 2016), trans. not sought; *E.F. v. St. Vincent Hosp. and Health Care Ctr.*, 194 N.E.3d 1130, 1135 (Ind. Ct. App. 2022), trans. not sought; *K.S. v. St. Vincent Hosp. and Health Care Ctr.*, No. 23A-MH-2712 at *4 (Ind. Ct. App. Apr. 24, 2024) (mem.), trans. not sought; *N.H. v. Indiana University Health Methodist Hosp.*, No. 23A-MH-2828 at *4 (Ind. Ct. App. May 16, 2024) (mem.), trans. not sought; *K.C. v. St. Vincent*

Hosp. and Health Care Ctr., No. 24A-MH-2336 at *3 (Ind. Ct. App. Oct. 24, 2024) (mem.), trans. not sought. Indiana Supreme Court | Case No. 26S-MH-65 | February 27, 2026 Page 3 of 3

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