

COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO, EIGHTH APPELLATE DISTRICT,
CUYAHOGA COUNTY

State v. Lewis

2025-Ohio-5756 · No. 114860 · Decided December 24, 2025

SUMMARY

The Ohio Eighth District Court of Appeals reviewed Doneic Lewis’s challenge to consecutive sentences imposed after his guilty pleas to child endangering, domestic violence, and strangulation offenses. The court held that the trial court failed to make the required finding that consecutive sentences were not disproportionate to the seriousness of the conduct and the danger posed to the public under R.C. 2929.14(C)(4). The consecutive-sentence portion of the judgment was vacated, and the case was reversed and remanded for resentencing.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Eighth Appellate District, Cuyahoga County
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Anita Laster Mays, J.; Michelle J. Sheehan, P.J.; William A. Klatt, J., sitting by assignment
JURISDICTION	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Eighth Appellate District, Cuyahoga County
DECIDED	December 24, 2025
DOCKET	114860
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Lewis appealed from the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas after pleading guilty to amended criminal charges and receiving consecutive sentences on two counts.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under Ohio Revised Code 2953.08(G)(2), the appellate court may overturn consecutive sentences if it clearly and convincingly finds that the record does not support the sentencing court’s findings under R.C. 2929.14(C)(4), or that the sentence is otherwise contrary to law. Appellate review of consecutive-sentence findings is deferential.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Court of Appeals opinion
PARTIES	Doneic Lewis v. State of Ohio

TOPICS

sentencing

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PRACTICE AREAS

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Criminal procedure

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the trial court made all findings required by R.C. 2929.14(C)(4) at the sentencing hearing before imposing consecutive sentences.
2. Whether the record supported the trial court's findings supporting consecutive sentences.
3. Whether the appellate court should vacate the consecutive-sentence portion of the judgment and remand for resentencing.

HOLDINGS

1. A trial court imposing consecutive sentences must make a finding at the sentencing hearing that consecutive sentences are not disproportionate to the seriousness of the offender's conduct and to the danger the offender poses to the public. The trial court's discussion of the seriousness of the conduct did not permit the appellate court to discern that it made the required finding concerning disproportionality to the danger posed to the public.
2. The record supported the trial court's findings that Lewis committed the offenses while awaiting trial or sentencing in another case and that his criminal history demonstrated that consecutive sentences were necessary to protect the public from future crime.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"To impose consecutive sentences, the trial court must make each finding required under R.C. 2929.14(C)(4) at the sentencing hearing and incorporate those findings into its sentencing journal entry." (¶ 10)

"Although the trial court is not required to recite any particular magic words when making its findings, we must be able to discern from the record that the trial court engaged in the correct analysis." (¶ 13)

"However, "because we clearly and convincingly find that the trial court failed to make the second finding under R.C. 2929.14(C)(4), the portion of the trial court's order imposing consecutive sentences must be vacated." (¶ 19)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Lewis pleaded guilty to amended charges including two counts of endangering children, domestic violence, and strangulation. The trial court imposed concurrent sentences on most counts but ordered the 18-month strangulation sentence to run consecutively to a 30-month child-endangering sentence. The sentencing court relied on the victim's serious physical injury, Lewis's criminal history, and the fact that the offenses occurred while he was awaiting trial or sentencing in another case.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The trial court imposed an aggregate 48-month prison sentence, including an 18-month sentence for strangulation to run consecutively to a 30-month sentence for child endangering. Although the sentencing entry recited the statutory consecutive-sentence findings, the appellate court concluded that the trial court did not make the required proportionality finding at the sentencing hearing. The appellate court vacated the portion of the judgment imposing consecutive sentences and remanded for resentencing.

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The trial court must resentence Lewis and consider whether consecutive sentences are appropriate under R.C. 2929.14(C)(4). If it imposes consecutive sentences, it must make the proper findings on the record at the sentencing hearing.

CASES CITED

- State v. Davis, 2025-Ohio-2863, ¶ 22-23 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Shephard, 2024-Ohio-2010, ¶ 26 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Jones, 2024-Ohio-1083, ¶ 11-14
- State v. Venes, 2013-Ohio-1891, ¶ 11 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Gwynne, 2023-Ohio-3851, ¶ 4
- State v. Smith, 2020-Ohio-3666, ¶ 19 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Johnson, 2016-Ohio-1536, ¶ 7 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Hervey, 2022-Ohio-1498, ¶ 19 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Bonnell, 2014-Ohio-3177, syllabus, ¶ 29, 37
- State v. Cox, 2016-Ohio-20, ¶ 22 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Lariche, 2018-Ohio-3581, ¶ 25 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Sumlin, 2025-Ohio-550, ¶ 19-25 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Riley, 2025-Ohio-3276, ¶ 12 (8th Dist.)
- State v. Wells, 2021-Ohio-2585, ¶ 71
- State v. Smith, 2025-Ohio-2090, ¶ 19 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Nia, 2014-Ohio-2527, ¶ 38 (8th Dist.)