

COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO, SECOND APPELLATE DISTRICT, MIAMI COUNTY

McGhee v. McGhee

2026-Ohio-1302 · No. C.A. No. 2025-CA-40 · Decided April 10, 2026

SUMMARY

The Ohio Second District Court of Appeals affirmed a trial court judgment adopting a magistrate’s decision concerning child custody, parenting time, and related motions. The court held that the pro se appellant’s failure to comply with Ohio Appellate Rule 16 prevented meaningful appellate review and warranted affirmance.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Second Appellate District, Miami County
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Michael L. Tucker; Lewis, P.J.; Epley, J.
JURISDICTION	Ohio Court of Appeals, Second Appellate District, Miami County
DECIDED	April 10, 2026
DOCKET	C.A. No. 2025-CA-40
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Appeal from a judgment of the Miami County Common Pleas Court adopting a magistrate's decision that denied the appellant's motions concerning custody, parenting time, contempt, and a money judgment, and granted the appellee's motion to suspend parenting time.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the appeal under the requirements governing appellate briefs and determined that meaningful appellate review was impossible because the pro se appellant failed to present a coherent argument showing error.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published
PARTIES	Latrishia McGhee v. Aaron McGhee

TOPICS

- appellate procedure
- family law procedure
- child custody
- visitation
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the appeal could be resolved when Mother's pro se brief failed to comply with Ohio App.R. 16 and did not present a coherent argument identifying error in the trial court's adoption of the magistrate's decision.

HOLDINGS

1. An appellant's failure to comply with the mandatory requirements of Ohio App.R. 16, particularly the failure to present a coherent and understandable argument explaining how the trial court erred, prevents meaningful appellate review and supports affirmance of the judgment.
2. Although courts may afford pro se litigants some flexibility, pro se litigants are held to the same rules and procedures as litigants represented by counsel.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“If a reviewing court cannot discern the arguments presented by a party, relief cannot be granted.” (§ 11)

“Thus, while pro se litigants may be afforded some flexibility, they are held to the same rules and procedures as individuals represented by counsel.” (§ 12)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The parties married in 2003, had three children, and dissolved their marriage in 2016 under a shared parenting plan. In 2021, the trial court terminated the shared parenting plan and designated Father as the primary residential parent and legal custodian, while awarding Mother parenting time. Mother was incarcerated from September 2021 through November 2023 and thereafter had very limited contact with the children; following motions filed by both parties in 2024, the magistrate suspended Mother's parenting time, and the trial court adopted that decision with limited modifications.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The parties' marriage was dissolved in 2016 with a shared parenting plan. In 2021, the trial court terminated the shared parenting plan, designated Father as the primary residential parent and legal custodian, and awarded Mother parenting time; Mother did not appeal. After Mother filed multiple motions in 2024, including motions concerning contempt, visitation, reunification therapy, custody, and a \$5 million judgment, the magistrate denied Mother's motions and granted Father's motion to suspend parenting time. The trial court overruled Mother's objections and adopted the magistrate's decision, except that it found Father in contempt for failing to timely notify Mother of a change of address and for preventing parenting time in December 2023.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- State v. Obermeyer, 2024-Ohio-4508, ¶ 13 (2d Dist.)
- Parson v. Dayton, 2023-Ohio-4689, ¶ 10 (2d Dist.)
- McCormick v. Lu, 2019-Ohio-624, ¶ 19 (10th Dist.)
- State v. Dunlap, 2005-Ohio-6754, ¶ 10 (10th Dist.)
- Yocum v. Means, 2002-Ohio-3803, ¶ 20 (2d Dist.)
- Kilroy v. B.H. Lakeshore Co., 111 Ohio App.3d 357, 363 (8th Dist. 1996)
- Craver v. Haefner, 2024-Ohio-2242, ¶ 8 (10th Dist.)
- J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, N.A. v. Cloyes, 2021-Ohio-3316, ¶ 9 (10th Dist.)

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