

OHIO COURT OF APPEALS, THIRD APPELLATE DISTRICT

State v. Holdcraft

2026-Ohio-61 · No. 3-25-10 · Decided January 12, 2026

SUMMARY

The Ohio Third District Court of Appeals reversed David L. Holdcraft’s sentence and remanded the case. The court held that the trial court violated R.C. 2929.19 and R.C. 2950.03 by failing to provide mandatory sex-offender registration notifications at sentencing, despite imposing concurrent life-without-parole sentences.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Ohio Court of Appeals, Third Appellate District
WRITING FOR THE COURT	William R. Zimmerman, P.J.; Juergen A. Waldick, J.; John R. Willamowski, J.
JURISDICTION	Ohio Court of Appeals, Third Appellate District, Crawford County
DECIDED	January 12, 2026
DOCKET	3-25-10
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Holdcraft appealed his sentence from the Crawford County Court of Common Pleas, arguing that the trial court failed to provide the statutory notification of sex-offender registration duties at sentencing.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under R.C. 2953.08(G)(2), the appellate court reviews the sentence to determine whether clear and convincing evidence shows that the record does not support the trial court's statutory findings or that the sentence is otherwise contrary to law.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Court of Appeals opinion
PARTIES	David L. Holdcraft v. State of Ohio

TOPICS

- sentencing
- criminal procedure
- statutory interpretation
- appellate procedure
- standard of review

PRACTICE AREAS

- criminal law
- sentencing
- sex-offender registration
- appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether a sentencing court must provide the R.C. 2950.03 sex-offender registration notification at the time of sentencing when the defendant is sentenced to life without parole under R.C. 2907.02(B).
2. Whether failure to provide that mandatory notification renders the sentence contrary to law and requires reversal.

HOLDINGS

1. A sentencing court must provide the mandatory R.C. 2950.03 notification of sex-offender registration duties at the time of sentencing even when the defendant is sentenced to life without parole under R.C. 2907.02(B).
2. The sentence was contrary to law because the trial court failed to provide the mandatory R.C. 2950.03 notification at sentencing.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Because the court failed to provide the mandatory R.C. 2950.03 notification at the time of sentencing as expressly required by statute, and because R.C. 2929.19 contains no exception for a sentence of life without parole, Holdcraft’s sentence is contrary to law.” (¶ 9)

“Having found error prejudicial to the appellant herein in the particulars assigned and argued, we reverse the judgment of the trial court and remand for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.” (¶ 11)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Holdcraft pleaded guilty to three counts of rape under R.C. 2907.02(A)(1)(b) and (B) in exchange for dismissal of a gross-sexual-imposition count and an indictment in another case. The trial court sentenced him to three concurrent terms of life imprisonment without parole and classified him as a Tier III sex offender. Although the court made the classification, it expressly declined to explain the sex-offender reporting requirements at sentencing.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A Crawford County grand jury indicted Holdcraft on three counts of rape and one count of gross sexual imposition. He later pleaded guilty to the three rape counts under a negotiated agreement, and the trial court dismissed the remaining count and sentenced him to three concurrent terms of life imprisonment without parole. The trial court classified him as a Tier III sex offender but did not provide the required registration-duty notification at sentencing. The Ohio Court of Appeals sustained his sole assignment of error, reversed the sentence, and remanded for further proceedings.

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The cause was remanded for further proceedings consistent with the opinion, including compliance with the mandatory R.C. 2950.03 notification requirement.

CASES CITED

- State v. Marcum, 2016-Ohio-1002, ¶¶ 1, 22
- Cross v. Ledford, 161 Ohio St. 469 (1954), paragraph three of the syllabus
- State v. Kase, 2010-Ohio-2688, ¶ 23 (7th Dist.)
- State v. Hathaway, 2017-Ohio-6925, ¶ 5 (9th Dist.)

OPINION

PER CURIAM.

[Cite as State v. Holdcraft, 2026-Ohio-61.] IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO THIRD APPELLATE DISTRICT CRAWFORD COUNTY STATE OF OHIO, CASE NO. 3-25-10 PLAINTIFF-APPELLEE, v. DAVID L. HOLDCRAFT, OPINION AND JUDGMENT ENTRY DEFENDANT-APPELLANT. Appeal from Crawford County Common Pleas Court Trial Court No. 24-CR-0045 Judgment Reversed and Cause Remanded Date of Decision: January 12, 2026 APPEARANCES: William T. Cramer for Appellant Daniel J. Stanley for Appellee Case No. 3-25-10 ZIMMERMAN, P.J. {¶1} Defendant-appellant, David L. Holdcraft (“Holdcraft”), appeals the April 17, 2025 judgment entry of sentence of the Crawford County Court of Common Pleas.

For the reasons that follow, we reverse. {¶2} On February 27, 2024, the Crawford County Grand Jury indicted Holdcraft on Counts One, Two, and Three of rape in violation of R.C. 2907.02(A)(1) (b), (B), first-degree felonies, and Count Four of gross sexual imposition in violation of R.C. 2907.05(A)(4), (C)(2), a third-degree felony.

On March 12, 2024, Holdcraft appeared for arraignment and pleaded not guilty to the indictment. {¶3} On March 3, 2025, Holdcraft withdrew his pleas of not guilty and entered guilty pleas, under a negotiated plea agreement, to Counts One, Two, and Three.

In exchange for his change of pleas, the State agreed to dismiss Count Four and an indictment in another case. The trial court accepted Holdcraft’s guilty pleas, found him guilty, dismissed Count Four, and ordered a pre-sentence investigation (“PSI”). {¶4} On April 16, 2025, the trial court sentenced Holdcraft to life in prison without the possibility of parole as to each count.¹ The court ordered the terms to 1 The trial court filed its judgment entry of sentence on April 17, 2025. -2- Case No. 3-25-10 run concurrently to each other, and concurrently to his sentence in a federal case.

The trial court also classified Holdcraft as a Tier III sex offender. {¶5} On May 6, 2025, Holdcraft filed his notice of appeal. He raises one assignment of error for our review. Assignment of Error The trial court violated R.C. 2929.19 & R.C. 2950.03 by failing to provide notification of

appellant's sex offender registration requirements at sentencing even though appellant was sentenced to life without parole. {¶6} In his sole assignment of error, Holdcraft argues that the trial court committed reversible error by failing to comply with the mandatory statutory requirements of R.C.

2929.19 and R.C. 2950.03. Specifically, he contends that Ohio law expressly requires the sentencing court to provide formal notification of sex offender registration duties, even where the defendant is sentenced to life in prison without parole.

The State concedes the error. Standard of Review {¶7} Under R.C. 2953.08(G)(2), an appellate court will reverse a sentence "only if it determines by clear and convincing evidence that the record does not support the trial court's findings under relevant statutes or that the sentence is otherwise contrary to law." *State v. Marcum*, 2016-Ohio-1002, ¶ 1. Clear and convincing evidence is that "'which will produce in the mind of the trier of facts a -3- Case No. 3-25-10 firm belief or conviction as to the facts sought to be established.'" *Id.* at ¶ 22, quoting *Cross v. Ledford*, 161 Ohio St. 469 (1954), paragraph three of the syllabus.

Analysis {¶8} R.C. 2929.19(B)(3)(a) provides, in its relevant part, that "[t]he court shall include in the offender's sentence a statement that the offender is a tier III sex offender/child-victim offender, and the court shall comply with the requirements of section 2950.03 of the Revised Code if... [t]he offender is sentenced to a term of life without parole under division (B) of section 2907.02 of the Revised Code." R.C.

R.C. 2929.19(B)(3)(a)(v). In this case, Holdcraft was sentenced to three concurrent terms of life without parole under R.C. 2907.02(B). The trial court complied with the first part of the statute by classifying Holdcraft as a Tier III sex offender at sentencing and in the sentencing entry. See *State v. Kase*, 2010-Ohio-2688, ¶ 23 (7th Dist.). {¶9} However, the trial court failed to comply with the concurrent mandate to satisfy the requirements of R.C.

2950.03. Importantly, R.C. 2950.03 requires the trial court to provide the mandatory notification of sex offender registration duties "at the time of sentencing." R.C. 2950.03(A)(2). At Holdcraft's sentencing hearing, the trial court classified Holdcraft as a Tier III sex offender but then explicitly stated that "[t]here's no reason to go through the reporting requirements... at this particular time." (April 16, 2025 Tr. at 37).

Because the court failed to provide the mandatory R.C. 2950.03 notification at the time of sentencing as expressly required -4- Case No. 3-25-10 by statute, and because R.C. 2929.19 contains no exception for a sentence of life without parole, Holdcraft's sentence is contrary to law. See *State v. Hathaway*, 2017-Ohio-6925, ¶ 5 (9th Dist.). {¶10} Therefore, Holdcraft's assignment of error is sustained. {¶11} Having found error prejudicial to the appellant herein in the particulars

assigned and argued, we reverse the judgment of the trial court and remand for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.

Judgment Reversed and Cause Remanded WALDICK and WILLAMOWSKI, J.J., concur. -5-
Case No. 3-25-10 JUDGMENT ENTRY For the reasons stated in the opinion of this Court, the assignment of error is sustained and it is the judgment and order of this Court that the judgment of the trial court is reversed with costs assessed to Appellee for which judgment is hereby rendered.

The cause is hereby remanded to the trial court for further proceedings and for execution of the judgment for costs. It is further ordered that the Clerk of this Court certify a copy of this Court's judgment entry and opinion to the trial court as the mandate prescribed by App.R. 27; and serve a copy of this Court's judgment entry and opinion on each party to the proceedings and note the date of service in the docket.

See App.R. 30. William R. Zimmerman, Judge Juergen A. Waldick, Judge John R. Willamowski,
Judge DATED: /hls -6-