

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA

Jonathon C. Buckley v. Rob Jeffreys

Buckley · No. 8:25CV593 · Decided January 20, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Nebraska addresses preliminary review of Jonathon C. Buckley’s petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. Although the Court noted that the petition may be barred by the statute of limitations, it ordered the case to proceed to final resolution and established deadlines and procedures for Respondent’s filing of state court records, an answer, or a motion for summary judgment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Nebraska
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Joseph F. Bataillon
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Nebraska
DECIDED	January 20, 2026
DOCKET	8:25CV593
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Preliminary review of a state prisoner’s petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The court determined that the petition appeared potentially untimely but allowed the case to proceed to final resolution and ordered the respondent to file either a motion for summary judgment or an answer supported by state-court records.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Preliminary review under the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases; the court considered the apparent statute-of-limitations issue from the face of the petition but did not finally resolve it.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Jonathon C. Buckley v. Rob Jeffreys

TOPICS

- federal habeas corpus
- post-conviction relief
- statute of limitations
- summary judgment
- discovery dispute

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the petition should proceed beyond preliminary review despite appearing potentially barred by the one-year statute of limitations in 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d)(1).
2. What filing, record-designation, briefing, and service procedures should govern the respondent's answer or motion for summary judgment in the § 2254 proceeding.
3. Whether discovery may be undertaken without leave of court in the § 2254 proceeding.

HOLDINGS

1. The court did not dismiss the petition at preliminary review; although the petition appeared potentially barred by the statute of limitations, the court ordered the case to proceed to final resolution.
2. The respondent must, by March 6, 2026, file either a motion for summary judgment supported by the necessary state-court records or an answer supported by designated state-court records, with the specified briefing and service procedures.
3. No discovery may be undertaken without leave of the court.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"It appears from the face of the petition that Petitioner's claims may be barred by the statute of limitations because the petition was filed more than one year after Petitioner's judgment became final."

"However, in order to ensure a just and fair resolution of this matter, the Court will enter an order progressing this case to final resolution."

"No discovery shall be undertaken without leave of the Court."

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Buckley pleaded no contest to four counts of kidnapping and one count of use of a firearm to commit a felony and received an 80-to-130-year sentence in Nebraska state court on August 16, 2010. The Nebraska Court of Appeals remanded because the record did not clearly establish the extent of his knowledge of the plea's penal consequences, while rejecting some claims and finding the record insufficient for review of others. After later state habeas proceedings in 2025, Buckley filed a federal habeas petition challenging his state-court custody.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Buckley was convicted in Nebraska state court following a no-contest plea and was sentenced in 2010. The Nebraska Court of Appeals remanded for consideration of whether he understood the penal consequences of his plea, and later addressed his sentencing and ineffective-assistance claims. Buckley subsequently filed a state habeas petition in 2025, which was denied and summarily affirmed on appeal. He filed this federal § 2254 petition on October 1, 2025; the district court conducted preliminary review and entered case-management and briefing directives without resolving the merits or timeliness defense.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- State v. Curnyn, 274 N.W.2d 160 (Neb. 1979)
- State v. Buckley, No. A-10-910, 2011 WL 1522529 (Neb. Ct. App. Apr. 19, 2011)
- Stutzka v. McCarville, 420 F.3d 757, 760 n.2 (8th Cir. 2005)

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