

CONNECTICUT APPELLATE COURT

In re Loyal H. et al.

In re Loyal H. · No. AC 48934 · Decided March 16, 2026

SUMMARY

The Connecticut Appellate Court affirmed judgments adjudicating four minor children neglected based on evidence of physical abuse and conditions injurious to their well-being. The court held that the amended neglect petitions were legally sufficient and that the evidence supported the trial court’s findings despite the respondent father’s challenges.

CASE DETAILS

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| COURT                 | Connecticut Appellate Court                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| WRITING FOR THE COURT | Cradle, C. J.; Moll, J.; Palmer, J.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| JURISDICTION          | Connecticut Appellate Court                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| DECIDED               | March 16, 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| DOCKET                | AC 48934                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| DISPOSITION           | affirmed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| PROCEDURAL POSTURE    | The respondent father appealed from judgments adjudicating his four minor children neglected and committing them to the custody of the Commissioner of Children and Families. He challenged the denial of motions to strike two neglect petitions and the sufficiency of the evidence supporting the neglect adjudications.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| STANDARD OF REVIEW    | Review of a ruling on a motion to strike is plenary; the court considers the facts alleged, construed broadly and realistically and in the manner most favorable to sustaining legal sufficiency. Review of the sufficiency of the evidence is limited to determining whether the trial court's factual findings are supported by the evidence and whether those facts legally support the judgment, with great deference given to the trial court's credibility determinations and weighing of evidence. |
| PRECEDENTIAL VALUE    | published                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PARTIES               | Respondent father v. Commissioner of Children and Families                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

TOPICS

family law procedure

appellate procedure

standard of review

parental rights

evidence

## PRACTICE AREAS

family law

juvenile law

child welfare

appellate procedure

evidence

## QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the trial court properly denied the respondent father's motions to strike the neglect petitions concerning S and L after the petitions were amended to allege that the children were living under conditions injurious to their well-being.
2. Whether sufficient evidence supported adjudicating all four children neglected on the ground that they were permitted to live under conditions injurious to their well-being.

## HOLDINGS

1. The trial court properly denied the motions to strike because the amended petitions alleged that S and L were permitted to live under circumstances injurious to their well-being, and allegations that the respondent and paternal grandmother physically abused other children in the home were legally sufficient to support a neglect claim as to all four children.
2. Sufficient evidence supported the trial court's adjudication that all four children were neglected because they were permitted to live under conditions injurious to their well-being.

## KEY QUOTATIONS

*“As the court aptly noted, even if S and L were not abused themselves, the allegations of physical abuse and violence on the part of the respondent and the paternal grandmother as to the other children were legally sufficient to find that all of the children were living under circumstances that were injurious to their well-being.”*

*“As noted herein, the abuse of one of the children, in the presence of the others, in itself, would support a determination that all four children were living under conditions that were injurious to their well-being.”*

## FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Department of Children and Families became involved after reports that the respondent father and paternal grandmother physically abused the children. Police and medical personnel observed scars, bruises, scratches, and other injuries on several children, and two children disclosed that they had been beaten with hands, belts, shoes, hangers, or a metal pipe. The paternal grandmother admitted using physical discipline and stated that “kids should be beaten; that’s the way we do it.” The trial court credited the children's initial disclosures and the grandmother's admissions, rejected the father's denial as not credible, and found that all four children were permitted to live under conditions injurious to their well-being.

## PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Commissioner of Children and Families filed temporary-custody motions and neglect petitions concerning the respondent's four children in the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters in the judicial district of Waterbury. The

trial court consolidated the matters for the temporary-custody and adjudicatory proceedings, denied the respondent's motions to strike after permitting amended petitions, and adjudicated all four children neglected. During the dispositional phase, the children were committed or placed in the custody of the petitioner or their mother, and the appellate court dismissed as moot the challenges to the temporary-custody orders. The appellate court affirmed the neglect judgments.

## DISPOSITION

affirmed

## CASES CITED

- In re Forrest B., 109 Conn. App. 772, 776, 953 A.2d 887 (2008)
- In re P. M., 226 Conn. App. 378, 389-90, 318 A.3d 1085, cert. denied, 349 Conn. 919, 320 A.3d 978 (2024)
- In re Nelmarie O., 97 Conn. App. 624, 629, 905 A.2d 706 (2006)
- In re Payton V., 158 Conn. App. 154, 162, 118 A.3d 166 (2015), cert. denied, 317 Conn. 924, 118 A.3d 549 (2015)
- Spiotti v. Clarke, 235 Conn. App. 715, 721, 346 A.3d 562 (2025)