

SUPREME COURT OF APPEALS OF WEST VIRGINIA

Christopher I. v. Veronica I.

No. 24-304 (23-ICA-460) · No. 24-304 (23-ICA-460) · Decided January 13, 2026

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia affirmed the Intermediate Court of Appeals’ decision upholding a family court’s separate valuation of marital real property and timber for equitable-distribution purposes. The court concluded that the family court did not abuse its discretion in valuing the property and timber separately based on the parties’ intent to harvest and sell the timber. The decision was issued as a memorandum decision without oral argument.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Chief Justice C. Haley Bunn; Justice William R. Wooton; Justice Charles S. Trump IV; Justice Thomas H. Ewing; Justice Gerald M. Titus III
JURISDICTION	Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia
DECIDED	January 13, 2026
DOCKET	24-304 (23-ICA-460)
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Christopher I. appealed the Intermediate Court of Appeals' memorandum decision affirming the Family Court of Randolph County's order denying his motion for reconsideration of the parties' final divorce decree.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On appeal of a final family-court order from the Intermediate Court of Appeals, factual findings are reviewed for clear error, application of law to facts for abuse of discretion, and questions of law de novo.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published memorandum decision; the source does not state a separate precedential designation.
PARTIES	Christopher I. v. Veronica I.

TOPICS

- equitable distribution
- divorce
- real estate
- family law procedure
- appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

family law

real estate

appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the family court abused its discretion by separately valuing the Barbour County real property and the timber located on it for equitable-distribution purposes.
2. Whether the Intermediate Court of Appeals erred by affirming the family court's denial of the petitioner's motion for reconsideration.

HOLDINGS

1. The family court did not abuse its discretion by separately valuing the Barbour County real property and the timber because the evidence supported that the parties intended to utilize the timber and the real-estate appraisal did not include the value of the timber if cut and sold.
2. The Intermediate Court of Appeals did not err in affirming the family court's order denying the petitioner's motion for reconsideration.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“On appeal of a final order of a family court from the Intermediate Court of Appeals of West Virginia, the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia shall review the findings of fact made by the family court for clear error, and the family court’s application of law to the facts for an abuse of discretion. The Supreme Court of Appeals shall review questions of law de novo.” (2)

“Accordingly, we find that the ICA did not err in affirming the family court’s order denying the motion for reconsideration.” (3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The parties married in October 2006 and separated in September 2020. Shortly before separation, they purchased Barbour County real property containing approximately 110 acres of timber; the respondent presented evidence that the property was purchased with the intent to cut and sell the timber. The family court valued the real property at \$295,000 and the timber separately at \$268,977.94, awarded the property and timber to the petitioner, awarded the respondent the marital home, and ordered an equalizing payment of \$125,888.97.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Family Court of Randolph County entered a final divorce decree that separately valued marital real property in Barbour County and the timber located on that property for equitable-distribution purposes. The family court denied Christopher I.'s motion for reconsideration, and the Intermediate Court of Appeals affirmed. The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia affirmed the ICA.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Christopher I. v. Veronica I., No. 23-ICA-460, 2024 WL 1728970 (W. Va. Ct. App. Apr. 22, 2024)
- Christopher P. v. Amanda C., 250 W. Va. 53, 902 S.E.2d 185 (2024)
- Conrad v. Conrad, 216 W. Va. 696, 612 S.E.2d 772 (2005)

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