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SLIP OPINION NO. 2026-OHIO-3309

THE STATE EX REL. WRIGHT, APPELLANT, v. [FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT], APPELLEE.

[Until this opinion appears in the Ohio Official Reports advance sheets, it may be cited as *State ex rel. Wright v. Franklin Cty. Mun. Court*, Slip Opinion No. 2026-Ohio-3309.]

Mandamus—Appellant waived all but plain-error review by failing to object to magistrate’s decision recommending that court of appeals grant municipal court’s motion to dismiss appellant’s petition—Magistrate did not plainly error in finding that appellant failed to include an affidavit of prior civil filings as required by R.C. 2969.25(A)—Court of appeals’ judgment granting municipal court’s motion to dismiss affirmed.

(No. 2026-0203—Submitted June 9, 2026—Decided August 27, 2026.)

APPEAL from the Court of Appeals for Franklin County,
No. 25AP-562, 2026-Ohio-277.

The per curiam opinion below was joined by KENNEDY, C.J., and FISCHER,

DEWINE, BRUNNER, DETERS, HAWKINS, and SHANAHAN, JJ.

Per Curiam.

{¶ 1} Appellant, Ramone Wright, filed a petition for a writ of mandamus in the Tenth District Court of Appeals, seeking an order compelling appellee, the Franklin County Municipal Court, to vacate a prior, unidentified conviction. The matter was referred to a magistrate, who recommended that the Tenth District grant the municipal court’s motion to dismiss based on Wright’s failure to comply with the mandatory requirements of R.C. 2969.25(A). Wright did not object, and the Tenth District subsequently adopted the magistrate’s decision and dismissed Wright’s petition. Wright has appealed to this court.

{¶ 2} By failing to object to the magistrate’s decision, Wright waived all but plain-error review. Because the Tenth District did not plainly err in adopting the magistrate’s decision and dismissing Wright’s petition, we affirm.

FACTS AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

{¶ 3} Wright filed a petition for a writ of mandamus in the Tenth District on July 7, 2025. In his petition, Wright requested an order compelling the municipal court to vacate a prior, unidentified conviction for an unspecified crime on the grounds that the municipal court had lacked subject-matter jurisdiction over the underlying criminal case and the conviction was “procedural[ly] barred.” Wright seemed primarily to allege that the municipal court had lacked subject-matter jurisdiction because the indictment initiating the underlying case was “invalid” or “defective.” In the brief attached to the petition, Wright additionally asserted a bevy of constitutional violations, including violations of his rights under the Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. Along with his petition, Wright filed documents purporting to be an affidavit of indigency, an affidavit of prior civil filings, and an affidavit of verity.

These purported affidavits each consisted only of a title page; they did not contain any averments and were not signed or notarized.

{¶ 4} The Tenth District referred the matter to a magistrate under Civ.R. 53(C) and Tenth Dist.Loc.R. 13(M). The municipal court filed a motion to dismiss Wright’s petition, arguing, among other things, that the petition was procedurally defective because it failed to include an affidavit of prior civil filings as required by R.C. 2969.25(A). After the motion was fully briefed, the magistrate issued a decision recommending that the Tenth District grant the motion based on Wright’s failure to comply with R.C. 2969.25(A). 2026-Ohio-277 at ¶ 22-23 (10th Dist.). Specifically, the magistrate took judicial notice of “at least eight” civil actions or appeals of civil actions that Wright filed in the preceding five years, including five in the Tenth District, none of which Wright had disclosed in the “affidavit of civil filings” attached to his petition. *Id.* at ¶ 21. Indeed, the magistrate noted that the affidavit consisted only of a title page and did not “include any further information, any case names, or a notarization.” *Id.* Because that issue was dispositive, the magistrate did not consider the municipal court’s other arguments. *Id.* at ¶ 19, 22.

{¶ 5} Neither Wright nor the municipal court objected to the magistrate’s decision. *Id.* at ¶ 2. Finding “no error of law or other defect on the face of the magistrate’s decision,” the Tenth District adopted the decision in full, granted the municipal court’s motion, and dismissed Wright’s petition. *Id.* at ¶ 3.

{¶ 6} Wright has appealed the Tenth District’s judgment dismissing his petition. Both parties filed merit briefs, but Wright did not file a reply brief.

ANALYSIS

{¶ 7} An inmate who commences a civil action against a government entity or employee in a court of appeals is required to file an affidavit describing “each civil action or appeal of a civil action that the inmate has filed in the previous five years in any state or federal court.” R.C. 2969.25(A). The affidavit must be filed at the time the action is commenced and must include (1) a brief description of the

nature of each civil action or appeal, (2) the case name, the case number, and the court in which each action or appeal was brought, (3) the name of each party to each action or appeal, and (4) the outcome of each action or appeal. *Id.* An inmate’s failure to strictly comply with R.C. 2969.25’s mandatory requirements warrants dismissal of the action. *State ex rel. Swanson v. Dept. of Rehab. & Corr.*, 2019-Ohio-1271, ¶ 6; *State v. Henton*, 2016-Ohio-1518, ¶ 3. Wright’s failure to comply with R.C. 2969.25(A) was the sole basis for the magistrate’s decision and, consequently, the sole basis for the Tenth District’s judgment of dismissal.

{¶ 8} Wright did not object to the magistrate’s decision. By failing to object, he waived all but plain-error review, *see* Civ.R. 53(D)(3)(b)(iv) (“Except for a claim of plain error, a party shall not assign as error on appeal the court’s adoption of any factual finding or legal conclusion . . . unless the party has objected to that finding or conclusion”); *State ex rel. Boyle v. Chambers-Smith*, 2024-Ohio-2777, ¶ 15 (holding that Civ.R. 53(D)(3)(b)(iv) “applies to direct appeals to this court”). In the civil context, “‘the plain error doctrine is not favored’ ” and is reserved for “‘exceptional circumstances’ ” in which the error “‘seriously affects the basic fairness, integrity, or public reputation of the judicial process, thereby challenging the legitimacy of the underlying judicial process itself.’” *Perez v. Falls Fin., Inc.*, 2000-Ohio-453, ¶ 17, quoting *Goldfuss v. Davidson*, 1997-Ohio-401, syllabus.

{¶ 9} Wright does not expressly assert plain error. Indeed, his merit brief appears to contain no argument regarding his compliance with R.C. 2969.25(A) or the legal effect of a failure to comply with that provision. Instead, Wright raises arguments regarding the merits of his claims for a writ of mandamus. But the Tenth District did not adjudicate the merits of Wright’s writ claims, and those issues therefore are not properly before us. *See State ex rel. Robinson v. Page*, 2025-Ohio-623, ¶ 9 (declining to reach merits when the appellant failed to raise any argument in support of reversal of the court of appeals’ dismissal on R.C. 2969.25 grounds).

{¶ 10} In any event, on this record, we find nothing approaching the exceptional circumstances that would be required to constitute plain error, *see Perez* at ¶ 17; *see also State ex rel. Neguse v. McIntosh*, 2020-Ohio-3533, ¶ 11-12 (affirming dismissal of complaint for writ of prohibition because the relator's affidavit of prior civil actions did not comply with R.C. 2969.25(A)).

CONCLUSION

{¶ 11} Because the Tenth District Court of Appeals did not plainly err in adopting the magistrate's decision, we affirm its judgment dismissing Wright's petition for a writ of mandamus.

Judgment affirmed.

Ramone Wright, pro se.

Zach Klein, Columbus City Attorney, and Matthew D. Sturtz and Richard N. Coglianese, Assistant City Attorneys, for appellee.
