

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO
SECOND APPELLATE DISTRICT
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

STATE OF OHIO

Appellee

V.

JUSTIN BLAKE SEELIG

Appellant

C.A. No. 2025-CA-35

Trial Court Case Nos. 2025 CR 137;
2022 CR 205

(Criminal Appeal from Common Pleas Court)

FINAL JUDGMENT ENTRY & OPINION

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Pursuant to the opinion of this court rendered on August 28, 2026, the judgment of the trial court in Champaign C.P. No. 2025-CR-137 is affirmed, and the appeal in Champaign C.P. No. 2022-CR-205 is dismissed as moot.

Costs to be paid as stated in App.R. 24.

Pursuant to Ohio App.R. 30(A), the clerk of the court of appeals shall immediately send a copy of the court's ruling to each party and note that action on the docket. Additionally, pursuant to App.R. 27, the clerk of the court of appeals shall send a certified copy of this judgment, which constitutes a mandate, to the clerk of the trial court and note the service on the appellate docket.

For the court,

Christopher B. Epley

CHRISTOPHER B. EPLEY, JUDGE

LEWIS, P.J., and TUCKER, J., concur.

OPINION
CHAMPAIGN C.A. No. 2025-CA-35

COLIN P. COCHRAN, Attorney for Appellant
KARA N. RICHTER, Attorney for Appellee

EPLEY, J.

{¶ 1} Justin Blake Seelig appeals from judgments of the Champaign County Court of Common Pleas that (1) revoked his community control in Champaign C.P. No. 2022 CR 205 and imposed 12 months in prison, and (2) imposed 180 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine for misdemeanor domestic violence in Champaign C.P. No. 2025 CR 137. For the following reasons, Seelig’s conviction in Case No. 2025 CR 137 is affirmed, and his appeal in Case No. 2022 CR 205 is dismissed as moot.

I. Facts and Procedural History

{¶ 2} In October 2022, Seelig was indicted in Case No. 2022 CR 205 on aggravated possession of drugs, a fifth-degree felony (Count 1); possession of dangerous drugs, a fifth-degree felony (Count 2); and operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, a first-degree misdemeanor (Count 3). Seelig and the State later reached a plea agreement under which Seelig agreed to plead guilty to Counts 1 and 3, to pay court costs and court-appointed counsel fees, and to forfeit a seized item. In exchange, the State agreed to dismiss Count 2, to not oppose Seelig’s participation in a driver’s intervention program, and if certain conditions were met, to recommend non-residential community control. The court accepted Seelig’s guilty plea.

{¶ 3} In its sentencing entry, the trial court identified several facts that weighed against the imposition of community control sanctions. Nevertheless, it sentenced Seelig to three years of community control with standard and special conditions. It further imposed

concurrent one-year driver's license suspensions and ordered Seelig to pay a \$500 fine on each count (for a total of \$1,000) and court costs. The court informed Seelig that he faced a prison term between 6 and 12 months on Count 1 and up to 180 days in jail on Count 3 if he violated the terms of his community control.

{¶ 4} In March 2023, approximately two months after his conviction, Seelig's probation officer filed a notice of supervision violation with the court, alleging that Seelig had violated the terms of community control. After a hearing, the trial court returned Seelig to community control with several additional conditions, including that he complete the West Central Community Based Correctional Facility residential program.

{¶ 5} More than two years later, on November 26, 2025, Seelig's probation officer filed another notice of supervision violation, alleging that Seelig had violated his community control by being convicted of telephone harassment, failing to complete a West Central Justice Reinvestment Grant program, failing to pay fines and court costs, and failing to perform required community service. On December 11, 2026, the probation officer filed a supplemental notice, adding that Seelig had engaged in menacing and criminal damaging. The State proceeded on the supplemental notice.

{¶ 6} After negotiations between the parties, Seelig agreed to plead guilty to a bill of information, charging him with domestic violence in violation of R.C. 2919.25(C) (two prior domestic violence convictions), a first-degree misdemeanor. He also agreed to admit to the community control violations and to a joint recommendation that his community control be revoked. In return, the State agreed not to pursue a potential felony charge of disrupting public service.

{¶ 7} The trial court held a hearing on December 22, 2025, during which the trial court accepted Seelig's guilty plea to domestic violence in Case No. 2025 CR 137 and Seelig

admitted to the community control violations in the December supplemental notice. On the State's motion, the court dismissed the November notice of supervision violation. The court heard statements from defense counsel, the prosecutor, Seelig, and Seelig's fiancée, who was the victim in Case No. 2025 CR 137. The trial court spoke to Seelig about his abusive behavior, his repeated moving in and out of his fiancée's residence, his mental health struggles, and how little had changed.

{¶ 8} The court revoked Seelig's community control in Case No. 2022 CR 205 and sentenced him on Count 1 to 12 months in prison, plus the previously-imposed financial sanctions. In doing so, the court told Seelig that it had considered and applied the purposes and principles of sentencing and the relevant factors set forth in R.C. 2929.11 and 2929.12. The court found that Seelig was entitled to 219 days of jail time credit for the 2022 case. As for the domestic violence charge, the trial court imposed 180 days in jail and ordered him to pay a \$1,000 fine and court costs. The court ordered the prison and jail terms to be served concurrently.

{¶ 9} Seelig appeals from his convictions, raising one assignment of error concerning his sentence in Case No. 2022 CR 205. He did not present any assignment of error related to his conviction in Case No. 2025 CR 137. Accordingly, his conviction in Case No. 2025 CR 137 is summarily affirmed. See App.R. 12(A)(1)(b) and 16; *State v. Reid*, 2023-Ohio-2217 (2d Dist.) ("an appellate court may summarily affirm the trial court's judgment when an appellant fails to set forth and argue any assigned error").

II. Mootness

{¶ 10} In his sole assignment of error, Seelig claims that his 12-month prison sentence was contrary to law "where it was not supported by the record and where the trial court considered factors extraneous to R.C. 2929.11 and R.C. 2929.12." The State responds

that Seelig’s appeal is moot because he has been released from prison without postrelease control and that even if the appeal were not moot, the trial court properly considered the purposes and principles of sentencing and the seriousness and recidivism factors and imposed a lawful prison term.

{¶ 11} Before addressing the merits of Seelig’s assignment of error, we must address whether his appeal is moot. “The role of courts is to decide adversarial legal cases and to issue judgments that can be carried into effect.” *Cyran v. Cyran*, 2018-Ohio-24, ¶ 9, citing *Fortner v. Thomas*, 22 Ohio St.2d 13, 14 (1970); *State v. Smith*, 2019-Ohio-3592, ¶ 8 (2d Dist.). “Issues are moot when they lack practical significance and, instead, present academic or hypothetical questions.” *Dibert v. Carpenter*, 2018-Ohio-1054, ¶ 30 (2d Dist.), citing *State ex rel. Ford v. Ruehlman*, 2016-Ohio-3529, ¶ 55. Appellate courts lack jurisdiction to consider the merits of a moot appeal. See *State v. Berndt*, 29 Ohio St.3d 3, 4 (1987); *Smith* at ¶ 9.

{¶ 12} An appeal from a prison sentence is moot where the defendant has served that prison sentence and there is no indication that the defendant is on postrelease control or is subject to collateral liability. See *State v. Scott*, 2019-Ohio-400, ¶ 14 (2d Dist.); *State v. Roberts*, 2017-Ohio-481, ¶ 15 (2d Dist.).

{¶ 13} In this case, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (“ODRC”) notified the trial court that Seelig would complete his 12-month sentence on May 12, 2026, and that Seelig would need to complete the remaining portion of his 180-day sentence in Case No. 2025 CR 137 at the Tri-County Regional Jail. The trial court agreed and ordered that Seelig be conveyed from prison to jail on May 12, 2026. The ODRC website now reflects that Seelig is no longer an inmate for Case No. 2022 CR 205 and has not been placed on

postrelease control. See *State v. Erdman*, 2014-Ohio-2997, ¶ 3 (2d Dist.) (taking judicial notice that appellant's name is not listed on the ODRC website).

{¶ 14} Because Seelig has completely served his sentence and was not placed on postrelease control, there is no meaningful remedy that we can provide regarding the imposition of the 12-month prison sentence. Consequently, Seelig's appeal in Case No. 2022 CR 205 is moot.

III. Conclusion

{¶ 15} The trial court's judgment in Case No. 2025 CR 137 is affirmed, and Seelig's appeal in Case No. 2022 CR 205 is dismissed as moot.

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LEWIS, P.J., and TUCKER, J., concur.