

# **APPENDIX A**

**DECISION OF THE STATE SUPREME COURT**

# The Supreme Court of the State of Louisiana

CLIFFORD ABSHIRE

NO. 2018-CI-0048

VS.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND  
CORRECTIONS

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IN RE: Clifford Abshire; - Plaintiff; Applying For Writ of  
Certiorari and/or Review, Parish of E. Baton Rouge, 19th Judicial  
District Court Div. I, No. C649114; to the Court of Appeal, First  
Circuit, No. 2017 CA 0005;

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January 8, 2019

Denied.

MRC

BJJ

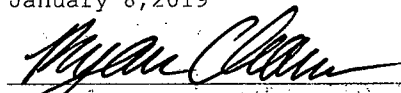
JLW

GGG

SJC

JTG

Supreme Court of Louisiana  
January 8, 2019

  
Deputy Clerk of Court  
For the Court

# **APPENDIX B**

**DECISION OF THE STATE COURT OF APPEAL**

NOT DESIGNATED FOR PUBLICATION

STATE OF LOUISIANA

COURT OF APPEAL

FIRST CIRCUIT

NO. 2017 CA 0005

CLIFFORD ABSHIRE

VERSUS

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
AND CORRECTIONS

Judgment Rendered: SEP 15 2017

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On Appeal from  
The 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court,  
Parish of East Baton Rouge, State of Louisiana  
Trial Court No. C649114  
The Honorable R. Michael Caldwell, Judge Presiding

\*\*\*\*\*

Clifford C. Abshire III  
Cottonport, Louisiana

Plaintiff/Appellant,  
In Proper Person

William L. Kline  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Attorney for Defendant/Appellee,  
Louisiana Department of Public  
Safety and Corrections

\*\*\*\*\*

BEFORE: GUIDRY, PETTIGREW, AND CRAIN, JJ.

CRAIN, J.

Clifford Abshire, an inmate in the custody of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, appeals the dismissal, without prejudice, of his petition for judicial review of Disciplinary Board Appeal number WNC-2015-430. In that disciplinary proceeding, Abshire was found guilty of violating Rule 10 (fighting) and received a sentence of custody change to restricted housing and a suspended sentence of ten days of disciplinary detention/isolation. Abshire was also ordered to pay restitution of \$5.00 for the cost of a medical exam. Abshire's appeal of the decision was denied by the Department upon finding the disciplinary report was clear, concise, and provided convincing evidence of the violation as charged. The Department also found the sanctions were appropriate.

Abshire's petition for judicial review was referred to a Commissioner of the district court for screening pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statutes 15:1178 and 1188. The Commissioner issued a screening report recommending that Abshire's suit be dismissed for failure to state a cause of action under Louisiana Revised Statute 15:1177A(9), because no substantial rights were involved in the matter. Following *de novo* review of the record, the district court adopted the Commissioner's report as its reasons for judgment and dismissed Abshire's suit.

Courts may intervene and reverse or modify the Department's decisions in disciplinary cases only where the petitioner's substantial rights have been prejudiced. See La. R.S. 15:1177A(9); see also La. R.S. 15:1178B and 1188A. Here, the disciplinary proceeding resulted in a change in Abshire's custody status and the imposition of restitution in the amount of \$5.00. It is well settled that a change of custody status, such as the one at issue here, is not atypical or a significant hardship in relation to the ordinary incidents of prison life, and does not prejudice an inmate's substantial rights. See *Sandin v. Conner*, 515 U.S. 472, 484-

86, 115 S.Ct. 2293, 2300-01, 132 L.Ed.2d 418 (1995); *Robinson v. Rader*, 14-0333 (La. App. 1 Cir. 11/20/14), 167 So. 3d 780, 781; *Boudreaux v. Leblanc*, 14-0214 2014WL4668358 (La. App. 1 Cir. 9/19/14).

Abshire, however, argues the order of restitution affects a substantial right, citing *Anderson v. LeBlanc*, 11-1800, 2012WL1550529 (La. App. 1 Cir. 5/2/12), wherein this court held that an inmate's substantial rights were affected by the imposition of restitution in the amount of \$1,217.50. Subsequent to *Anderson*, this court has repeatedly recognized that significantly smaller awards of restitution do not impose an unusual and significant hardship on an inmate in relation to the ordinary incidents of prison life and, therefore, do not prejudice his substantial rights. See *Drake v. Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Correction*, 16-1356 (La. App. 1 Cir. 6/2/17), \_\_\_ So. 3d \_\_\_, \_\_\_ (2017WL2399479 at \*2) (restitution of \$39.75); *Black v. Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections*, 15-1908, 2016WL3132157 at \*3 (La. App. 1 Cir. 6/3/16) (restitution of \$8.00); *Boatner v. Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections*, 12-0973, 2013WL593989 at \*1 (La. App. 1 Cir. 2/15/13) (restitution of \$13.00). Consistent with this jurisprudence, we find the \$5.00 award of restitution does not affect a substantial right of Abshire; therefore, the district did not err in dismissing his claim for failing to state a cause of action. See La. R.S. 15:1177A(9), 1178B, and 1188A.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abshire also argues on appeal that he was denied parole because of the disciplinary violation and, therefore, the proceeding affects a substantial right. Abshire made no allegations in that regard in his petition for judicial review, nor did he submit any evidence to support such a claim with his petition. Although he attached a document to his appellate brief that appears to reflect the denial of his parole for several reasons, including four disciplinary reports in 2015, the matter cannot be raised for the first time on appeal. See La. R.S. 15:1177A(5); *Black*, 2016WL3132157 at \*3. We further note the Supreme Court, in considering whether a substantial right might be implicated by the possible adverse effect a disciplinary proceeding may have on an inmate's prospects for parole, stated:

The district court's judgment is affirmed.<sup>2</sup> This memorandum opinion is issued in accordance with Uniform Rules – Courts of Appeal, Rule 2-16.1B. Costs of this appeal are assessed to Clifford Abshire.

**AFFIRMED; MOTION DENIED.**

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The decision to release a prisoner rests on a myriad of considerations. And, the prisoner is afforded procedural protection at his parole hearing in order to explain the circumstances behind his misconduct record. The chance that a finding of misconduct will alter the balance is simply too attenuated to invoke the procedural guarantees of the Due Process Clause.

*Sandin*, 515 U.S. at 487, 115 S. Ct. at 2302 (citations omitted).

<sup>2</sup> Abshire filed a motion with this court requesting that all briefs and memoranda filed by the Department be struck from the record, because the Department failed to file a brief on appeal. This sanction is not authorized by Uniform Rules – Courts of Appeal, Rule 2-12.12. We further note the Department did not file any documents in this proceeding, so there is nothing to strike from the record. For these reasons, the motion is denied.

Clifford Abshire III -- Versus -- Louisiana Department of  
Public Safety & Corrections  
COURT OF APPEAL OF LOUISIANA, FIRST CIRCUIT  
2017 La. App. Unpub. LEXIS 316  
Docket Number 2017-CA-0005  
October 27, 2017, Decided

Notice:

DECISION WITHOUT PUBLISHED OPINION

Editorial Information: Prior History

19th Judicial District Court. Case#: 649114. East Baton  
Rouge Parish. Abshire v. La. Dep't of Pub. Safety & Corr.,  
2017 La.App. Unpub. LEXIS 278 (La.App. 1 Cir., Sept. 15,  
2017)

Judges: John M. Guidry, John T Pettigrew, William J Crain.

Opinion

Rehearing Denied.

/s/ John M. Guidry

John M. Guidry

/s/ John T Pettigrew

John T Pettigrew

/s/ William J Crain

William J Crain

CLIFFORD ABSHIRE VERSUS LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS  
COURT OF APPEAL OF LOUISIANA, FIRST CIRCUIT  
2017 La. App. Unpub. LEXIS 278  
NO. 2017 CA 0005  
September 15, 2017, Judgment Rendered

Notice:

NOT DESIGNATED FOR PUBLICATION. PLEASE  
CONSULT THE LOUISIANA RULES OF APPELLATE  
PROCEDURE FOR CITATION OF UNPUBLISHED  
OPINIONS.

Editorial Information: Subsequent History

Rehearing denied by Abshire v. La. Dep't of Pub. Safety &  
Corr., 2017 La.App. Unpub. LEXIS 316 (La.App. 1 Cir., Oct.  
27, 2017)

Editorial Information: Prior History

On Appeal from The 19th Judicial District Court, Parish of  
East Baton Rouge, State of Louisiana. Trial Court No.  
C649114. The Honorable R. Michael Caldwell, Judge  
Presiding.

Disposition:

AFFIRMED; MOTION DENIED.

Selected by Clifford C. Abshire III, Cottonport, Louisiana  
Plaintiff/Appellant, pro per.

William L. Kline, Baton Rouge, Louisiana Attorney for  
Defendant/Appellee, Louisiana Department of Public Safety  
and Corrections.

Judges: BEFORE: GUIDRY, PETTIGREW, AND CRAIN, JJ.

Opinion

Opinion by: CRAIN

Opinion

[Pg 2] CRAIN, J.

Clifford Abshire, an inmate in the custody of the Louisiana  
Department of Public Safety and Corrections, appeals the  
dismissal, without prejudice, of his petition for judicial review  
of Disciplinary Board Appeal number WNC-2015-430. In that  
disciplinary proceeding, Abshire was found guilty of violating  
Rule 10 (fighting) and received a sentence of custody change  
to restricted housing and a suspended sentence of ten days  
of disciplinary detention/isolation. Abshire was also ordered to  
pay restitution of \$5.00 for the cost of a medical exam.  
Abshire's appeal of the decision was denied by the  
Department upon finding the disciplinary report was clear,  
concise, and provided convincing evidence of the violation as  
charged. The Department also found the sanctions were  
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Abshire's petition for judicial review was referred to a  
Commissioner of the district court for screening pursuant to  
Louisiana Revised Statutes 15:1178 and 1188. The  
Commissioner issued a screening report recommending that  
Abshire's suit be dismissed for failure to state a cause of  
action under Louisiana Revised Statute 15:1177A(9),  
because no substantial rights were involved in the matter.  
Following *de novo* review of the record, the district court  
adopted the Commissioner's report as its reasons for  
judgment and dismissed Abshire's suit.

Courts may intervene and reverse or modify the Department's  
decisions in disciplinary cases only where the petitioner's  
substantial rights have been prejudiced. See La. R.S.  
15:1177A(9); see also La. R.S. 15:1178(B) and 1188(A).  
Here, the disciplinary proceeding resulted in a change in  
Abshire's custody status and the imposition of restitution in  
the amount of \$5.00. It is well settled that a change of  
custody status, such as the one at issue here, is not atypical  
or a significant hardship in relation to the ordinary incidents of  
prison life, and does not prejudice an inmate's substantial  
rights. See *Sandin v. Conner*, 515 U.S. 472, 484-86, 115 S.  
Ct. 2293, 2300-01, [Pg 3] 132 L. Ed. 2d 418 (1995); *Robinson*  
*v. Rader*, 14-0333 (La.App. 1 Cir. 11/20/14), 167 So.3d 780,  
781; *Boudreaux v. Leblanc*, 14-0214, 2014 La.App. Unpub.  
LEXIS 493, 2014 WL 4668358 (La.App. 1 Cir. 9/19/14).

Abshire, however, argues the order of restitution affects a  
substantial right, citing *Anderson v. LeBlanc*, 11-1800, 2012  
La.App. Unpub. LEXIS 347, 2012 WL 1550529 (La.App. 1  
Cir. 5/2/12), wherein this court held that an inmate's  
substantial rights were affected by the imposition of restitution  
in the amount of \$1,217.50. Subsequent to *Anderson*, this  
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awards of restitution do not impose an unusual and significant  
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prison life and, therefore, do not prejudice his substantial  
rights. See *Drake v. Louisiana Department of Public Safety*  
*and Correction*, 16-1356 (La.App. 1 Cir. 6/2/17), 222 So.3d  
1272, 1273, 2017 La.App. LEXIS 1038, (2017 WL 2399479 at  
\*2) (restitution of \$39.75); *Black v. Louisiana Department of*  
*Public Safety and Corrections*, 15-1908, 2016 La.App.  
Unpub. LEXIS 220, 2016 WL 3132157 at \*3 (La.App. 1 Cir.  
6/3/16) (restitution of \$8.00); *Boatner v. Louisiana*



Department of Public Safety and Corrections, 12-0973, 2013 La.App. Unpub. LEXIS 74, 2013 WL 593989 at \*1 (La.App. 1 Cir. 2/15/13) (restitution of \$13.00). Consistent with this jurisprudence, we find the \$5.00 award of restitution does not affect a substantial right of Abshire; therefore, the district did not err in dismissing his claim for failing to state a cause of action. See La. R.S. 15:1177(A)(9) , 1178(B), and 1188(A).<sup>1</sup>

[Pg 4] The district court's judgment is affirmed.<sup>2</sup> This memorandum opinion is issued in accordance with Uniform Rules - Courts of Appeal, Rule 2-16.1(B). Costs of this appeal are assessed to Clifford Abshire.

AFFIRMED; MOTION DENIED.

Footnotes

1

Abshire also argues on appeal that he was denied parole because of the disciplinary violation and, therefore, the proceeding affects a substantial right. Abshire made no allegations in that regard in his petition for judicial review, nor did he submit any evidence to support such a claim with his petition. Although he attached a document to his appellate brief that appears to reflect the denial of his parole for several reasons, including *four* disciplinary reports in 2015, the matter cannot be raised for the first time on appeal. See La. R.S. 15:1177A(5); *Black*, 2016 La.App. Unpub. LEXIS 220, 2016 WL 3132157 at \*3. We further note the Supreme Court, in considering whether a substantial right might be implicated by the possible adverse effect a disciplinary proceeding may have on an inmate's prospects for parole, stated:

The decision to release a prisoner rests on a myriad of considerations. And, the prisoner is afforded procedural protection at his parole hearing in order to explain the circumstances behind his misconduct record. The chance that a finding of misconduct will alter the balance is simply too attenuated to invoke the procedural guarantees of the Due Process Clause. *Sandin*, 515 U.S. at 487, 115 S. Ct. at 2302 (citations omitted).

2

Abshire filed a motion with this court requesting that all briefs and memoranda filed by the Department be struck from the record, because the Department failed to file a brief on appeal. This sanction is not authorized by Uniform Rules - Courts of Appeal, Rule 2-12.12. We further note the Department did not file any documents in this proceeding, so there is nothing to strike from the record. For these reasons, the motion is denied.

# **APPENDIX C**

## **DECISION OF THE STATE TRIAL COURT**

CLIFFORD ABSHIRE  
DOC#439164

VERSUS

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
ET AL.

NUMBER: 649,114 SECTION 24

19<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

STATE OF LOUISIANA

SCREENING JUDGMENT

This matter came on for ruling by this Court in accordance with R.S. 15:1178, R.S. 15:1184-88 and R.S. 15:1177(A)(9). After a careful *de novo* review of the pleadings filed herein, together with any traversal timely filed, and adopting the written recommendation of the Commissioner filed herein,

IT IS ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED, that the Petitioner's appeal of DBA No. WNC-2015-430 is dismissed without prejudice, without service on the Department, and at the Petitioner's costs in accordance with R.S. 15:1178, R.S. 15:1184-88 and R.S. 15:1177(A)(9), for failure to raise a "substantial right" violation and thus, for being frivolous and failing to state a cognizable claim or cause of action for relief.

READ, RENDERED AND SIGNED, this 20<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2016 at  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

R. Michael Caldwell  
R. MICHAEL CALDWELL  
JUDGE, SECTION 24  
NINETEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ON THIS DAY A COPY  
OF THE WRITTEN REASONS/JUDGMENT/ORDER  
COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION WAS MAILED  
BY ME WITH SUFFICIENT POSTAGE AFFIXED TO:  
ALL PARTIES: Clifford Abshire & DOC  
DONE AND SIGNED THIS 20<sup>th</sup> DAY OF September  
2016  
Debbie Hux  
Deputy Clerk of Court

FILED  
SEP 20 2016  
Debbie Hux  
DEPUTY CLERK OF COURT