

Jennifer Denise PISTO v. STATE of Arkansas

CR 06-1348

244 S.W.3d 695

Supreme Court of Arkansas
Opinion delivered December 7, 2006

APPEAL & ERROR — ATTORNEY ADMITTED FAULT — MOTION FOR BELATED APPEAL WAS GRANTED. — In accordance with *McDonald v. State*, appellant's attorney candidly admitted fault and the motion for belated appeal was therefore granted.

Motion for Belated Appeal; granted.

Sharon Kiel, for appellant.

No response.

PER CURIAM. Appellant Jennifer Denise Pisto, by and through her attorney, has filed a motion for belated appeal. Her attorney, Sharon Kiel, a deputy public defender, states in the motion that the record was tendered late due to a mistake on her part.

This court clarified its treatment of motions for rule on clerk and motions for belated appeals in *McDonald v. State*, 356 Ark. 106, 146 S.W.3d 883 (2004). There we stated that there are only two possible reasons for an appeal not being timely perfected: either the party or attorney filing the appeal is at fault, or there is "good reason." *Id.* at 116, 146 S.W.3d at 891. We explained:

Where an appeal is not timely perfected, either the party or attorney filing the appeal is at fault, or there is good reason that the appeal was not timely perfected. The party or attorney filing the appeal is therefore faced with two options. First, where the party or attorney filing the appeal is at fault, fault should be admitted by affidavit filed with the motion or in the motion itself. There is no advantage in declining to admit fault where fault exists. Second, where the party or attorney believes that there is good reason the appeal was not perfected, the case for good reason can be made in the motion, and this court will decide whether good reason is present.

Id., 146 S.W.3d at 891 (footnote omitted). While this court no longer requires an affidavit admitting fault before we will consider the motion, an attorney should candidly admit fault where he has erred and is responsible for the failure to perfect the appeal. *See id.*

[1] In accordance with *McDonald v. State, supra*, Ms. Kiel has candidly admitted fault. The motion is, therefore, granted. A copy of this opinion will be forwarded to the Committee on Professional Conduct.

Motion granted.
