

UNREPORTED

IN THE APPELLATE COURT

OF MARYLAND

No. 340

September Term, 2025

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STARSHA SEWELL

v.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

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Zic,  
Ripken,  
Wright, Alexander, Jr.  
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

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PER CURIAM

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Filed: December 31, 2025

\*This is a per curiam opinion. Under Rule 1-104, the opinion is not precedent within the rule of stare decisis nor may it be cited as persuasive authority.

Starsha Sewell, appellant, appeals from an order issued by the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County denying her “Motion for Appropriate Relief.” She raises four issues on appeal, which reduce to one: whether the court erred in denying the motion for appropriate relief. For the reasons that follow, we shall affirm.

In March 2024, appellant sued the Prince George’s County Police Department, appellee, alleging negligence and abuse of process. These claims stemmed from an incident that occurred on March 7, 2014, where appellee served and enforced upon her a vacated court order related to her custody case. Appellee filed a motion to dismiss the complaint as barred by the statute of limitations. But this motion was deficient, and the court struck the filing. Appellee refiled the motion, and appellant filed an opposition. The court then granted the motion and dismissed the complaint on June 26, 2024.

Appellant filed a timely motion for reconsideration on July 2, 2024, which the court also denied on July 12, 2024. On July 13, 2024, appellant filed a motion for recusal “along with a MD Rule 2-535 Motion for Relief of Fraudulent Judgment” (the second motion for reconsideration). In addition to requesting recusal of the judge who dismissed her case, she claimed that the court had erred in ruling on a deficient motion to dismiss, which had been stricken, rather than entering a default judgment. On August 10, 2024, appellant also filed a notice of appeal.

On August 21, 2024, the court granted the motion for recusal and ordered that the second motion for reconsideration would be assigned to another judge for consideration (the August 21 order). However, the motion was not ruled on, presumably because of the pending direct appeal. In that appeal, appellant similarly claimed that the court abused its

discretion by ruling on appellee’s deficient motion. We held, however, that: (1) there was no procedural irregularity because the court did not issue a ruling until appellee filed a corrected motion to dismiss, and (2) although appellant did not specifically challenge the merits of the motion to dismiss, the court did not err in granting the motion because her claims were barred by the statute of limitations. *Sewell v. Prince George’s Cnty. Police Dep’t*, No. 1156, Sept. Term 2024 (filed March 7, 2025).

The same day that the mandate was received by the circuit court, appellant filed a “Motion for Appropriate Relief” wherein she requested the court to “enforce[]” the August 21 order and assign a judge to rule on her second motion for reconsideration. In the motion for appropriate relief, appellant again asserted that the court had erred in granting the motion to dismiss because it had been struck as a deficient filing. On April 3, 2025, the court denied the motion as “moot.” Appellant then filed a “MD Rule 2-534(a) Motion for Relief” from that order, which was denied on April 14, 2025. This appeal followed.

On appeal, appellant first claims that the court erred in considering appellee’s deficient motion to dismiss, which had previously been stricken. Because of this alleged error, appellant contends that the court abused its discretion in denying her motion for appropriate relief and not granting her second motion for reconsideration. However, we have previously addressed this claim in appellant’s direct appeal and found that it lacked merit. Consequently, it is barred by the law of the case doctrine and could not serve as a basis for the court to reconsider its judgment. *See Baltimore Cnty. v. Baltimore Cnty. Fraternal Ord. of Police, Lodge No. 4*, 220 Md. App. 596, 659 (2014) (noting that “neither the questions decided [by the appellate courts] nor the ones that could have been raised and

decided are available to be raised in a subsequent appeal” (quotation marks, citation, and emphasis omitted)).

Appellant next claims that the court’s denial of her motion for appropriate relief without a hearing violated her due process rights. However, because the circuit court’s order denying the motion was not dispositive of a claim or defense, no hearing was required. *See Pelletier v. Burson*, 213 Md. App. 284, 293 (2013) (holding that the circuit court was not required to hold a hearing before denying a Rule 2-535 motion because it was not a “dispositive” motion).

Finally, appellant asserts that the court “abused its discretion by refusing to hold [] appellee in contempt for noncompliance with a clear court order” and that a contempt action initiated in another case “was an unlawful retaliation in violation of the Maryland Whistleblower Protection Act.” These claims, however, were not raised in appellant’s Motion for Appropriate Relief. And because the court’s denial of that motion is the only order properly before us, we will not consider those issues for the first time in this appeal.<sup>1</sup> *See* Maryland Rule 8-131(a).

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS TO BE PAID BY APPELLANT.**

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, the latter claim involves an entirely different civil action.