

Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County
Case No.: C-02-CV-23-000407

UNREPORTED
IN THE APPELLATE COURT
OF MARYLAND

No. 606

September Term, 2024

DEDRIC HAGLER

v.

MD LIVE CASINO

Shaw,
Ripken,
Meredith, Timothy E.
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

PER CURIAM

Filed: March 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.

Dedric Hagler, appellant, sued PPE Casino Resorts Maryland, LLC (t/a Maryland Live! Casino) (“the Casino”), appellee, in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County alleging negligence on a theory of premises liability. Hagler claimed that, while a guest at the Casino, he pulled on a door to enter a patio, but the handle detached from the door and struck him in the face. After discovery, the Casino moved for summary judgment, which the court granted after a hearing. This appeal followed.

We review a circuit court’s grant of summary judgment *de novo*. *Westminster Mgmt., LLC v. Smith*, 486 Md. 616, 637 (2024). In doing so, we “undertake[] an independent review of the record to determine whether a genuine dispute of material fact exists and whether the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.” *Id.* (cleaned up).

To prevail on his negligence claim, Hagler had to prove: (1) that the Casino was under a duty to protect Hagler from injury; (2) that the Casino breached that duty; (3) that Hagler suffered actual injury or loss; and (4) that the loss or injury proximately resulted from the Casino’s breach. *Joseph v. Bozzuto Mgmt. Co.*, 173 Md. App. 305, 314 (2007). The critical element here is the second.

There is no dispute that Hagler was an invitee at the Casino. The Casino thus owed him “a duty to use reasonable and ordinary care to keep the premises safe and to protect [Hagler] from injury caused by an unreasonable risk which [Hagler], by exercising ordinary care for his own safety, w[ould] not discover.” *Southland Corp. v. Griffith*, 332 Md. 704, 715–16 (1993). To prove the Casino breached that duty, however, Hagler had to prove “not only that a dangerous condition existed but also that the [Casino] had actual or constructive

knowledge of the dangerous condition and that the knowledge was gained in sufficient time to give them the opportunity to remove it or to warn [him].” *Joseph*, 173 Md. App. at 315 (cleaned up).

Hagler’s claim fails as a matter of law because there was no evidence showing that the Casino had actual or constructive knowledge of any latent defect in the door or handle. At his deposition, Hagler testified that, as he approached the door, he did not see anything that would have given him any reason to think the handle would detach. It did not look loose or different from the other door next to it. Indeed, Hagler had used the door several times over the course of his visit without issue. He testified that the door did not look any different when the handle broke than it had when he previously used the door. Surveillance footage also showed that the door was in normal, proper working condition until the moment Hagler pulled the handle and it detached from the door. Nothing in the record suggests that the Casino had actual or constructive knowledge that the handle would break. Thus, Hagler could not establish that the Casino breached its duty of care, and the circuit court did not err in awarding summary judgment to the Casino.

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT
COURT FOR ANNE ARUNDEL
COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS TO
BE PAID BY APPELLANT.**