

Circuit Court for Baltimore County  
Case No. 03-K-83-002339

UNREPORTED  
IN THE APPELLATE COURT  
OF MARYLAND

No. 1743

September Term, 2024

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VERNON LEE EVANS, JR.

v.

STATE OF MARYLAND

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Nazarian,  
Beachley,  
Kenney, James A., III  
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

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PER CURIAM

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Filed: September 8, 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.

Vernon Lee Evans, Jr., appellant, appeals from an order issued by the Circuit Court for Baltimore County denying his motion to correct illegal sentence. For the reasons that follow, we shall affirm.

In 1984, a jury in the Circuit Court for Worcester County convicted appellant of two counts of first-degree murder (counts 1 and 2), conspiracy to commit murder (count 3), and use of a handgun in commission of a felony or crime of violence (count 4). The jury sentenced him to death for both murders. In addition to those sentences, the court imposed a 20-year sentence on count 4, to run consecutive to any other sentence appellant was serving,<sup>1</sup> and a life sentence on count 3, to run consecutive to appellant’s sentence on count 4. Following a 1991 postconviction proceeding, appellant’s death sentences were vacated and, at appellant’s suggestion for removal, the case was transferred to the Circuit Court for Baltimore County, where a new jury sentenced appellant to death on both counts, and a new commitment record was issued with respect to those sentences. Appellant’s sentences on counts 3 and 4 remained unchanged. After the General Assembly in 2013 prospectively repealed the death penalty, then Governor Martin O’Malley, exercising his pardon power, commuted appellant’s death sentences to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

In 2024, appellant filed a motion to correct illegal sentence claiming the failure of the sentencing court to specify in the commitment record the exact date on which each of his sentences was to begin and end violated Maryland Rule 4-351(a)(5), resulting in an

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<sup>1</sup> Appellant was serving a related federal sentence at the time of sentencing.

irregularity in his sentence that could be revised under Maryland Rule 4-345(b). The court denied the motion without a hearing. This appeal followed.

Appellant claims on appeal, as he did in his motion, that his “sentence was pronounced with an irregularity” because the court failed to “state on [the] record when each consecutive sentence was to begin” and “when each consecutive sentence was to be terminated.” In other words, he seems to insist that the court was required to give a particular start and end date for each sentence. We disagree for two reasons. First, a term of imprisonment “for the rest of [a defendant’s] natural life” terminates upon the end of the defendant’s natural life. Second, appellant does not cite any authority that interprets Rule 4-351(a)(5) to require a sentencing court to state the exact date on which a term of life imprisonment, or any other sentence, is to end. In short, the law does not require such specificity. Because the record indicates that the court complied with Rule 4-351(a), there is no irregularity in appellant’s sentence, and the court did not err in denying appellant’s motion to correct illegal sentence.

Finally, appellant asserts that the court erred in denying his motion without a hearing. But the “open hearing requirement found in Rule 4-345 ordinarily applies only when the court intends to ‘modify, reduce, correct, or vacate a sentence.’” *Scott v. State*, 379 Md. 170, 190 (2004) (cleaned up). Here, however, the court denied the motion. Consequently, no hearing was required.

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