

*This opinion is nonprecedential except as provided by
Minn. R. Civ. App. P. 136.01, subd. 1(c).*

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
IN COURT OF APPEALS
A25-1224**

In re the Estate of Prince Rogers Nelson, Deceased.

**Filed January 26, 2026
Affirmed
Schmidt, Judge**

Carver County District Court
File No. 10-PR-16-46

Jacqueline Nicholson, Litchfield, Minnesota (pro se appellant)

Alan I. Silver, James C. Kovacs, Bassford Remele, P.A., Minneapolis, Minnesota (for respondents Primary Wave Music IP Fund 3, LP; Prince OAT Holdings, LLC; Prince Legacy, LLC; L. Londell McMillan, and Charles Spicer)

Considered and decided by Cochran, Presiding Judge; Bratvold, Judge; and Schmidt, Judge.

NONPRECEDENTIAL OPINION

SCHMIDT, Judge

Appellant Jacqueline Nicholson appeals from a district court order dismissing her late claims to decedent Prince Rogers Nelson's estate. We affirm.

FACTS

Prince died intestate in April 2016. The district court issued a notice to creditors regarding Prince's estate, giving any creditors with claims against Prince's estate four months to present their claims "after the date of this [n]otice or the claims will be barred."

In May 2017, the district court issued an order determining Prince's intestacy, finding the identities of his heirs, and commencing the one-year statutory window during which such an order may be modified or vacated. *See* Minn. Stat. § 524.3-412 (2024). A year later, the district court ordered that "[a]ny filing after May 18, 2018 by any other individual claiming to be an heir shall be presumed barred and not addressed by the Court."

In 2019, Nicholson filed a "Written Statement of Claim," asserting that Prince named her and her children as beneficiaries of his estate in a secret will that was drafted in 2006. Nicholson filed a second "Written Statement of Claim" asserting a claim to 67 gold bars, a birthday card, and a poem that Prince gave her for her birthday. The district court did not address Nicholson's untimely filings.

Nicholson petitioned the district court to allow her to submit a late claim. The district court issued an order denying that petition. Nicholson did not appeal that order.

In 2025, Nicholson filed a motion with the district court seeking: (1) relief from the district court's "denial of access to sealed confidential records, based on disability, exclusion, and concealment"; (2) "Vacatur of the May 18, 2017 determination of intestacy and heirship"; and (3) an order compelling discovery of "testamentary and confidential documents that may directly affect the rights of myself and my children." Nicholson also requested an order compelling the production of "the will Prince created in 2006" and "all related files that reference and affect [Nicholson] and [her] children, including [a docket entry] which described a trust fund for [her] two children." The district court dismissed Nicholson's filings as barred under Minnesota's Uniform Probate Code.

Nicholson appeals.

DECISION

Nicholson appeals from the district court's order dismissing her 2025 motion. Nicholson's motion cited rule 60.02, which allows the district court to relieve a party from a final judgment, order, or proceeding. Minn. R. Civ. P. 60.02. But the rule does not apply to Nicholson's motion to vacate the 2017 determination of Prince's intestacy and heirs because she was not a party to the 2017 order that she seeks to vacate. Rule 60.02 also does not apply to Nicholson's motion to gain access to sealed documents.

The substance of Nicholson's appeal challenges the district court's refusal to consider her "untimely" claims. She argues that the district court erred by dismissing her claim as untimely because (1) she presented "evidence of trauma-related dissociative amnesia, disability, and her counsel's misrepresentations that prevented timely assertion of beneficiary rights"; (2) she presented "evidence that trauma-related dissociative amnesia and disability prevented her from validly executing a disclaimer"; and (3) the court should have ordered the law firm handling Prince's estate matters "to produce documents concerning [Prince's] will, and heirship designations." We construe Nicholson's appeal as a challenge to the district court's order denying her petition to submit a late claim, which we review for an abuse of discretion. *In re Estate of Kotowski*, 704 N.W.2d 522, 531 (Minn. App. 2005), *rev. denied* (Minn. Dec. 21, 2005).

Under Minnesota law, any claims not otherwise barred by the time limit for noticed creditors are barred unless filed within one year of the decedent's death. Minn. Stat. § 524.3-803 (2024). Here, Nicholson's claims were untimely. Prince died in 2016. Nicholson did not assert her claim until 2019, three years after Prince died and two years

after the statutory deadline expired. The district court denied Nicholson's 2019 petition to submit a late claim, which Nicholson did not appeal. Nicholson's 2025 filings collaterally attacks that unappealed 2019 order and attempts to assert additional relief in the form of access to sealed records and confidential documents. But Nicholson's failure to appeal the 2019 order makes this appeal untimely. *See id.*

Even if this appeal were timely, the district court may only "revive [late claims] upon petition of . . . the claimant for cause shown." *Kotowski*, 704 N.W.2d at 531. A court may allow late claims to proceed "in cases of hardship, misunderstanding, and diligent but mistaken procedures but not in cases of unexplained and inexcusable lack of diligence." *Id.* (quotations omitted). "It is not an abuse of discretion for the district court to reject a petition when the petitioner does not present a significant reason for the delay." *Id.*

In arguing her cause for late claims, Nicholson's petition stated that:

It would have been an absolute impossibility for [her] to meet the set deadline of [September 9, 2016] to make any claims against the estate as [she] had no memory of [her] gift. Furthermore, [she] had no memory of [her] relationship to Prince, who was [her] fiancé as of 2007. [She] suffer[s] from complex PTSD/dissociation which under severe emotional grief and distress left [her] in a state of amnesia.

The district court rejected Nicholson's reasons for filing her claims late:

While the [district court] may allow a claim for cause shown which would otherwise be barred under Minn. Stat. § 524.3-803 (*See* Minn. Stat. § 524.3-803(c)(4)(ii) (2018)) . . . Nicholson's Petition to Allow a Late Claim fails to include any factual support for either her entitlement to the claimed property or her inability to assert her claim within the time frames provided by Minn. Stat. § 524.3-803. As a result, it is appropriate that her petition be denied.

The district court acted within its discretion in denying Nicholson’s petition to allow a late claim because she did not present a significant, credible reason for the delay. Thus, even if the 2019 order were properly before us, the district court—within its discretion—properly rejected Nicholson’s petition to allow her to submit a late claim. It follows that the district court also acted within its discretion by dismissing Nicholson’s attempts to collaterally attack the unappealed 2019 order through her 2025 filings.

Affirmed.