

*This opinion is nonprecedential except as provided by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
A25-1338**

In the Matter of Mia Wilson-Greenwood,
on behalf of minor, petitioner,
Appellant,

vs.

Maurice Wilson, III,
Respondent.

**Filed April 20, 2026
Affirmed
Connolly, Judge**

Dakota County District Court
File No. 19AV-FA-19-752

Mia Lynae-Brazier Greenwood, Apple Valley, Minnesota (pro se appellant)

Maurice Allen Wilson, III, Apple Valley, Minnesota (pro se respondent)

Considered and decided by Connolly, Presiding Judge; Wheelock, Judge; and Segal,
Judge.*

NONPRECEDENTIAL OPINION

CONNOLLY, Judge

Appellant-mother, pro se, challenges the district court's denial of her petition for an
order for protection (OFP) against respondent-father on behalf of the parties' 12-year-old

* Retired judge of the Minnesota Court of Appeals, serving by appointment pursuant to
Minn. Const. art. VI, § 10.

son, arguing that the district court denied her son's due process rights by not permitting him to testify at the OFP hearing or interviewing him privately. She also argues that she is entitled to reversal of the denial of the OFP and to a remand of the case before a different judge. We affirm.

FACTS

Appellant Mia Wilson-Greenwood and respondent Maurice Wilson III were married in 2012 and divorced in 2020. Their son, M., was born on June 1, 2013. Appellant petitioned for an OFP for M. against respondent and for an emergency order suspending parenting time on June 13, 2025.

In the petition, in answer to "What Happened? Most Recent Incident," appellant described an incident that occurred on June 11, 2025.

1. [Respondent] stopped car in traffic to yell at [M.] and cause fear in the child on his way to school.
2. They arrived at the school at 7:55 AM and he loudly yelled at [M.] in front of the school . . . for 11 minutes.
3. [M.] is seen on School surveillance at 8:06 AM leaving the vehicle and then being chased down by his dad.
4. [Respondent] grabbed [M.] by the arm and slammed him into his gold mini-SUV.
5. [Respondent] open[ed] the car door and slam[med M.] into the back seat hitting the child's head on the door frame.
6. [Respondent] then berated the child for another 2-3 minutes with the car door opened in front of everyone at the school.

7. [M.] cried at school . . . and reported the incident to school staff and messaged [appellant.] Child is afraid to be alone with [respondent], scared another argument will ensue about mental issues and [respondent] will become violent again. [M.] adds [respondent] has increased drinking and sees personality changes when [he] drinks.

On the petition, appellant answered “yes” to the question “Was anyone injured?” and described the injuries as “child reported injury pain and lump on back [of] head.” She answered “No” to questions on whether medical treatment was received, whether respondent interfered with a 911 or emergency call, whether the police or sheriff came, and whether she needed to describe any other recent incidents.

Later on June 13, after reviewing the petition, the district court issued an OFP suspending respondent’s parenting time and scheduling an expedited hearing. Following a hearing on June 18, the district court issued two orders. The first stated that appellant had filed an ex parte motion “alleg[ing] that [respondent] physically and emotionally abused [M.]” and noted that “at this time, the [e]x [p]arte [OFP] will . . . preclude [respondent] from exercising parenting time with the minor child[.]”

The second order found that: (1) appellant had requested that the district court interview M.; (2) respondent objected to this request; (3) M. had significant mental health issues, “suicidal ideation” and “issues of self-harm and harm to others” reported by appellant; and (4) respondent reported that M. “ha[d] been placed in the middle of litigation by [appellant].” The district court stated that it did not find that M. was “of sufficient ability, age, and maturity to express an independent, reliable preference” or to “address the allegations of domestic abuse with this Court” and denied the request.

The evidentiary hearing was held on June 27. The district court told the parties and their attorneys: “We’re here today on whether or not domestic abuse as defined by [Minn. Stat. §] 518B.01 occurred between [respondent] and [M].” Concerning the June 11 incident of alleged domestic abuse, appellant testified: “I guess [respondent] stopped the car in the middle of the street and like yelled at him in the passenger seat. And then when they finally got to school, the argument continued” Appellant then directed the court to a video she had taken of the school’s parking-lot camera video, which had recorded the incident.

Respondent testified that he and M. got into an argument in the car when he told M. to clean his room before he did anything else when he got home from school and M. said, “I don’t have to clean my room. I don’t have to listen to you. I don’t have to respect you. I only have to do it sometimes.” Respondent then said, “No, you don’t. You don’t have to do it sometimes; you have to respect and listen to your father all the time.” At this point they arrived in the school parking lot, and M. said:

I don’t have to listen to you. I can go live with [appellant.] I can make you pay child support. I can make you homeless. I can make you and all the kids in that house homeless. I can take away your home . . . I’m not going to clean my room.

Respondent then said, “[Y]ou’re not in control. . . . God is in control.” M. replied, “Don’t you dare bring God into this. He has nothing to do with it.” Respondent testified that M. then got out of the car and “slam[med] the door with all of his might.” Respondent stopped the car, got out, grabbed M., brought him back to the car, opened the door, and pushed M. down in the seat. Respondent testified: “[M. did] hit his head, and I quickly

[said]: I'm sorry you hit your head, but the problem here is disrespect." Respondent answered "No" when asked if M. appeared to be physically injured or complained that his head hurt and if the school contacted respondent about the incident. Respondent met with a social worker about the incident, but the social worker did not indicate that any services were needed for the family.

The focus of appellant's testimony was on M.'s relationship with each of his parents in regard to his sexuality and his religion, while the focus of respondent's testimony was on the June 11 incident that appellant claimed was domestic abuse. Appellant's attorney did not refer to the incident that was the basis for the OFP petition but said:

[P]hysical harm has occurred as we have seen from the video and from what [M.] has relayed to [appellant]. In addition to that, [M.] also has fear that imminent physical harm could come to him by [respondent] if the Order for Protection is not granted or extended because of discussions that [M.] has had with [respondent] in regard to his own gender identity and the fact that the child is suffering from mental health issues that are being—currently being addressed. But the fact that [M.] now has been with his mother and he's a lot more open and a lot happier and he is more confident about discussing his identity with others, it shows that the relationship with [respondent] has not been a healthy one for [M.], and, therefore, the Order for Protection needs to be extended for the full two years.

After appellant's testimony, respondent's attorney described the June 11 incident and requested dismissal of the OFP.

[T]his case revolves around a child's mental health struggles. Both parents acknowledge and testify that [M.] does suffer from some mental health struggles. But that does not mean that there has been domestic abuse.

And, Your Honor, you can see in the video that the child does get out of the car. He slams the door very hard. And then

[respondent] does grab him, as he testified and admits to. Unfortunately, the child did hit his head and [respondent] immediately apologized to [M.] and did not observe any injury.

... [E]ven if the incident from June 11th could be construed as domestic abuse, this was a single isolated incident involving a parent parenting their child for not wanting to clean his room and slamming doors. It is a reasonable use of force for a parent to do what [respondent] did.

The district court stated at the end of the hearing:

[I]t's [appellant] that must prove by a preponderance of the evidence that it's more likely than not that domestic abuse has occurred. The legislature, under [Minn. Stat. §] 518B.01, has defined domestic abuse to include any of the following committed against a family or a household member: Physical harm, bodily injury or assault [and] two, the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury or assault. . . .

[Respondent] testified that he was--was attempting to discipline the minor child on the evening of June 10th with respect to cleaning the room, the morning of June 11th with respect to cleaning the room, in the car ride on the way to school, again with respect to cleaning the room, and being respectful towards -- the minor child being [respectful] toward his father. . . .

Here, . . . the video [of the incident] itself reflects that the minor child exited out of the vehicle, that's consistent with [respondent's] testimony. He slams the door and walks around the rear end of the vehicle. [Respondent] meets the child outside of the vehicle, grabs his arm, and directs him to the vehicle. This is consistent with [appellant's] testimony. It's consistent with [respondent's] testimony. It's clearly reflected on [the video].

We also see, consistent with both parties' testimony and the video itself, . . . that [respondent] does push the minor child into the vehicle and it does appear that the child may have hit his head on the side of the vehicle when he was being pushed into the vehicle. However, the Court will say that that portion of the video is somewhat blurry and it is hard to see. You can

see something hitting the side of the vehicle. Both parties report it was the minor child's head. And the Court will, therefore, make a finding that it was the minor child's head that hit the vehicle. So that's what we have in terms of facts here. The question becomes whether or not the acts--the acts of grabbing, pulling, and pushing and the minor child making contact with the vehicle or hitting his head in the vehicle are such that [respondent] inflicts injury on the child. . . .

. . . .

Here, [appellant's] petition indicated that the minor child, I believe, had a lump on his head. . . .

. . . [H]owever, there was no testimony regarding a lump on the back of the head here today at trial. When asked by her attorney, [appellant] testified that the minor child, in response to whether or not there was any physical harm or injury, [appellant] testified that the minor child said he hurt his head and that the other teachers at the scene asked him if he was okay.

So that was the injury that was reported, which is not consistent with what was reported in the petition.

. . . I have to determine . . . whether it's more likely than not -- that's the preponderance of the evidence -- that an injury occurred here as a result of the domestic abuse[.]

. . . The testimony at trial by [appellant] wasn't consistent with what was on the petition itself regarding the actual physical injury itself.

. . . [W]hen viewing all of the evidence, I don't find that [appellant] has met her burden on that issue, and, as result of that, the Order for Protection will be dismissed.

Appellant challenges the district court's denial of her petition for an OFP and of her request that M. either testify or be interviewed by the district court and the district court's refusal to recuse from the case.

DECISION

1. Denial of the OFP

This court will “review the decision to grant an OFP for an abuse of discretion.” *Thompson v. Schrimsher*, 906 N.W.2d 495, 500 (Minn. 2018). On appeal from a district court’s decision on granting an OFP, this court will not reconcile conflicting evidence or decide issues of witness credibility. *Aljubailah v. James*, 903 N.W.2d 638, 643 (Minn. App. 2017).

Both parties were present at the hearing, so the district court could evaluate their testimony and determine their credibility. Appellant claims that respondent “admitted to making contact with the child but characterized it as accidental.” The district court found that appellant “failed to meet her burden of proof” that respondent had committed domestic abuse by causing physical harm, bodily injury, or assault on M., or caused his fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, or assault. *See* Minn. Stat. § 518B.01, subd. 2 (a) (2024) (defining “domestic abuse”). We discern no abuse of discretion in denying the OFP on this record.

2. Denial of Child’s Testimony or Interview

Appellant claims that the district court’s refusal to either interview M. or have M. testify was a denial of due process. She offers no support for her argument that a child of 12 years has a due-process right to testify at a hearing or to be interviewed by a judge. For this argument, she relies on *Chosa ex rel. Chosa v. Tagliente*, 693 N.W.2d 487 (Minn. App. 2025), claiming that it “reversed a district court that excluded a child’s testimony without findings, explaining that fairness requires every litigant an opportunity to present relevant

evidence.” Appellant misreads *Chosa*, which concerns a child who was 19 months old and a grandmother who sought and obtained an OFP against the child’s mother. *Id.* at 488. The district court in *Chosa* granted the OFP after finding that the mother had committed “inappropriate hygiene and inadequate medical care of the child, leaving the child unattended, active chemical dependency while caring for the child” and had “an overall pattern of behavior endangering the physical well being of the child[.]” *Id.* at 489-90. On appeal, this court concluded these were acts that “may well evidence neglect, but they do not constitute domestic abuse” and reversed the OFP. *Id.* at 490. *Chosa* has nothing to do with a child of 12 years testifying or obtaining an interview with a judge.

Appellant also relies on *In re Welfare of Child of R.D.L.*, 853 N.W.2d 127 (Minn. 2014), saying it “held that due process includes the right to present evidence and be heard at a meaningful time and in a meaningful time.” Again, appellant misreads the case. *R.D.L.* concerns the statutory presumption that a parent who has had a prior termination of parental rights is an unfit parent. *R.D.L.*, 853 N.W.2d at 128-29. The phrase “due process” appears in the case in connection with (1) the parent’s argument that the presumption violates due process, *id.* at 130; (2) the government’s compelling interest in promoting relationships among those in recognized family units, *id.* at 134; and (3) moving expeditiously toward a resolution of cases involving parental rights to secure both the best interests of the child and the due process rights of all parties, *id.* at 134-35. The case has nothing to do with a child giving testimony. *Id.* at 130-35.

Appellant has not shown that M.’s due process rights were violated by the district court’s decision that M. lacks “sufficient ability, age, and maturity” to either express a

preference or to deal with one parent's allegations of domestic abuse of himself against the other parent.

3. Entitlement to Remand Before a Different Judge

A decision on a motion to remove a judge for cause is within the district court's discretion and will be reversed on appeal only if the district court abused its discretion. *Hooper v. State*, 838 N.W.2d 775, 790 (Minn. 2013). Appellant argues that "cumulative irregularities" require reversal and remand of her case before a different judge. She objects to the judge's denying her motion for recusal without hearing or notice, making a reference to appellant's recusal motion at a later hearing, describing appellant off-the-record as "high conflict" because of her history of appeals and recusal motions, and denying a continuance when her counsel was unavailable. Appellant does not refute any of the judge's statements or provide any references to the record that would enable review.

No abuse of discretion has been shown.

Affirmed.