

*This opinion is nonprecedential except as provided by  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  
A26-0080**

Rondell Russell Camp, petitioner,  
Appellant,

vs.

State of Minnesota,  
Respondent.

**Filed September 8, 2026  
Affirmed  
Worke, Judge**

Hennepin County District Court  
File No. 27-CR-17-2680

Christina Zauhar, Halberg Criminal Defense, Bloomington, Minnesota (for appellant)

Keith Ellison, Attorney General, St. Paul, Minnesota; and

Mary F. Moriarty, Hennepin County Attorney, Nicholas G. Kimball, Assistant County Attorney, Minneapolis, Minnesota (for respondent)

Considered and decided by Worke, Presiding Judge; Cochran, Judge; and Bond, Judge.

**NONPRECEDENTIAL OPINION**

**WORKE**, Judge

Appellant challenges the district court's denial of his second petition for postconviction relief, arguing that the district court erred by concluding that appellant failed to show that newly discovered evidence could not have been obtained within the

two-year time limit. Appellant raises additional claims in his pro se supplemental brief. We affirm.

## FACTS

Appellant Rondell Russell Camp murdered S.P. Camp appealed his second-degree intentional-murder conviction, arguing, among other things, that respondent State of Minnesota failed to disprove his self-defense claim. In our opinion affirming Camp's conviction, we provided facts that are also relevant to the current postconviction appeal, and we recite them here. *See State v. Camp*, No. A18-0329, 2019 WL 272879 (Minn. App. Jan. 22, 2019), *rev. denied* (Minn. Mar. 19, 2019).

S.P. worked out of a residential garage as a mechanic. S.P. had worked on Camp's vehicles in the past. On January 29, 2017, Camp went to the garage. S.P. discovered an oil leak and asked Camp to return later so that S.P. could repair it. Later that day, S.P. contacted Camp and told him that he had enlisted another person to help repair the leak.

Camp returned late that afternoon. Soon after, a neighbor heard S.P. and another man arguing in the garage, and a witness saw Camp dragging himself along the ground, screaming for help and saying that somebody was trying to kill him. Camp's leg was injured, and he had blood on his body and clothing. Officers arrived at the garage and discovered S.P.'s lifeless body on the floor with a bloody wrench under his head, a loaded handgun on the passenger-side windshield of Camp's car, and a bloody knife on the ground near a wall.

At trial, a medical examiner opined that S.P. suffered a minimum of 29 incision injuries, including sharp-force injuries of a cutting, rather than stabbing nature, and a deep

incision on his neck. S.P. also had incision injuries to his fingers from a possible bite, and the frontal bones of his head were “completely pulpified by a blunt force injury.”

Camp testified that he acted in self-defense and that S.P. was alive when he left the garage. Camp testified that he pulled into the garage and asked S.P. where the other guy was who was going to fix the car. S.P. said that the guy was on his way. Camp asked S.P. to open the garage door so that he could leave. S.P. walked around the driver’s side, like he was going to open the garage door. Camp started the car, and when he looked up, he was struck in the head with an object, which turned out to be a gun. S.P. told Camp to get out of the car and lie face down on the ground. Camp lunged for the gun and grabbed S.P.’s wrist. Camp described a physical fight between him and S.P. After the fight, S.P. told Camp, “[T]hey’re going to come back for you and try to kill you. Don’t let them do like they did the rest.” Camp asked S.P. who wanted him dead but S.P. “kept shaking his head” and “repeating the same things.”

In determining that the evidence was sufficient to disprove Camp’s self-defense claim, we noted that the handgun was found nowhere near S.P.’s body and it did not have blood on it, though there was a significant amount of blood by S.P.’s body. *Id.* at \*5. And despite the lack of a firearm near S.P., Camp constantly attacked S.P. “at some point switch[ing] weapons, . . . causing 38 cutaneous groups of injuries [that] were devastating and effectively pulpified the frontal bones of S.P.’s head, rendering him unconscious.” *Id.*

In 2021, Camp filed his first petition for postconviction relief, challenging the district court’s decision to give the justifiable-taking-of-a-life jury instruction rather than the general self-defense instruction. The district court denied Camp’s petition because the

state established that Camp intentionally caused S.P.'s death. This court affirmed the district court's denial of Camp's petition, concluding that Camp failed to show that the result would have been different had counsel objected to the jury instruction because the jury found that Camp intended to cause S.P.'s death. *See Camp v. State*, No. A21-1312 (Minn. App. July 25, 2022), *rev. denied* (Minn. Oct. 18, 2022).

On March 6, 2025, Camp filed his second petition for postconviction relief, asserting that, since September 2024, three witnesses had come forward with evidence that S.P. had robbed or attempted to rob them. Camp also argued that law enforcement failed to investigate A.B. as an alternative perpetrator because he worked with S.P., was at the crime scene, and handled evidence.

At a hearing on the postconviction petition, two of the three witnesses testified. E.S. testified that he came forward about "a year ago" after he saw a social-media post that an "older guy was killed who was fixing a car." He recognized the victim's name because he lived in the area in late 2016 and S.P. had worked on E.S.'s car. E.S. had been referred to S.P. by a man named "Adam." When E.S. realized that S.P. had not done the work correctly, he returned to S.P. S.P. held a gun and yelled, "Give me the wallet. Give me the cash. I want it all." E.S. was in his vehicle, and he "ducked down and floored it." E.S. did not report the attempted robbery.

J.M. testified that, in early 2023, she saw a social-media post with a phone number for a law office that said, "if you knew something come forward." She came forward because the post mentioned "a mechanic on the street where [she] went to see a mechanic" in January 2017. She was referred to the mechanic by a man named "Adam." J.M. stated:

“I just remember pulling up and then them telling me to shut the car off and I shut it off and then I’m being pulled . . . but I couldn’t tell you step by step what happened. I just know I gave [S.P. and two other people] my money because they asked for it.” J.M. stated that S.P. had a gun, and she gave S.P. her money and he walked away without hurting her. J.M. did not report the robbery.

On November 10, 2025, the district court denied Camp’s petition because it determined that, although the witnesses were credible, the evidence could have been discovered at an earlier date. The district court further determined that Camp’s claim that law enforcement failed to investigate an alternative perpetrator was *Knaffla* barred. *See State v. Knaffla*, 243 N.W.2d 737, 741 (Minn. 1976). This appeal followed.

## DECISION

### *Postconviction Relief*

Camp argues that the district court should have granted his petition for postconviction relief because the newly discovered evidence showed that S.P. was the aggressor in the altercation between Camp and S.P. and law enforcement failed to investigate an alternative perpetrator.

This court reviews the denial of postconviction relief for an abuse of discretion. *Reed v. State*, 793 N.W.2d 725, 729 (Minn. 2010). A district court abuses its discretion when it “exercise[s] its discretion in an arbitrary or capricious manner, base[s] its ruling on an erroneous view of the law, or ma[kes] clearly erroneous factual findings.” *Id.* This court reviews a district court’s legal conclusions de novo and its findings of fact for clear error. *Greer v. State*, 836 N.W.2d 520, 522 (Minn. 2013).

A petition for postconviction relief may not be filed more than two years after an appellate court's disposition of a direct appeal. Minn. Stat. § 590.01, subd. 4(a)(2) (2024). The disposition of Camp's direct appeal occurred in 2019. His second petition filed in March 2025 is time barred unless it falls under an exception enumerated in Minn. Stat. § 590.01, subd. 4(b) (2024).

Camp argues that his petition falls under two exceptions to the statutory time bar—the newly-discovered-evidence and the interests-of-justice exceptions.

### ***Newly Discovered Evidence***

Camp first argues that the newly discovered evidence supports his self-defense claim because the evidence shows that S.P. was the aggressor.

Under the newly-discovered-evidence exception,

the petitioner alleges the existence of newly discovered evidence, including scientific evidence, that provides facts necessary to sustain one or more legally cognizable claims for postconviction relief, if such evidence could not have been ascertained by the exercise of due diligence by the petitioner or petitioner's attorney within the two-year time period for filing a postconviction petition, is not cumulative to evidence presented at trial, and is not for impeachment purposes.

*Id.*, subd. 4(b)(2).<sup>1</sup> All requirements must be satisfied to obtain relief. *Riley v. State*, 819 N.W.2d 162, 168 (Minn. 2012).

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<sup>1</sup> The district court and the parties analyzed the newly-discovered-evidence claim under an earlier version of the statute that required the petitioner to establish actual innocence. We do not need to review the district court's determination that Camp failed to establish that the evidence showed his innocence because Camp failed to meet the statutory requirement that he show that the evidence could not have been obtained within the two-year time period.

The district court determined that Camp was not entitled to relief because he was required to satisfy all requirements, *see id.*, and he failed to show that the evidence could not have been ascertained by the exercise of due diligence. We agree.

Camp murdered S.P. in 2017, and his conviction became final in 2019. In 2023, the witnesses responded to a social-media post. While the record does not show who created the social-media post or when it was made, it is undisputed that the social-media post occurred after the two-year time bar. It was Camp's burden to show that he could not have ascertained the evidence with the exercise of due diligence within the two-year time bar, but he has provided no explanation as to why he could not have made efforts to identify witnesses, including using social media before the two-year period elapsed. The district court noted that social media was well developed in 2017. We agree with the district court that "[t]he fact that no such post was made before trial or within the two-year time bar after the appeal order supports the conclusion that [Camp] was not duly diligent and this information could have been obtained within the two-year time bar."

Camp argues that the district court "unreasonably" construed the due-diligence requirement and that he is not expected to "magically divine the existence of unknown witnesses to uncharged and unreported crimes." But Camp introduced no evidence at the evidentiary hearing to show that he could not have discovered these witnesses sooner than 2023. And the district court's reasoning did not require Camp to "divine the existence of unknown witnesses" because after the 2023 social-media post, the witnesses came forward on their own. There is nothing in the record showing that the witnesses would not have come forward in the years between 2017 and 2023. Therefore, the district court did not

abuse its discretion by denying Camp’s petition because he failed to show that the evidence could not have been ascertained by the exercise of due diligence within the two-year time-bar for filing a petition.

### ***Interests of Justice***

Camp also argues that the district court should have granted his petition in the interests of justice because his due-process rights were violated when law enforcement failed to investigate an alternative perpetrator. *See* Minn. Stat. § 590.01, subd. 4(b)(5) (stating that a court may hear a postconviction petition if “the petitioner establishes to the satisfaction of the court that the petition is not frivolous and is in the interests of justice”). However, this claim is one that would have been known at the time of direct appeal or the first postconviction petition. *See Knaffla*, 243 N.W.2d at 741 (stating that when direct appeal has been taken, “all matters raised therein, and all claims known but not raised, will not be considered upon a subsequent petition for postconviction relief”). Therefore, the district court did not abuse its discretion by denying Camp’s second petition for postconviction relief.

### ***Pro se Brief***

In his pro se supplemental brief, Camp seeks to “highlight trial errors that . . . undermined the jury’s ability to determine . . . intent.”<sup>2</sup> Specifically, Camp claims that the jury’s extended deliberation demonstrated that it was confused about the law and did not

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<sup>2</sup> Under Minn. R. Crim. P. 28.02, subd. 5(17), a pro se supplemental brief is permitted in direct appeals when the defendant is represented by the state public defender’s office. Although there is no authority that permits a pro se supplemental brief in a postconviction appeal, because Camp’s pro se supplemental brief was accepted, we will address it.

understand the intent element. He also claims that his attorney was ineffective for failing to object to the prosecutor's statement that at some point intent "takes over."

Camp did not raise these claims in his postconviction petition. As such, these alleged trial-error issues were not considered by the district court in its consideration of the postconviction petition. "It is well settled that a party may not raise issues for the first time on appeal from denial of postconviction relief." *Azure v. State*, 700 N.W.2d 443, 447 (Minn. 2005) (quotation omitted). Because Camp failed to raise these issues in his postconviction petition, the issues are forfeited. *See id.*

**Affirmed.**