

Court of Appeals of the State of Georgia

ATLANTA, October 09, 2026

The Court of Appeals hereby passes the following order:

A27D0164. WAYLAND BRAXTON WILLIS v. HALEY CROWE.

In this action for modification of child support and visitation, the trial court entered its fifth temporary order awarding Haley Crowe sole physical custody of the child, suspending Wayland Braxton Willis's visitation until he submits to a drug screen, prohibiting Willis from posting pleadings or other information about the child custody proceedings online, and ordering Willis to pay attorney fees and undergo a psychological evaluation. The trial court reserved all other matters pending further order of the court. Willis has filed an application for discretionary appeal, challenging the award of attorney fees.

As Willis notes, OCGA § 5-6-35(a)(2) ordinarily requires an application for discretionary review in domestic relations cases, such as this one. The trial court's fifth temporary order, however, is interlocutory because the court explicitly reserved ruling on other matters.¹ For this reason, Willis was required to follow the

¹ We note that OCGA § 5-6-34(a)(11) authorizes direct appeals from judgments or orders "in child custody cases awarding, refusing to change, or modifying child custody." And custody rulings are directly appealable, even if interlocutory. *Brabant v. Patton*, 315 Ga. App. 711, 712-13 (728 SE2d 244) (2012). However, this Court looks to the specific issue raised on appeal to determine whether a party is entitled to a direct appeal under this provision. See *Voyles v. Voyles*, 301 Ga. 44, 47 (799 SE2d 160) (2017). Here, although the trial court's fifth temporary order addresses custody, Willis attacks only the entry of attorney fees against him. "Because custody is therefore not an issue on appeal in this domestic relations case under OCGA § 5-6-35(a)(2), it is not subject to a direct appeal pursuant to OCGA § 5-6-34(a)(11)." *Barnes v. Barnes*, 361

*I certify that the above is a true extract from
the minutes of the Court of Appeals of Georgia.*

Christina Coley Smith

Ga. App. 279, 281 (864 SE2d 119) (2021) (quotation marks omitted).