

Court of Appeals of the State of Georgia

ATLANTA, April 16, 2026

The Court of Appeals hereby passes the following order:

A26A1448. BATASKI BAILEY v. LAQUINTA N. CARTER.

A26A1485. RANDY HARLING, JR. v. LAQUINTA N. CARTER.

In these domestic relations proceedings, the trial court entered an order in March 2025, finding Randy Harling, Jr. (the “father”) in contempt. The court denied the father’s motion for new trial, and, on February 2, 2026, issued an order awarding the mother, Laquinta N. Carter, \$5,005 in OCGA § 9-15-14(b) attorney fees. In the February 2 order, the court found that the proceedings had been unnecessarily expanded by actions and omissions of the father and his former counsel, Bataski Bailey, ordering the father to pay \$2,505 of the award, and Bailey to pay \$2,500. The father and Bailey then each filed a direct appeal of the award, docketed as Case Nos. A26A1448 and A26A1485, respectively. We, however, lack jurisdiction.

Appeals from judgments or orders in domestic relations cases, including orders holding persons in contempt of such orders, must be initiated by filing an application for discretionary review. OCGA § 5-6-35(a)(2), (b); *Russo v. Manning*, 252 Ga. 155, 156 (312 SE2d 319) (1984). Additionally, appeals from orders awarding OCGA § 9-15-14 attorney fees also must be initiated by filing an application for discretionary review. OCGA § 5-6-35(a)(10), (b); *Capricorn Systems v. Godavarthy*, 253 Ga. App. 840, 841–42 (560 SE2d 730) (2002). “Compliance with the discretionary appeals procedure is jurisdictional.” *Smoak v. Dep’t of Human Res.*, 221 Ga. App. 257, 257 (471 SE2d 60) (1996).

Here, the father and Bailey failed to comply with the required discretionary

appeals procedure. Thus, these appeals are hereby DISMISSED for lack of jurisdiction.



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Clerk's Office, Atlanta, 04/16/2026

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

Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto affixed the day and year last above written.

Christina Bailey Smith

, Clerk.