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May 27, 2026

**VIA U.S. MAIL AND EMAIL**  
Hon. Jenny Abbott Kitchings  
Clerk of Court  
South Carolina Court of Appeals  
P.O. Box 11629  
Columbia, SC 29211  
[ctappfilings@sccourts.org](mailto:ctappfilings@sccourts.org)

Re: Wilson vs. Sumter County Sheriff's Office, et al.  
Case No. 2022-CP-43-728  
Notice of Appeal

Dear Clerk of Court Kitchings,

Enclosed for filing in the above-referenced matter please find:

1. Notice of Appeal;
2. Order Granting Defendants' Motion to Bifurcate;
3. Order Granting in Part and Denying in Part Plaintiff's Motion for Reconsideration;
4. Order Denying Plaintiff's Motion for Reconsideration; and
5. This firm's check in the amount of \$250.00.

Thank you for your assistance, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Regards,

s/Elliotte Quinn

Elliotte Quinn  
[equinn@steinberglawfirm.com](mailto:equinn@steinberglawfirm.com)  
843-720-2800

FEQ/mbc

Cc: (via e-filing)

The Honorable S. Bryan Doby  
Sumter County Clerk of Court

ELECTRONICALLY FILED - 2026 May 27 11:14 AM - SUMTER - COMMON PLEAS - CASE#2022CP4300728

(via U.S. mail and e-mail)

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Attorneys for Respondent

THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
In The Court of Appeals

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APPEAL FROM SUMTER COUNTY

Court of Common Pleas

R. Kirk Griffin, Circuit Court Judge

---

Case No. 2022-CP-43-728

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Jawana Wilson, as Personal  
Representative of the Estate  
of Janet Wilson,

Appellant

v.

Sumter County Sheriff's Office,

Respondent.

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NOTICE OF APPEAL

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Appellant Jawana Wilson, as Personal Representative of the Estate of Janet Wilson, appeals the December 15, 2025 Order Granting Motion to Bifurcate, the April 27, 2026 Order Granting in Part and Denying in Part Plaintiff's Motion for Reconsideration, and the May 5, 2026 Order Denying Plaintiff's Motion for Reconsideration. Appellant received written notice of the Court's decisions on her motions for reconsideration, made pursuant to Rule 59 of the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure, on April 27, 2026, and May 5, 2026, respectively. The orders are attached hereto.

May 27, 2026

s/Elliotte Quinn  
F. Elliotte Quinn IV  
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**Attorneys for Appellant**

Other Counsel of Record:

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Attorneys for Respondent

THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
In The Court of Appeals

APPEAL FROM SUMTER COUNTY  
Court of Common Pleas  
R. Kirk Griffin, Circuit Court Judge

Case No. 2022-CP-43-728

Jawana Wilson, as Personal Representative of the Estate of Janet Wilson, Appellant,

v.

Sumter County Sheriff's Office, Respondent.

PROOF OF SERVICE

I certify that I served the Notice of Appeal on the parties by depositing a copy of it in the United States Mail, postage prepaid, and by e-mail on May 27, 2026, addressed to Respondent's attorneys of record as follows:

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May 27, 2026

s/Elliotte Quinn  
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Attorneys for Appellant

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	)	
	)	IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
COUNTY OF SUMTER	)	THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
	)	
	)	
Jawana Wilson as Personal Representative of the Estate of Janet Wilson	)	
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	
	)	
v.	)	ORDER
	)	
	)	C/A NO. 2022-CP-43-00728
Sumter County Sheriff's Office	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

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This matter is before the Court pursuant to Rule 59 (e) SCRCF. The Plaintiff seeks an Order of this Court amending or altering its Order of December 15, 2025. A hearing on the motion for reconsideration was held via WebEx on March 11, 2026.

Having duly considered the motion for bifurcation, this Court has determined the motion for reconsideration of the bifurcation order shall be granted in part and denied in part. The Order of December 15, 2025 is vacated and replaced by this Order. While the December 15, 2025, Order is vacated, the Court finds bifurcation of the employment related causes of action is warranted solely because of danger of unfair prejudice to the Defendant.

The issue of prejudice conclusively weighs in favor of bifurcation. Even when the other factors listed in Rule 42(b) would otherwise be served by not bifurcating, a court still abuses its discretion in failing to bifurcate when inevitable prejudice to a party would result such that the party cannot receive a fair trial on a claim. *See Dixon v. CSX Transp., Inc.*, 990 F.2d 1440, 1445 (4th Cir. 1993).

One major source of prejudice if the claims and issues are tried together is the fact that much of the evidence relevant to the employment-related claims and issues would be likely inadmissible in a trial relating only to a single vehicle accident. *See, e.g., Dawson v. Prince George's Cty.*, 896 F. Supp. 537, 540 (D. Md. 1995) (ordering bifurcation in a police case also involving municipal liability based, in part, on the conflict between the admissibility of prior acts for purposes of municipal liability but not against the individual officers under Rule 404(b) and noting that the best way to avoid this conflict is to bifurcate).

Such evidence would also run the risk of inflaming the jury, which favors separate trials. *Mardell v. Harleysville Life Ins. Co.*, 65 F.3d 1072, 1074 n.2 (3d Cir. 1995) (finding “bifurcation may sometimes be advisable as a vehicle to insure that . . . evidence not be improperly used during the liability phase”); *Laitram Corp. v. Hewlett-Packard Co.*, 791 F. Supp. 113, 116 (E.D. La. 1992) (a jury having to potentially consider evidence that may be admissible on only one issue is a factor supporting bifurcation). This is exactly the kind of prejudice the rule is intended to avoid. *See, e.g., State v. Hawes*, 423 S.C. 118, 129, 813 S.E.2d 513, 519 (Ct. App. 2018) (“Unfair prejudice means an undue tendency to suggest a decision on an improper basis.”). Courts have recognized that the type of evidence that would be inadmissible under Rule 404(b), SCRE, relating to prior bad acts is inadmissible for a reason—it has “the potential to be exceedingly prejudicial.” *Magnolia N. Prop. Owners' Ass'n, Inc. v. Heritage Communities, Inc.*, 397 S.C. 348, 360, 725 S.E.2d 112, 119 (Ct. App. 2012). The evidence relating to Deputy West’s employment history is the kind of evidence that would likely be inadmissible under Rule 404(b). Therefore, such evidence would be “exceedingly prejudicial” to the Defendant if the claims and issues are tried together.

This Court makes no findings or conclusions as to the mode of trial beyond granting the Defendant's motion for bifurcation. The mode of trial is left to the sound discretion of the presiding trial judge. Rule 611. SCRE.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

Sumter, South Carolina

April \_\_\_\_\_, 2026

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R. Kirk Griffin  
Judge, Third Judicial Circuit



Sumter Common Pleas

**Case Caption:** Jawana Wilson, As Pr Of The Estate Of Janet Wilson VS Sumter  
County Sheriff'S Office  
**Case Number:** 2022CP4300728  
**Type:** Order/Other

So Ordered

s/ R. Kirk Griffin 2768

Electronically signed on 2026-04-24 15:55:20 page 4 of 4

ELECTRONICALLY FILED - 2026 MAY 27 8:57 AM - SUMTER - COMMON PLEAS - CASE#2022CP4300728

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
 )  
COUNTY OF SUMTER )  
  
Jawana Wilson, as Personal )  
Representative of the Estate of Janet )  
Wilson, )  
 )  
Plaintiff, )  
 )  
v. )  
 )  
Sumter County Sheriff's Office, )  
 )  
Defendant. )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

C/A #: 22-CP-43-00728

**ORDER GRANTING  
MOTION TO BIFURCATE**

This matter came before the Court on Defendant's Motion to Bifurcate pursuant to Rule 42(b) SCRCF. The Court heard arguments on this matter on September 23, 2025. Wilson Jackson appeared for Plaintiff and David Morrison and Steven Spreuwers appeared for Defendant. After reviewing the parties' submissions and hearing arguments from counsel, the Court hereby **GRANTS** Defendant's motion to bifurcate because, in this contested liability case, it would be in judicial economy for the jury to determine the total verdict amount before determining whether there are multiple occurrences of negligence under the Tort Claim Act. The jury could award less than the statutory cap for the value of the decedent's life, which would prevent the jury from hearing several days of testimony related to negligent hiring, training, and retention. Also, the Court finds that due to the nature of the allegations surrounding Deputy West's employment history, trying these causes of action along with the negligence causes of action would unduly prejudice the Defendant.

**IT IS ORDERED**

This the \_\_\_\_\_ day of December, 2025, at \_\_\_\_\_, South Carolina.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Honorable R. Kirk Griffin



Sumter Common Pleas

**Case Caption:** Jawana Wilson, As Pr Of The Estate Of Janet Wilson VS Sumter  
County Sheriff'S Office  
**Case Number:** 2022CP4300728  
**Type:** Order/Bifurcate

So Ordered

s/ R. Kirk Griffin 2768

FORM 4

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF Sumter  
IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

JUDGMENT IN A CIVIL CASE

CASE NO. 2022CP4300728

Jawana Wilson, As Pr Of The Estate Of Janet Wilson  
PLAINTIFF(S)

Sumter County Sheriff'S Office  
DEFENDANT(S)

DISPOSITION TYPE (CHECK ONE)

- JURY VERDICT.** This action came before the court for a trial by jury. The issues have been tried and a verdict rendered.
- DECISION BY THE COURT.** This action came to trial or hearing before the court. The issues have been tried or heard and a decision rendered.
- ACTION DISMISSED (CHECK REASON):**  Rule 12(b), SCRPC;  Rule 41(a), SCRPC (Vol. Nonsuit);  Rule 43(k), SCRPC (Settled);  Other
- ACTION STRICKEN (CHECK REASON):**  Rule 40(j), SCRPC;  Bankruptcy;  Binding arbitration, subject to right to restore to confirm, vacate or modify arbitration award;  Other
- STAYED DUE TO BANKRUPTCY**
- DISPOSITION OF APPEAL TO THE CIRCUIT COURT (CHECK APPLICABLE BOX):**  Affirmed;  Reversed;  Remanded;  Other

NOTE: ATTORNEYS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR NOTIFYING LOWER COURT, TRIBUNAL, OR ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY OF THE CIRCUIT COURT RULING IN THIS APPEAL.

IT IS ORDERED AND ADJUDGED:  See attached order (formal order to follow)  Statement of Judgment by the Court:

Plaintiff filed a Motion for Reconsideration of the Court's order dated April 27, 2026. After consideration of the motion and the prior order, the order is ratified and reconfirmed. Plaintiff's Motion for Reconsideration is respectfully denied.

ORDER INFORMATION

This order  ends  does not end the case.  See Page 2 for additional information.

For Clerk of Court Office Use Only

This judgment was electronically entered by the Clerk of Court as reflected on the Electronic Time Stamp, and a copy mailed first class to any party not proceeding in the Electronic Filing System on 05/05/2026 .

NAMES OF TRADITIONAL FILERS SERVED BY MAIL

**Court Reporter:**

**E-Filing Note:** The date of Entry of Judgment is the same date as reflected on the Electronic File Stamp and the clerk's entering of the date of judgment above is not required in those counties. The clerk will mail a copy of the judgment to parties who are not E-Filers or who are appearing pro se. See Rule 77(d), SCRCP.

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Sumter Common Pleas

**Case Caption:** Jawana Wilson, As Pr Of The Estate Of Janet Wilson VS Sumter  
County Sheriff'S Office  
**Case Number:** 2022CP4300728  
**Type:** Order/Electronic Form 4

So Ordered

s/ R. Kirk Griffin 2768

Electronically signed on 2026-05-05 09:53:24 page 3 of 3

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