

Sep 17 2026

S.C. SUPREME COURT

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Appellate Case No. 2026-001200

Regina Ford,
Petitioner,

v.

Zack Alleyne,
Respondent.

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

Petitioner Regina Ford, appearing without counsel, respectfully petitions the Supreme Court of South Carolina for a writ of certiorari under Rule 242, SCACR, to review the Court of Appeals' dismissal of her civil appeal and its August 18, 2026 order denying rehearing.

QUESTIONS PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

1. Whether the Court of Appeals erred in dismissing Petitioner's appeal for failure to pay the appellate filing fee after Petitioner repeatedly sought relief from the fee, advised the court that she was financially unable to pay it, and requested leave to proceed in forma pauperis or other fee relief authorized by Rule 240(d), SCACR.
2. Whether the Court of Appeals should have reinstated the appeal where the procedural dismissal prevented merits review of Petitioner's preserved challenge to an ejectment judgment based on alleged nonpayment of November rent, although Petitioner maintained that the November rent was paid or timely tendered and sought to present payment records and other evidence disputing the asserted basis for ejectment.
3. Whether, under the circumstances reflected in the appellate record, dismissal without merits review despite Petitioner's continuing efforts to prosecute the appeal presents a substantial due process and access-to-courts issue warranting discretionary review under Rule 242(b), SCACR.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Petitioner operated a business from commercial office space at 392 West Evans Street, Florence, South Carolina. The underlying landlord-tenant dispute and ejectment concerned that commercial property.

Petitioner did not rent her current residential address from Respondent Zack Alleyne. That residence is associated with Petitioner's mother, and Petitioner relocated there to assist with her mother's care. It should not be identified as the premises involved in the underlying commercial eviction proceeding.

The underlying ejectment action was based on alleged nonpayment of rent. Petitioner consistently maintained that the November rent identified in the ejectment matter was paid or timely tendered and that broader allegations that she had missed multiple rental payments were contradicted by payment records, communications, and the parties' course of dealing.

Petitioner also disputed the fairness of the proceedings because she understood that she was defending an allegation concerning November nonpayment, while substantial emphasis was later placed on historical payment issues from prior years. Her appellate filings sought leave to

supplement the record with payment records, emails, text messages, lease communications, photographs, and other evidence.

Petitioner previously objected in writing that an eviction filing used the wrong property address and that notice was delivered to an address other than the commercial premises she occupied. Petitioner contends Respondent knew the commercial tenancy was at 392 West Evans Street and knew she later relocated away from that office.

The Florence County Court of Common Pleas entered judgment on May 12, 2026, in Case No. 2026CP2100023, affirming the magistrate court ruling. Petitioner sought review in the South Carolina Court of Appeals, Appellate Case No. 2026-001200.

On May 26, 2026, the Court of Appeals granted a temporary stay and remanded for an expedited determination concerning stay and bond conditions. In the same order, the Court of Appeals denied Petitioner's request to proceed in forma pauperis and required the appellate filing fee to be paid within fifteen days.

Petitioner did not abandon the appeal. She continued communicating with the Court of Appeals concerning the filing fee, sought additional time, sought reinstatement, and renewed her request to proceed in forma pauperis or otherwise obtain fee relief.

On July 15, 2026, the Court of Appeals dismissed the appeal. On July 16 and July 17, 2026, Petitioner filed a motion to reinstate and a request to proceed in forma pauperis. The Court of Appeals expressly construed those filings as a petition for rehearing.

On August 18, 2026, the Court of Appeals denied rehearing.

Petitioner is no longer occupying 392 West Evans Street and does not seek restoration of possession. She seeks appellate review of the ejectment judgment because she contends the judgment should not have been entered and because the eviction record has continuing collateral consequences.

Those consequences are not limited to one type of tenancy. Petitioner states that the eviction record has affected, and is capable of continuing to affect, both commercial renting or leasing and residential renting or leasing. Petitioner seeks meaningful review so that the underlying record accurately reflects the commercial tenancy, the payment evidence, the address issue, and the procedural history.

Petitioner's current mailing address is 703 A Mechanics Street, Florence, South Carolina 29506. That address was not rented from Respondent and was not the commercial premises involved in the ejectment. The commercial premises at issue were 392 West Evans Street.

Petitioner does not present the address clarification as a new standalone question for certiorari review. The questions presented remain limited to the issues raised in the Court of Appeals and in the rehearing or reinstatement proceedings.

This petition is timely. The Court of Appeals denied rehearing on August 18, 2026. Under Rules 242(c) and 263(a), SCACR, the date of the triggering event is excluded and the thirtieth day is September 17, 2026. Petitioner is filing this petition on September 17, 2026.

REASONS THE WRIT SHOULD BE GRANTED

I. The dismissal prevented merits review despite Petitioner's repeated efforts to obtain authorized fee relief.

Rule 240(d), SCACR, permits an appellate court in an extraordinary case to relieve a party from paying a filing fee. Petitioner's filings repeatedly advised the Court of Appeals that she lacked the present ability to pay and sought extensions, reinstatement, and fee relief rather than abandoning the appeal.

The appeal was dismissed before the Court of Appeals considered the merits. Petitioner's position is not that every civil litigant has an unconditional right to a free appeal. The narrower issue is whether dismissal should remain the final disposition where the record reflected continuing attempts to prosecute the appeal and repeated requests for relief contemplated by the appellate rules.

II. The procedural dismissal prevented review of Petitioner's preserved challenge to the factual basis for ejectment.

The ejectment action was based on nonpayment. Petitioner maintained that the November rent identified in the action was paid or timely tendered and sought to present records disputing nonpayment and the characterization of her payment history.

Petitioner also maintained that the proceedings expanded beyond the November allegation to historical payment issues for which she had not prepared the same documentary response. Her appellate motions sought leave to supplement the record with the evidence she contended was necessary to address those issues.

Because the appeal was dismissed on the filing-fee issue, the Court of Appeals never determined whether the ejectment judgment should stand in light of those preserved arguments.

III. The appellate record reflects diligence rather than abandonment.

Petitioner filed the appeal, sought emergency relief, responded to the fee requirement, requested additional time, sought in forma pauperis or extraordinary fee relief, and promptly sought reinstatement after dismissal. The August 18 order confirms that Petitioner filed a motion to reinstate and a request to proceed in forma pauperis on July 16 and July 17, 2026.

Those acts demonstrate an intent to obtain appellate review. The procedural history therefore presents a question about access to review, not voluntary abandonment of the appeal.

IV. The judgment continues to have commercial and residential consequences even though Petitioner has already vacated the office.

Petitioner does not seek possession of 392 West Evans Street. She seeks review of a judgment that remains part of the public court record and that she states has already affected her ability to rent or lease property. The consequences extend to both commercial and residential renting or leasing. These continuing effects support the need for meaningful appellate review of whether the appeal should have been dismissed before the merits were considered.

RELIEF REQUESTED

Petitioner respectfully requests that the Supreme Court grant the petition for writ of certiorari, review the Court of Appeals' dismissal and denial of rehearing or reinstatement, and grant appropriate relief, including vacating the procedural dismissal and remanding the matter for merits consideration of Petitioner's appeal.

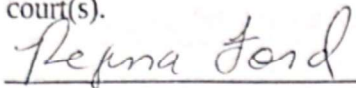
Respectfully submitted,

Regina Ford, Self-Represented Petitioner
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Date: September 17, 2026

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION AND NOTICE REGARDING SERVICE

I certify that on September 17, 2026, I transmitted a true and correct copy of this Petition for Writ of Certiorari by e-mail to Respondent Zack Alleyne at the e-mail address used for him in prior appellate court correspondence, by copying him on the filing e-mail to the appellate court(s).



Regina Ford
Self-Represented Petitioner