THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

In The Court of Appeals

APPEAL FROM RICHLAND COUNTY

Court of Common Pleas

Daniel Coble, Circuit Court Judge

Case No. 2025-CP-40-06986

Appellate Case No. 2026-000774

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SC Court of Appeals

Brandi Barnett and Kevin Rubink, Plaintiffs,

v.

Luke Shealey, Brian Shealey, and Shealey Law Firm, LLC, Defendants,

of which Brandi Barnett is the Appellant and Luke Shealey is the Respondent.

PROPOSED ORDER GRANTING TARGETED REDACTION AND LIMITED SEALING

This matter is before the Court on Appellant Brandi N. Barnett's Motion for Targeted Redaction and Limited Sealing of Barnett-Specific Confidential Information and Request for Interim Sealed Treatment. The Court has reviewed the motion, memorandum, Appellant's Affidavit contained in the public motion package, public Exhibit A, Sealed Exhibit B, the proposed public replacement pages contained in Exhibit C, the Record on Appeal, the current public-docket status identified in the motion, and the applicable authorities.

The Court recognizes the strong presumption of public access to judicial records and Appellant's burden under Ex parte Capital U-Drive-It, Inc., 369 S.C. 1, 630 S.E.2d 464 (2006), Davis v. Jennings, 304 S.C. 502, 405 S.E.2d 601 (1991), Rule 41.1, SCRCP, and Order No. 2014-04-15-02. The Court further finds that targeted redaction, rather than wholesale sealing, is the least restrictive means adequate to protect the interests identified below.

FINDINGS

1. The complete unredacted Record will remain available to the Court and the parties. The requested relief concerns only public-facing access and does not alter the evidentiary Record.

2. The litigants are private persons and entities. The collateral passages targeted by the motion have no independent historical significance, while the public retains a substantial interest in the legal rulings, fee and refund evidence, Rule 1.5 analysis, sanctions issues, procedural history, and the Court's reasoning.

3. Portions of the targeted material have previously been publicly available. Prior availability does not render prospective relief ineffective because continued court-hosted availability creates an ongoing opportunity for indexing, copying, and redistribution from an official source. Prospective redaction can materially reduce that continuing dissemination even if it cannot retrieve every prior copy.

4. The Rule 41.1 factors, considered individually and collectively, favor the passage-specific relief granted below. The fair-hearing and witness-cooperation factors are neutral because the complete unredacted Record remains available to the Court and parties. The confidentiality, harm, alternatives, and public-interest factors favor narrow redaction rather than broader sealing.

5. R. p. 23, Finding 2: the specific charge-list detail is unnecessary to public understanding of the appeal. The public copy shall preserve Finding 2 and substitute a neutral redaction notation for the charge-list narrative.

6. R. p. 24, Finding 5: the public copy shall preserve the general representation scope and redact only the collateral criminal, private-financial, law-enforcement, and nonparty detail identified in Exhibit A.

7. R. p. 24, Finding 7: the public copy shall preserve the conference/referral context and redact only the collateral law-enforcement and private-financial detail identified in Exhibit A.

8. R. p. 25, Finding 12: the public copy shall preserve Finding 12 and substitute a neutral notation for the Barnett-specific private-financial narrative.

9. R. p. 25, Finding 13: the public copy shall preserve Finding 13 and substitute a neutral notation for the collateral personal and financial narrative.

10. R. p. 155: the public copy shall preserve the investigator's identity, assigned-member role, persons interviewed, review process, stated focus on time and complexity, and general criminal-representation context. It may redact only the specific confidential-document/disciplinary submission detail and the detailed collateral criminal/nonparty background identified in Exhibit A.

11. R. p. 156: preserve the quoted fee, amount paid, general representation scope, referral/conference context, termination, refund offer, and short-duration fee rationale. Redact only the specific charge list and expungement-offense detail, former-location detail, exact third-party payment detail, asserted law-enforcement interest, and collateral nonparty/private-financial detail identified in Exhibit A.

12. R. p. 157: the public copy shall redact only the opening collateral personal characterization and exact third-party payment reference. The Rule 1.5(a) and Rule 1.5(f) discussion shall remain public in full.

13. No redaction is granted as to R. p. 158, R. p. 30, R. p. 31, R. p. 198, or the Court's dispositive legal holdings.

ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Appellant's motion is GRANTED to the limited extent stated above. The Clerk may substitute the approved public redacted pages from Exhibit C for the corresponding public-facing pages R. pp. 23-25 and 155-157. The complete unredacted pages submitted as Sealed Exhibit B shall remain available to the Court and the parties and shall not be publicly accessible. If a particular passage-specific redaction cannot be implemented without revealing protected content through context, only that particular page

may remain under limited seal pending further order. All other portions of the appellate file remain public except information independently subject to mandatory redaction.

BY THE COURT:

_____

Judge, South Carolina Court of Appeals

Date: _____

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