

Affirmed and Memorandum Opinion filed December 23, 2025.



In The

Fourteenth Court of Appeals

NO. 14-24-00782-CV

STACIE ANN SHAKIR, Appellant

V.

PROCOLLECT, INC., Appellee

**On Appeal from the County Civil Court at Law No. 4
Harris County, Texas
Trial Court Cause No. 1228044**

MEMORANDUM OPINION

Stacie Ann Shakir appeals the trial court's final judgment, which ordered she take nothing on her various credit reporting claims against ProCollect, Inc. and ordered her to pay ProCollect's attorney's fees upon a finding of bad faith under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (FDCPA) and the Texas Debt Collection Act (TDCA). Shakir originally sued ProCollect in justice court and then filed an appeal from the justice court's judgment with the county civil court at law, which issued the final judgment now being appealed. In two issues, Shakir raises several

complaints regarding the lower courts' rulings and alleges the lower court judges violated canons of judicial conduct. Finding no reversible error, we affirm.

Background

Shakir initiated this lawsuit by filing a small claims petition in justice court. She stated claims against ProCollect for common law fraud, fraudulent misrepresentation, fraudulent use and possession, breach of contract, identity theft, and non-authorized disclosure of address, all stemming from alleged debt collection and reporting activities. Ultimately, the justice court dismissed the case for want of prosecution. Shakir then appealed that ruling to the county civil court at law. In the appeal, Shakir asserted that the evidence had demonstrated ProCollect's "guilt," and she raised numerous complaints regarding the conduct of the justice of the peace during the proceedings. In her prayer, Shakir requested that the justice court dismissal be overturned and that she be awarded "relief under the Deceptive Trade Practices Act, the Texas Fair Collections Act, and the Civil Tort law for Disclosure of the Plaintiff's identifying information."

ProCollect also raised several counterclaims, including alleging Shakir's claims were brought in bad faith and for the purpose of harassment, "as there is no basis in fact or law for Plaintiff's claims." On that basis, ProCollect sought to recover its attorney's fees pursuant to both Texas Finance Code section 392.403(c) and 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3)). Shakir subsequently filed a motion for sanctions but did not obtain a ruling from the county court on the motion.

The county court conducted a bench trial, during which there were only two witnesses—Shakir and ProCollect's general counsel. Shakir appeared for trial via Zoom. The trial record does not contain any exhibits offered by Shakir but does contain exhibits offered by ProCollect, including declarations of amounts owed by Shakir to two apartment complexes, rental applications, lease agreements,

assignments of claims, and a ledger of charges and payments. At the conclusion of the trial, the county court entered judgment favoring ProCollect, ordering Shakir take nothing on her claims and awarding ProCollect it's attorney's fees pursuant to the FDCPA and TDCA.

Discussion

We begin by noting that Shakir has represented herself pro se in the trial court and in this appeal. Pro se litigants and appellants are held to the same standards as licensed attorneys and must comply with applicable laws and procedures. *E.g.*, *Rogers v. City of Hous.*, 627 S.W.3d 777, 786 n.1 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 2021, no pet.).

As mentioned above, Shakir raises two issues, under which she makes numerous arguments. We will group these complaints into the following categories for discussion purposes: (1) complaints against the justice court, (2) allegations against ProCollect, (3) alleged violations of the canons of judicial conduct, and (4) other complaints regarding the county court.

Complaints Against Justice Court

Shakir raises several complaints regarding the justice court proceedings, including alleging that the justice of the peace should have recused himself, violated her civil rights, failed to apply justice, obstructed justice by refusing to allow her to speak in court, entered illegal eviction judgments in other cases, and refused to allow the case to go to trial. As explained above, however, after the justice court dismissed Shakir's claims for want of prosecution, she appealed to the county court for a trial de novo. *See* Tex. R. Civ. P. 506.3 ("The case must be tried de novo in the county court."). "A trial de novo is a new trial in which the entire case is presented as if there had been no previous trial." *Id.* Once Shakir perfected

her appeal to the county court, the justice court’s judgment was vacated and annulled, and the county court heard the case de novo, i.e. “as if there had been no previous trial.” *See Gioffredi v. Retreat at Riverstone*, No. 01-21-00627-CV, 2022 WL 17981570, at *6 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] Dec. 29, 2022, pet. denied) (mem. op.); *Praise Deliverance Church v. Jelinis, LLC*, 536 S.W.3d 849, 854 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] 2017, pet. denied). Any non-jurisdictional errors or irregularities in the justice court therefore became a nullity, and any challenge based on such errors or irregularities is moot. *See Gioffredi*, 2022 WL 17981570, at *6; *see also Stevenson v. Hous. Auth. of the City of Aus.*, 385 S.W.3d 684, 687 (Tex. App.—El Paso 2012, no pet.) (holding appellant’s complaint that justice court violated his due process rights was moot in light of trial de novo on appeal in county court at law). We do not have jurisdiction to decide moot issues. *See Heckman v. Williamson Cty.*, 369 S.W.3d 137, 162 (Tex. 2012). We therefore overrule Shakir’s two issues to the extent they complain regarding proceedings in the justice court.

Allegations Against ProCollect

Next, we note that Shakir’s brief contains numerous allegations against ProCollect. These include allegations that it “had an unverified business attempting to collect on a false debt”; committed “cyber stalking, tampering with computer, home lights turning off and on though the bill was paid, lying under oath, participating in the removal of certain words transcribed during trial, breaching [Shakir’s] home and Identity Theft”; refused to provide documents to Shakir during trial; “collections harassment, violations of the FDCPA, FCRA and the RDCPA”; “continued to report on [Shakir’s] credit file without verifying or sending the debt information to her”; and participated “in a scam network that has filed . . . false judgments.”

To the extent she intended to raise challenges to the sufficiency of the evidence regarding these allegations—she did assert the county court erred in not ruling in her favor on certain allegations—she does not expressly state a sufficiency challenge, cite relevant authority, cite to the reporter’s record of the trial in support, or offer any analysis of the evidence beyond stating the allegations against ProCollect. *See* Tex. R. App. P. 38.1(i) (requiring that appellate briefs “must contain a clear and concise argument for the contentions made, with appropriate citations to authorities and to the record”); *see also Rogers*, 627 S.W.3d at 787 (declining to make party’s argument for him).

While Shakir does cite to her motion for sanctions and the exhibits she attached thereto, those items were not in evidence at trial and therefore are not relevant to any sufficiency challenge. To the extent she intended to appeal the trial court’s failure to award her sanctions, she did not preserve this issue in the trial court by obtaining a ruling from the court or bringing her motion to the attention of the court to obtain a ruling. *See* Tex. R. App. P. 33.1(a) (providing that to preserve a complaint for appeal, a party must either obtain a ruling on his request, objection, or motion, or lodge an objection to the trial court’s refusal to rule); *Berry v. Covarrubias*, No. 14-03-01137-CV, 2004 WL 1631117, at *7 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] July 22, 2004, no pet.) (mem. op.).¹ Moreover, she again does not offer argument or citation to authority regarding any such contention concerning sanctions. *See* Tex. R. App. P. 38.1(i); *Rogers*, 627 S.W.3d at 787. We overrule Shakir’s two issues to the extent they raise allegations against ProCollect.

¹ At the conclusion of the trial, Shakir told the judge, “I wanted to request sanctions on the defendant.” The judge then informed Shakir that she (the judge) did not “have a document requesting sanctions.” Shakir asked if it would be okay if she submitted a document later, and the judge responded, “No. The trial is completed.” Shakir does not allege any error in regard to this exchange. The record does not demonstrate that Shakir ever obtained a ruling on the motion for sanctions she did file or bring the motion to the court’s attention for a ruling.

Alleged Violations of the Canons

Next, Shakir asserts that the county court violated certain provisions in the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct, including canons 2 (requiring that a judge avoid “[i]mpropriety and the [a]pppearance of [i]mpropriety”) and 3B(2) (requiring that a “judge should be faithful to the law and shall maintain professional competence in it.”). Tex. Code Jud. Conduct, Canons 2, 3B(2), *reprinted in* Tex. Gov’t Code, tit. 2, subtit. G, app. B. However, “mere violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct, alone, do not constitute reversible error.” *Kemp v. State*, 846 S.W.2d 289, 305 (Tex. Crim. App. 1992); *see also Merritt v. Davis*, 331 S.W.3d 857, 863 (Tex. App.—Dallas 2011, pet. denied) (quoting *Kemp*). The code is designed to provide guidance to judges and “to provide a structure for regulating conduct through the State Commission on Judicial Conduct”; it does not provide standards for appellate review. Tex. Code Jud. Conduct, Canon 8(A); *see also Merritt*, 331 S.W.3d at 863. To the extent Shakir’s second issue relies on the canons of judicial conduct to allege error, we overrule it.

Other Complaints

Lastly, we turn to Shakir’s more concrete complaints regarding the county court proceedings. These complaints include that (1) language was either missing or changed in the reporter’s record from the trial; (2) ProCollect’s trial exhibits were never entered into evidence; (3) the trial judge stated she was dismissing ProCollect’s counterclaim but then granted judgment on the counterclaim; (4) the county court improperly denied declaratory or injunctive relief; (5) the county court violated Shakir’s constitutional and civil rights, obstructed justice, and committed criminal negligence; and (6) she was improperly denied the removal of identifying information from credit files. We will address each contention in turn.

Missing or altered language. As stated, Shakir first contends that language

was either missing or changed in the reporter's record of the trial. Specifically, she asserts that the record does not include the trial judge's statements at the beginning of the trial, and she insists the record substitutes the word "recording" for her use of the word "reporting" at several points. Shakir does not cite or offer any proof that what she says is accurate. Moreover, even if she is correct regarding the record, she does not suggest that it had any substantive impact on the outcome of the case or her ability to bring this appeal, and we do not discern any way in which it could have mattered. We may not reverse a trial court's judgment unless harm resulted from the alleged error. *See* Tex. R. App. P. 44.1(a) (providing that no civil judgment may be reversed on appeal unless the error complained of either probably caused the rendition of an improper judgment or prevented the appellant from properly presenting the case on appeal); *Wendt v. Moore*, No. 14-22-00263-CV, 2024 WL 4456965, at *13 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] Oct. 10, 2024, pet. denied); *Saba Zi Expl., L.P. v. Vaughn*, 448 S.W.3d 123, 130 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 2014, no pet.).

ProCollect's exhibits. Next, Shakir complains that ProCollect's exhibits were never admitted into evidence. However, the reporter's record clearly shows that the trial court indeed admitted the exhibits during trial. This argument therefore has no merit.

ProCollect's counterclaim. Shakir further asserts the trial judge improperly changed her ruling on ProCollect's counterclaim, when she stated at trial she was dismissing the counterclaim but then subsequently granted a written judgment on the counterclaim. This argument pertains to ProCollect's request for its attorney's fees due to Shakir bringing her claims in bad faith and for the purpose of harassment. Shakir does not cite to any place in the trial record where the court stated any ruling on this request, and we have discovered no such ruling in our

review of the record. The premise of this argument therefore appears to be incorrect. Accordingly, we find no merit in it.

Declaratory and injunctive relief. Next, Shakir contends that the county court improperly denied her declaratory and injunctive relief. Shakir does not cite to any place in the record, and we have not found any, where she requested either of the lower courts to grant her declaratory relief. Although she requested a restraining order in the prayer of her petition in justice court, she has not cited to any place in the record, and we have not found any, where she requested injunctive relief in the county court. As discussed above, upon her appeal to the county court, the justice court proceedings became moot. *See, e.g., Gioffredi*, 2022 WL 17981570, at *6; *Stevenson*, 385 S.W.3d at 687. Additionally, to the extent Shakir did request injunctive relief in the county court, she does not cite any support in the record or make any cogent argument supporting her contention that the trial court erred in failing to provide her with such relief. *See* Tex. R. App. P. 38.1(i) (requiring appellate briefs “must contain a clear and concise argument for the contentions made, with appropriate citations to authorities and to the record”); *Rogers*, 627 S.W.3d at 787 (declining to make party’s argument for him).

Constitutional rights and removal of identifying information. Lastly, Shakir asserts that the county court violated her constitutional and civil rights, obstructed justice, committed criminal negligence, and improperly denied the removal of identifying information from her credit files. These conclusory complaints are inadequately briefed. Shakir does not cite to the record—except for citations to her motion for sanctions, which was not ruled on or brought to the court’s attention; does not cite relevant authority beyond a few boilerplate law citations; and does not provide sufficient argument in support of these assertions. Accordingly, we find no merit in them. *See* Tex. R. App. P. 38.1(i); *Rogers*, 627

S.W.3d at 787.

Conclusion

We overrule Shakir's two issues and affirm the trial court's judgment.

/s/ Maritza M. Antú
Justice

Panel consists of Justices Jewell, McLaughlin, and Antú.