

Circuit Court for Baltimore County  
Case No. C-03-FM-22-004939

UNREPORTED\*  
IN THE APPELLATE COURT  
OF MARYLAND

No. 892

September Term, 2025

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AMENEH M. ARASTEH

v.

MICHAEL ARASTEH

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Nazarian,  
Arthur,  
Sharer, J. Frederick  
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

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Opinion by Arthur, J.

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Filed: June 9, 2026

\* This is an unreported opinion. This opinion may not be cited as precedent within the rule of stare decisis. It may be cited for its persuasive value only if the citation conforms to Rule 1-104(a)(2)(B).

In connection with a judgment of absolute divorce, the Circuit Court for Baltimore County ordered appellee Michael Arasteh (“Husband”) to pay a monetary award in the amount of \$70,000.00 to appellant Amaneh Arasteh (“Wife”). Wife noted an appeal. In her informal brief, she presents three questions for review:

1. Whether the Circuit Court erred by failing to consider and divide all marital assets as part of the monetary award.
2. Whether the Circuit Court abused its discretion in determining the value of marital property and calculating the monetary award.
3. Whether the Circuit Court failed to provide due process and a fair hearing in accordance with Maryland Rule 2-311(f).

For the reasons stated below, we shall affirm.

### **FACTUAL AND PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND**

The parties were married in a civil ceremony on March 16, 1993. They had a religious ceremony of marriage on June 27, 1993. They separated in August 2022. Husband filed a complaint for divorce a month later.

Before trial, the parties submitted a joint statement of marital property. The parties agreed that the majority of their assets were marital property. The parties appear to have disagreed only that certain jewelry and rugs were marital property. However, they both valued the jewelry at \$50,000 and the rugs at \$100,000.

The parties provided limited testimony concerning their various assets. Husband testified that he owned an undeveloped lot worth \$24,700.00 and that he had bank accounts, as well as two retirement accounts worth \$440,000 and \$30,000. Husband stated that the jewelry and rugs were given to the parties as wedding gifts. Wife asserted

that the jewelry and rugs were not wedding gifts, but were instead gifts to her from her parents or an inheritance.

Wife testified that, at the religious ceremony, Husband had promised to pay her a dowry of 600 gold coins. Wife explained that, “in Islam, you can ask for that dowry anytime, even during your marriage. But if you want to get divorced, definitely you need to get it.” She testified that Husband had never paid her dowry and that he “has a lot of” gold coins, although she did not know how many. Husband testified that he had previously owned “maybe three or four coins,” but that he had sold them in 2020.

At the close of the evidence, the court stated that it could not reach a decision without more information about Husband’s Social Security benefits. Consequently, the court continued the matter. Wife said that she would submit video of the religious ceremony to support her assertion that no jewelry or rugs were given to the couple at that time.

After another hearing, the court determined that all property at issue was marital. Despite the parties’ opposition, the court appointed a trustee to facilitate the appraisal and sale of the marital property. At one point, the court “agreed to suspend the Trustee’s duties to allow for additional time for settlement negotiations” between the parties. The court, however, allowed the trustee to resume work on May 21, 2024, because the parties were unable to reach an agreement.

The court conducted several status conferences, including one on July 1, 2024. After that conference, Wife’s counsel withdrew his appearance. Wife indicated that she intended to find another attorney and provided the court with her telephone number,

email address, and “temporary address.” Shortly thereafter, Husband’s counsel withdrew her appearance.

On February 6, 2025, the court held a final hearing. Wife was not present for that hearing and has not provided this Court with a transcript of the proceedings. The record indicates that the hearing was held remotely and that Wife was emailed information about how to join the hearing. According to the hearing sheet, both Husband and the trustee were present for the hearing.

The court issued a written order and memorandum opinion on June 2, 2025. In its memorandum opinion, the court reviewed the procedural history of the case and stated that the trustee gave the court an “informal[] report[]” on October 22, 2024. The trustee reported “that his work had stalled” because of “the parties’ refusal to cooperate” and that Husband’s parcels of real property “were in foreclosure status and tax sale, and were not worth rescuing using the funds in the Trustee’s control.” The court stated that at the hearing on February 6, 2025, it had determined that “it has no other alternative but to value the marital property, determine a monetary award, and grant the parties’ divorce.”

The court found that the marital property consisted of “the accounts held by the Trustee, jewelry, and various other items of personal property[.]” The court also found that the “total value” of the marital property was “approximately” \$310,000.00, but noted that it was “unable to ascertain” the values of some pieces of property because of “the parties’ lack of cooperation with the Trustee.”

The court granted Wife a monetary award of \$70,000.00. In addition, the court awarded Wife the “jewelry held by the Trustee and the Persian rugs[.]” The court awarded “the vehicles and their respective keys to Husband.”

Wife noted this timely appeal.

## DISCUSSION

### I. Determination of Marital Property

Wife argues that the court “erred by failing to consider and divide all marital assets” and that the court “improperly included jewelry and carpets . . . as marital property.”<sup>1</sup> Wife lists the following items as having been “omitted . . . from equitable distribution”: (1) two retirement accounts; (2) the undeveloped lot; (3) gold coins; (4) cars; and (5) “cash from commercial property rental.”

“A circuit court’s classification of property as marital or non-marital is subject to review under the clearly erroneous standard[.]” *Huntley v. Huntley*, 229 Md. App. 484, 489 (2016). Under this highly deferential standard of review, we may reverse the trial court only if there is no credible evidence to support its decision. *See, e.g., Murray v. Murray*, 190 Md. App. 553, 568 (2010).

In the record provided to this Court, nothing suggests that the trial court omitted any disputed assets from the equitable distribution. Although the court’s order and memorandum opinion do not contain a complete list of items included as marital

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<sup>1</sup> In her brief Wife asserts that Husband “improperly included jewelry and carpets . . . as marital property and assigned them an inflated value.” In fact, both parties assigned the same value to these items in the joint statement of marital property.

property, the court stated that it found all disputed property to be marital. To the extent that Wife argues the court improperly found that certain items, such as the gold coins, did not exist, we are unable to consider the issue because of Wife’s failure to provide a transcript of the hearing on February 6, 2025.<sup>2</sup>

An appellant must obtain “a transcription of any portion of any proceeding relevant to the appeal[.]” Md. Rule 8-411(a)(2). “It is incumbent upon the appellant claiming error to produce a sufficient factual record for the appellate court to determine whether error was committed[.]” *Mora v. State*, 355 Md. 639, 650 (1999); *accord DiMeglio v. State*, 201 Md. App. 287, 314 (2011). “[T]he most fundamental principle of appellate review . . . is that the action of a trial court is presumed to have been correct and the burden of rebutting that presumption is on the party claiming error to first allege some error and then to persuade us that that error occurred.” *State v. Chaney*, 375 Md. 168, 183-84 (2003) (quoting *Fisher v. State*, 128 Md. App. 79, 104-05 (1999)). In the absence of a sufficient factual record showing otherwise, we “presume that [the trial court] did the right thing for the right reason.” *Campbell v. State*, 235 Md. App. 335, 339 (2017). Thus, without any proof to the contrary, we must presume that the court made the required findings at the hearing on February 6, 2025.

Turning to the jewelry and rugs, Husband testified that they were wedding gifts. Wife stated that they were not. We see no indication that Wife gave the court the

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<sup>2</sup> If the court did find that Husband had no gold coins, the finding would not be clearly erroneous. Husband testified that he had sold his gold coins in 2020, two years before the parties’ separation. The trial court could credit Husband’s testimony.

wedding video, which she claimed would show that the jewelry and rugs were not gifts to the married couple. Thus, the court could reasonably have found Husband’s testimony more credible on this issue. “In its assessment of the credibility of witnesses, the Circuit Court was entitled to accept—or reject—*all, part, or none* of the testimony of any witness, whether that testimony was or was not contradicted or corroborated by any other evidence.” *Omayaka v. Omayaka*, 417 Md. 643, 659 (2011) (emphasis in original).

## **II. Valuation of Marital Property**

Wife argues that the court erred in determining the value of the marital property. Specifically, she argues that the court “relied on incomplete and outdated financial information,” and “failed to consider updated financial statements that had been requested but not yet received.”

Wife’s argument on this issue suffers from the same problem as her previous argument—because Wife has not provided the relevant parts of the record, we do not know what evidence the circuit court relied on in making its decision. We have before us the parties’ testimony and documentary evidence from February 2024, but no information concerning the trustee’s reports to the court or the transcript of the final hearing, during which the court might have clarified what information it was relying on and how it arrived at its total marital property valuation. We therefore “presume that [the court] did the right thing for the right reason.” *Campbell v. State*, 235 Md. App. at 339.

As to Wife’s contention that the court erred in failing “to consider updated financial statements that had been requested but not yet received,” the record does not indicate that Wife requested a continuance or raised any other issues regarding the

updated statements. In general, we do not decide an issue that has not “been raised in or decided by the trial court.” Md. Rule 8-131(a). Thus, the issue of “updated financial statements” is not before us.

### III. Due Process

Wife describes her third contention on appeal as: “Whether the Circuit Court failed to provide due process and a fair hearing in accordance with Maryland Rule 2-311(f).” We present Wife’s final argument in its entirety:

[Wife] was self-represented after trial and was not given an adequate opportunity to present evidence or cross-examine regarding financial disclosures. Certain documents were submitted after the hearing without proper notice or opportunity to respond.

These procedural errors undermined the fairness of the judgment and warrant reversal or remand for a new hearing.

Only one hearing occurred after Wife’s counsel withdrew. The circuit court sent Wife notice of that hearing using the contact information that she had given to the court, but Wife failed to appear. She makes no claim that the notice was inadequate, and she did not request a continuance. Thus, she had an “adequate opportunity to present evidence or cross-examine regarding financial disclosures.” She did not take advantage of that opportunity.

Wife’s reference to Rule 2-311(f) is confusing. That rule concerns hearings held in response to motions, but Wife does not specify any motion on which the court failed to hold a hearing. In addition, she does not identify the “documents” that she claims were submitted after the hearing.

In short, Wife’s argument is not specific enough for this Court to review. “Parties’ appellate briefs must contain ‘[a]rgument in support of the party’s position on each issue.’” *Oxley v. Frederick Memorial Hosp.*, 268 Md. App. 575, 587 n.6 (2026) (alteration in original) (quoting Md. Rule 8-504(a)(6)). “[A]ppellate courts cannot be expected to either (1) search the record on appeal for facts that appear to support a party’s position, or (2) search for the law that is applicable to the issue presented.” *Ruffin Hotel Corp. of Md., Inc. v. Gasper*, 418 Md. 594, 618 (2011). A failure to present sufficient argument in an appellate brief acts as a waiver of the insufficiently argued issue. *Impac Mortg. Holdings, Inc. v. Timm*, 245 Md. App. 84, 117 (2020).

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT COURT  
FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY  
AFFIRMED. COSTS TO BE PAID BY  
APPELLANT.**