

Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
Case No. CADV19-28807

UNREPORTED  
IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS  
OF MARYLAND

No. 2102

September Term, 2019

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STARSHA SEWELL

v.

JOHN HOWARD

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Nazarian,  
Gould,  
Moylan, Charles E., Jr.  
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

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PER CURIAM

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Filed: July 28, 2020

\*This is an unreported opinion, and it may not be cited in any paper, brief, motion, or other document filed in this Court or any other Maryland Court as either precedent within the rule of stare decisis or as persuasive authority. Md. Rule 1-104.

In September 2019 Starsha Sewell, appellant, filed a petition for a protective order against John Howard, appellee, in the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County. The petition was filed on behalf of Ms. Sewell and the parties’ minor children and alleged that Mr. Howard had threatened Ms. Sewell via text message and had abused and neglected one of the minor children who was living with him at the time. Following hearings on September 13 and October 11, 2019 the court denied the petition, finding that Ms. Sewell had failed to meet her burden of proof. Ms. Sewell filed a timely motion for reconsideration, which was denied. This appeal followed.

Although Ms. Sewell presents 11 questions for our review, none of them directly address the merits of the order on appeal, with the possible exception of question number 10, wherein she generally asserts that the court “abused [its] discretion upon violating [her] due process rights to have a fraudulent judgment vacated at an Emergency CINA hearing involving child abuse concealment of the Judge who improperly classified child abuse as corporal punishment to conceal the fraud, racketeering activity and civil rights deprivations of herself and her colleagues[.]” However, to the extent that this question can be construed as challenging the merits of the court’s order denying her petition, Ms. Sewell fails to support her contention with a “clear concise statement of the facts material to a determination of the question[ ] presented,” a “concise statement of the applicable standard of review,” or any “[a]rgument in support of [her] position,” as required by Maryland Rule 8-504(a). For example, at no point in her brief does she discuss the testimony or evidence that was presented at the hearings; indicate why any of the court’s factual findings were not supported by the evidence; or offer any reasons why the court’s legal conclusions were

incorrect. Consequently, we will not consider these issues on appeal. *See Diallo v. State*, 413 Md. 678, 692-93 (2010) (noting that arguments that are “not presented with particularity will not be considered on appeal” (citation omitted)).<sup>1</sup>

Rather than addressing the merits of the court’s order, Ms. Sewell asserts that the circuit court lacked jurisdiction to enter certain orders in her custody case with Mr. Howard, specifically a 2014 order that granted Mr. Howard sole legal and physical custody of the minor children. She also asserts that various persons and entities involved in her case, including this Court, have violated her rights and engaged in “fraud” and “extortion” by failing to recognize the circuit court’s lack of jurisdiction.

As an initial matter, we note that the issue of whether the circuit court had jurisdiction in the parties’ custody case is irrelevant to the denial of her petition for a protective order in this case, which was an entirely separate legal action. Nevertheless, even if it were somehow relevant, Ms. Sewell has raised the same jurisdictional claim in a prior appeal to this Court and we held that it lacked merit. *See Sewell v. Howard*, No. 2266, Sept. 2017 (filed August 31, 2018). Consequently, that issue is barred by the law of the case doctrine and we will not consider it a second time. *See Baltimore County v. Baltimore County Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge No. 4*, 220 Md. App. 596, 659 (2014) (noting

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<sup>1</sup> In any event, we note that the existing record is insufficient to address the merits of the circuit court’s order as Ms. Sewell has failed to provide us with a complete copy of the transcript of the September 13, 2019 hearing or the Department of Social Services’ report investigating her claims of child abuse and neglect, which the court partially relied on in denying her petition. However, based on the record before us, we perceive no abuse of discretion in the court’s decision to deny her petition as the court found that the evidence she presented was not sufficiently credible to meet her burden of proof, a determination that was squarely within the court’s province as the fact-finder.

that “neither the questions decided [by the appellate courts] nor the ones that could have been raised and decided are available to be raised in a subsequent appeal.” (citation omitted)).

It is ultimately Ms. Sewell’s burden on appeal to demonstrate that the circuit court abused its discretion in denying her petition for a protective order. Because she has not met that burden, we shall affirm.

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT  
COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE’S  
COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS TO  
BE PAID BY APPELLANT.**