ORIGINAL

FILED
05/26/2026
Bowen Greenwood
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA
Case Number: DA 26-0287

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

DA 26-0287

FILED
MAY 26 2026
Bowen Greenwood
Clerk of Supreme Court
State of Montana

DCI CREDIT SERVICES, INC.,

Plaintiff and Appellee,

v.

JENNIFER GILLIS, a/k/a JENNIFER BUSH,

Defendant and Appellant.

ORDER

Through counsel, DCI Credit Services, Inc. (DCI Credit) moves this Court for clarification of the Notice of Appeal wherein self-represented Appellant Jennifer Gillis (Gillis), also known as Jennifer Bush, stated that the mediation process was not required. Gillis has filed a response in opposition.

On May 1, 2026, Gillis filed a Notice of Appeal where she certified that "[t]his appeal is not subject to mediation process required by M.R.App.7 because this appeal challenges the District Court's dismissal and affirmance of a Justice Court appeal on procedural/perfection grounds, not a direct appeal seeking mediation of a new money judgment." She did not include a copy of the final judgment from the Seventh Judicial District Court, Dawson County. This Court has not received the record yet.

DCI Credit puts forth that the appellate mediation requirements of M. R. App. P. 7 apply to this appeal, contrary to Gillis's assertion. DCI Credit provides that the original judgment is a money judgment, issued in the Justice Court of Dawson County, and attaches a copy of the judgment. DCI Credit also includes a copy of the District Court's final judgment.

Gillis states that she does not object to DCI Credit's motion for clarification. She, however, objects to "the unnecessary and misleading expansion of that narrow procedural question into a merits-oriented narrative regarding the underlying judgment[.]" She further

states that she made the certification in good faith. Gillis maintains that the procedural posture is more complicated. She also points out that DCI Credit mistakenly termed itself the Appellant.

The Montana Rules of Appellate Procedure provide the details about mediation or alternative dispute resolution. M. R. App. P. 7. The list of appeals subject to this rule includes money judgments where there are "[a]ppeals in actions seeking monetary damages/recovery." M. R. App. P. 7(2)(c). On October 27, 2016, the Justice Court issued its Judgment After Default, allowing DCI Credit to recover a judgment of $1,900.06 from Gillis. On January 16, 2026, the Justice Court issued its Order Denying Defendant's Motion to Vacate. Gillis, as the Defendant, appealed to the District Court, and the District Court issued its Order on April 3, 2026.

We conclude that this appeal is subject to mediation. The Court is aware of the parties' alignment as put forth in the above caption. Gillis may place her issues and arguments in her opening brief. Therefore,

IT IS ORDERED that this appeal is SUBJECT to mediation, pursuant to M. R. App. P. 7(1), and that the Clerk of the Supreme Court may APPOINT a mediator upon this Court's Order.

The Clerk is also directed to provide a copy of this Order to counsel of record and to Jennifer Gillis personally.

DATED this 26 day of May, 2026.

For the Court,

By _____
Chief Justice