

ORIGINAL

FILED

06/09/2026

Bowen Greenwood
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

Case Number: OP 26-0350

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

OP 26-0350

MARK T. FRENCH,

Petitioner,

v.

TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT,
SANDERS COUNTY, HONORABLE
MATTHEW J. CUFFE, Presiding,

Respondent.

FILED

JUN 09 2026

Bowen Greenwood
Clerk of Supreme Court
State of Montana

ORDER

Self-represented Petitioner Mark T. French has filed a Petition for Writ of Supervisory Control over the Twentieth Judicial District Court, Sanders County, and the Honorable Matthew J. Cuffe. French contends that the District Court is proceeding under a mistake of law, pursuant to M. R. App. P. 14(3)(a), and that constitutional issues of statewide importance are involved. M. R. App. P. 14(3)(b). He alleges that “[t]he presently scheduled jury trial date of June 25, 2026, will occur approximately 496 days after Petitioner filed his Notice of Trial De Novo on February 14, 2025.”

French appealed to the District Court his February 6, 2025 jury conviction of misdemeanor speeding in a restricted zone and the Sanders County Justice Court’s sentence. On February 9, 2026, the District Court issued an Opinion and Order denying French’s motion to dismiss. The District Court has set and re-set the trial several times. *See also French v. Twentieth Jud. Dist. Ct.*, 2025 MT 254, 424 Mont. 494, 578 P.3d 887. On March 24, 2026, the court reset a jury trial for June 25, 2026.

In his instant Petition, French argues that the District Court has committed “multiple mistakes of law” concerning a speedy trial analysis. He contends that the case *State v. Ariegwe*, 2007 MT 204, 338 Mont. 442, 167 P.3d 815, does not apply. French argues that the statute, § 46-13-401(2), MCA, must be properly applied; and he questions the meaning

of a trial de novo. He argues that he has suffered substantial prejudice. French requests dismissal of his criminal case.

Pursuant to the Montana Constitution, this Court has supervisory control over all other courts; however, we recognize that supervisory control is appropriate on a case-by-case basis. M. R. App. P. 14(3). “This extraordinary remedy can be invoked when the case involves purely legal questions and urgent or emergency factors make the normal appeal process inadequate.” *State v. Spady*, 2015 MT 218, ¶ 11, 380 Mont. 179, 354 P.3d 390. A petitioner must demonstrate a case with these factors, along with one of the three listed criteria under our rules. M. R. App. P. 14(3).

This Court declines to invoke the extraordinary remedy of supervisory control here. “A trial court has broad discretion to ‘oversee the administration of a trial.’” *City of Hardin v. Anthony*, 2025 MT 256, ¶ 20, 424 Mont. 500, 579 P.3d 156 (citing *Blanton v. Dep’t of Pub. Health & Human Servs.*, 2011 MT 110, ¶ 38, 360 Mont. 396, 255 P.3d 1229 (quotation and citation omitted)). French has not shown purely legal questions or any urgent or emergency factors. He has the adequate remedy of appeal where his objections to the court’s analysis of a speedy trial claim may be reviewed along with the complete record on appeal. Section 46-20-104, MCA; M. R. App. P. 4(5)(b)(i). French is not entitled to dismissal of the criminal case.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that French’s Petition for Writ of Supervisory Control is DENIED and DISMISSED.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this matter is CLOSED as of this Order’s date.

The Clerk is directed to provide a copy of this Order to: the Honorable Matthew J. Cuffe, District Court Judge; Lindsey Miller, Clerk of District Court, under Cause No. DC-25-11; counsel of record, and Mark T. French personally.

DATED this 9th day of June, 2026.



James Jeremiah Green

Katherine M. Bidegaray

James M. Khan

Angel G. Smith

Justices