

An unpublished opinion of the North Carolina Court of Appeals does not constitute controlling legal authority. Citation is disfavored, but may be permitted in accordance with the provisions of Rule 30(e)(3) of the North Carolina Rules of Appellate Procedure.

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF NORTH CAROLINA

No. COA24-402

Filed 17 September 2024

New Hanover County, Nos. 21JT41-42

IN THE MATTER OF:

P.Z.R.

P.W.R.

Appeal by respondent-father from orders entered 22 February 2024 by Judge J.H. Corpening, II, in New Hanover County District Court. Heard in the Court of Appeals 5 September 2024.

*Jill R. Cairo for petitioner-appellee New Hanover County Department of Social Services.*

*Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP, by Deborah S. Stern and Stephen V. Carey, for Guardian ad Litem.*

*Batch, Poore & Williams, PC, by Sydney Batch, for respondent-appellant father.*

PER CURIAM.

Respondent-appellant (“Father”) appeals from the termination of parental rights (“TPR”) orders filed on 22 February 2024. Counsel for Father filed a no-merit brief under Rule 3.1(e) of the North Carolina Rules of Appellate Procedure.

Counsel filing a Rule 3.1(e) no-merit brief is required to “identify any issues in the record on appeal that arguably support the appeal and must state why those issues lack merit or would not alter the ultimate result.” N.C. R. App. P. 3.1(e) (2023). Here, counsel fully complied with all the requirements of Rule 3.1(e) and identified two issues for our independent review: (1) whether the trial court erred in terminating Father’s parental rights based on neglect and a likelihood of future neglect and (2) whether the trial court abused its discretion by concluding that Father’s termination of parental rights was in the best interests of the child.

This Court conducts an independent review of the issues raised in the no-merit brief. *In re L.E.M.*, 372 N.C. 396, 402 (2019). “[T]he text of Rule 3.1([e]) plainly contemplates appellate review of the issues contained in a no-merit brief.” *Id.* “[W]e are satisfied that the trial court's order terminating [Father]’s parental rights is supported by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence and is based on proper legal grounds.” *In re K.M.S.*, 380 N.C. 56, 59 (2022). Accordingly, we affirm the trial court’s order.

AFFIRMED.

Panel consisting of Chief Judge DILLON and Judges MURPHY and STADING.

Report per Rule 30(e).