

Rule 1925. Opinion in Support of Order.

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(c) Remand.

- (1) An appellate court may remand in either a civil or criminal case for a determination as to whether a Statement had been filed **[and/]**or served, or timely filed **[and/]**or served.
- (2) Upon application of the appellant and for good cause shown, an appellate court may remand in a civil case for the filing or service *nunc pro tunc* of a Statement or for amendment or supplementation of a timely filed and served Statement and for a concurrent supplemental opinion. If an appellant has a statutory or rule-based right to counsel, good cause shown includes a failure by counsel to file or serve a Statement timely or at all.
- (3) If **[an] a criminal defendant**-appellant represented by counsel **[in a criminal case]** was ordered to file and serve a Statement and either failed to do so, or untimely filed or served a Statement, such that the appellate court is convinced that counsel has been *per se* ineffective, and the trial court did not file an opinion, the appellate court may remand for appointment of new counsel, the filing or service of a Statement *nunc pro tunc*, and the preparation and filing of an opinion by the judge.
- (4) If counsel intends to seek to withdraw in a criminal case pursuant to *Anders/Santiago* or if counsel intends to seek to withdraw in a post-conviction relief appeal pursuant to *Turner/Finley*, counsel shall file of record and serve on the judge a statement of intent to withdraw in lieu of filing a Statement. If the appellate court believes there are arguably meritorious issues for review, those issues will not be waived; instead, the appellate court shall remand for the filing and service of a Statement pursuant to Pa.R.A.P. 1925(b), a supplemental opinion pursuant to Pa.R.A.P. 1925(a), or both. Upon remand, the trial court may, but is not required to, replace an appellant's counsel.

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[Note:] Comment:

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[Paragraph] Subdivision (c): The appellate courts have the right under the Judicial Code to “affirm, modify, vacate, set aside or reverse any order brought before it for review, and may remand the matter and direct the entry of such appropriate order, or require such further proceedings to be had as may be just under the circumstances.” 42 Pa.C.S. § 706.

[Subparagraph] Subdivision (c)(1): This **[subparagraph] subdivision** applies to both civil and criminal cases and allows an appellate court to seek additional information~~[-]~~, whether by supplementation of the record or additional briefing~~[-]~~, if it is not apparent whether an initial or supplemental Statement was filed **[and/]or served**, or timely filed **[and/]or served**. **The 2026 amendment was technical in nature and did not alter practice or procedure.**

[Subparagraph] Subdivision (c)(2): This **[subparagraph] subdivision** allows an appellate court to remand a civil case to allow an initial, amended, or supplemental Statement and/or a supplemental opinion. See *also* 42 Pa.C.S. § 706. In 2019, the rule was amended to clarify that for those civil appellants who have a statutory or rule-based right to counsel, **[([such as appellants in post-conviction relief, juvenile, parental termination, or civil commitment proceedings])]**, good cause includes a failure of counsel to file a Statement or a timely Statement.

[Subparagraph] Subdivision (c)(3): This **[subparagraph] subdivision** allows an appellate court to remand in criminal cases only when **[an] a criminal defendant-appellant**, who is represented by counsel, has completely failed to respond to an order to file and serve a Statement or has failed to do so timely. It is thus narrower than **[subparagraph] subdivision** (c)(2). See, e.g., *Commonwealth v. Burton*, 973 A.2d 428, 431 (Pa. Super. 2009); *Commonwealth v. Halley*, 870 A.2d 795, 801 (Pa. 2005); *Commonwealth v. West*, 883 A.2d 654, 657 (Pa. Super. 2005). **For purposes of this rule, “criminal defendant-appellant” includes first PCRA petitioners. See Commonwealth v. Parrish, 224 A.3d 682, 701-02 (Pa. 2020).** *Per se* ineffectiveness applies in all circumstances in which an appeal is completely foreclosed by counsel's actions, but not in circumstances in which the actions narrow or serve to foreclose the appeal in part. See *Commonwealth v. Rosado*, 150 A.3d 425, 433-35 (Pa. 2016). **[Pro se] Self-represented appellants and the Commonwealth** are excluded from this exception to the waiver doctrine as set forth in *Commonwealth v. Lord*, 719 A.2d 306 (Pa. 1998). **The rule supersedes the holdings in Commonwealth v. Grohowski, 980 A.2d 113 (Pa. Super. 2009), and Commonwealth v. Baker, 311 A.3d 12 (Pa. Super. 2024), and their progeny, to the extent that those cases concluded that Pa.R.A.P. 1925(c)(3) may also apply to the Commonwealth.**

Direct appeal rights have typically been restored through a post-conviction relief process, but when the ineffectiveness is apparent and *per se*, the court in *West* recognized that the more effective way to resolve such *per se* ineffectiveness is to remand for the filing of a Statement and opinion. See *West*, 883 A.2d at 657; see also *Burton* (late filing of Statement is *per se* ineffective assistance of counsel). The procedure set forth in *West* is codified in **[subparagraph] subdivision** (c)(3). As the *West* court recognized, this rationale does not apply when waiver occurs due to the improper filing of a Statement. In such circumstances, relief may occur only through the post-conviction relief process and only upon demonstration by the appellant that, but for the deficiency of counsel, it was reasonably probable that the appeal would have been successful. An appellant must be able to identify *per se* ineffectiveness to secure a remand under this **[section] subdivision**, and any appellant who is able to demonstrate *per se* ineffectiveness is entitled to a remand. Accordingly, this **[subparagraph] subdivision** does not raise the concerns addressed in *Johnson v. Mississippi*, 486 U.S. 578, 588-89 (1988) (observing that where a rule has not been consistently or regularly applied, it is not[--], under federal law[--], an adequate and independent state ground for affirming petitioner's conviction.)

[Subparagraph] Subdivision (c)(4): See *Anders v. California*, 386 U.S. 738 (1967), and *Commonwealth v. Santiago*, 978 A.2d 349 (Pa. 2009); *Commonwealth v. Turner*, 544 A.2d 927 (Pa. 1988), and *Commonwealth v. Finley*, 550 A.2d 213 (Pa. Super. 1988). These procedures do not relieve counsel of the obligation to comply with all other rules.