

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

PAUL SANTIAGO,
Appellant,
vs.
THE STATE OF NEVADA,
Respondent.

No. 64577

FILED

JUN 11 2014

TRACIE K. LINDEMAN
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
BY R. Malone
DEPUTY CLERK

ORDER OF REVERSAL AND REMAND

This is a proper person appeal from an order of the district court denying a post-conviction petition for a writ of habeas corpus.¹ Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County; Kathleen E. Delaney, Judge.

Appellant filed a timely petition on June 27, 2013. The district court denied the petition without conducting an evidentiary hearing or appointing counsel. We conclude that the district court erred in denying the petition without appointing counsel for the reasons discussed below.

NRS 34.750 provides for the discretionary appointment of post-conviction counsel and sets forth the following factors which the court may consider in making its determination to appoint counsel: the petitioner's indigency, the severity of the consequences to the petitioner, the difficulty of those issues presented, whether the petitioner is unable to comprehend the proceedings, and whether counsel is necessary to proceed

¹This appeal has been submitted for decision without oral argument, NRAP 34(f)(3), and we conclude that the record is sufficient for our review and briefing is unwarranted. See *Lockett v. Warden*, 91 Nev. 681, 682, 541 P.2d 910, 911 (1975).

with discovery. The determination of whether counsel should be appointed is not necessarily dependent upon whether a petitioner raises issues in a petition which, if true, would entitle the petitioner to relief.

Appellant's petition arose out of a guilty plea with a potentially complex issue surrounding the advice of court-appointed counsel regarding appellant's ability to withdraw his guilty plea post-sentencing. Appellant is serving a significant sentence. In addition, appellant moved for the appointment of counsel and claimed that he was indigent. The failure to appoint post-conviction counsel prevented a meaningful litigation of the petition. Thus, we reverse the district court's denial of appellant's petition and remand this matter for the appointment of counsel to assist appellant in the post-conviction proceedings. Accordingly, we

ORDER the judgment of the district court REVERSED AND REMAND this matter to the district court for proceedings consistent with this order.²

Pickering, J.
Pickering

Parraguirre, J.
Parraguirre

Saitta, J.
Saitta

²We have considered all proper person documents filed or received in this matter. We conclude that appellant is only entitled to the relief described herein.

cc: Hon. Kathleen E. Delaney, District Judge
Paul Santiago
Attorney General/Carson City
Clark County District Attorney
Eighth District Court Clerk