



Supreme Court of Florida

[Main Press Page](#)

[Broadcasts of Arguments Including Archives](#)

[Directions to the Supreme Court](#)

Oral Argument Press Summaries May 2-6, 2016 no arguments on May 2, 3 or 6

Wednesday, May 4

Cortez Hatten v. State, [SC15-22](#)

Gadsden County – starts about 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Hatten was sentenced to 40 years in prison with a 25-year mandatory minimum term for attempted second-degree murder. His crime was reclassified as a first-degree felony under Florida's 10-20-Life sentencing law, which increases penalties for criminals who carry or use firearms. On appeal, he argued that the longest sentence allowed by state law for a first-degree felony is 30 years in prison, barring a specific exception to that general limit. The First District Court of Appeal upheld his 40-year sentence. The 1st DCA also certified direct conflict with rulings from other district courts of appeal on the same legal issue.

Antonio Garrett v. State, [SC14-2110](#)

Duval County – starts about 9:40 a.m.

Mr. Garrett was sentenced to life in prison for the first-degree murder of Jerry Ford, who was fatally shot in 2011. On appeal, Mr. Garrett, who said he acted in self-defense, argued that the jury was wrongly instructed to consider that illegal activity at the time of the shooting, such as firearm possession by a felon, meant he had a duty to retreat from a confrontation with Mr. Ford. The First District Court of Appeal agreed that the jury instruction was improper but ruled that the mistake was not a fundamental error. This Court accepted jurisdiction based on express and direct conflict between the decision by the 1st DCA and rulings by the Fourth District Court of Appeal on the same legal issue.

--10 minute break--

Brandon Bradley v. State, [SC14-1412](#)

Brevard County – starts about 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Bradley was convicted of the first-degree murder of Brevard County Sheriff Deputy Barbara Pill, who was fatally shot in 2012. The jury voted 10-2 to recommend a death sentence, and the trial court condemned him to death. This is his direct appeal.

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Co. v Shands Jacksonville Medical Center, Inc., [SC15-1257](#)

Duval County – starts about 11:30 a.m.

Shands treated injured people insured by State Farm. State Farm paid Shands but later sought documents from Shands to justify the reasonableness of the charges. State Farm argued state law specifically allows it to go to court to get approval to question Shands officials and to get relevant documents. The trial court agreed but the First District Court of Appeal overturned the trial court, ruling the scope of state law was much narrower than State Farm argued. The 1st DCA also certified conflict with the Fourth District Court of Appeal.

Thursday, May 5

Jonathan Godwin v State, [SC15-563](#)

Hillsborough County – starts about 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Godwin was charged with multiple felonies stemming from the robbery of a store. He rejected a plea offer from the state that would have resulted in a 10-year prison sentence. A jury convicted him of robbery with a firearm and false imprisonment with a firearm and he was sentenced to life in prison. He appealed, arguing the judge had improperly considered his refusal to take a plea deal and to admit guilt or show remorse. The Second District Court of Appeal upheld the life sentence. Mr. Godwin asked this Court to review the case.

Timothy Hurst v. State, [SC12-1947](#)

Escambia County – starts about 9:40 a.m.

Mr. Hurst was convicted of the first-degree murder of Cynthia Harrison, who was fatally stabbed and slashed in 1998. After his first death sentence was vacated by this Court, he had a second penalty hearing. The jury voted 7-5 to recommend a death sentence and the trial court condemned him to death a second time. This Court upheld the second death sentence on direct appeal but the U.S. Supreme Court vacated it, finding Florida's death penalty statute violated the Sixth Amendment by failing to require a jury finding of factors that can trigger a death sentence. Mr. Hurst now argues his sentence must be reduced to life in prison.

--10 minute break--

Dwayne White v. State, [SC15-625](#)

Seminole County – starts about 10:30 a.m.

Mr. White was convicted of the first-degree murder of Sarah Yvonne Rucker, his estranged wife, whose throat was cut in 2011. The jury voted 8-4 to recommend a death sentence and the trial court condemned him to death. This is his direct appeal.

###