

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 20-7051**

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RICKY DEAN NORMAN,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, at Statesville. Martin K. Reidinger, Chief District Judge. (5:20-cv-00021-MR)

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Submitted: December 17, 2020

Decided: December 22, 2020

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Before THACKER, HARRIS, and QUATTLEBAUM, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Ricky Dean Norman, Appellant Pro Se.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Ricky Dean Norman seeks to appeal the district court's order dismissing as untimely his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 petition. *See Gonzalez v. Thaler*, 565 U.S. 134, 148 & n.9 (2012) (explaining that § 2254 petitions are subject to one-year statute of limitations, running from latest of four commencement dates enumerated in 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d)(1)). The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2). When, as here, the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable and that the petition states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. *Gonzalez*, 565 U.S. at 140-41 (citing *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)).

On appeal, we confine our review to the issues raised in the informal brief. *See* 4th Cir. R. 34(b). Because Norman's informal brief does not challenge the dispositive timeliness determination by the district court, he has forfeited appellate review. *See Jackson v. Lightsey*, 775 F.3d 170, 177 (4th Cir. 2014) ("The informal brief is an important document; under Fourth Circuit rules, our review is limited to issues preserved in that brief."). Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability, deny leave to proceed in forma pauperis, and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

*DISMISSED*