

UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 17-6498

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

JOHN ELWOOD BUCKNER, a/k/a Bear, a/k/a John Branch,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, at Charleston. Patrick Michael Duffy, Senior District Judge. (2:00-cr-00398-PMD-2; 2:16-cv-01098-PMD)

Submitted: February 28, 2018

Decided: March 12, 2018

Before DUNCAN and AGEE, Circuit Judges, and SHEDD, Senior Circuit Judge.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Alicia Vachira Penn, OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER, Charleston, South Carolina, for Appellant. Sean Kittrell, Assistant United States Attorney, OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, Charleston, South Carolina, for Appellee.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

John Elwood Buckner seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 (2012) motion. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2012). 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) (2012). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see *Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the motion states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. *Slack*, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Buckner has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability 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