

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 23-6653**

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NOREL STERLING WARD, a/k/a Norell Sterling Ward,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

DIRECTOR CHADWICK DOTSON,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, at Alexandria. Leonie M. Brinkema, District Judge. (1:22-cv-00381-LMB-IDD)

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Submitted: February 15, 2024

Decided: February 22, 2024

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Before KING, AGEE, and HARRIS, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Norel S. Ward, Appellant Pro Se.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Norel Sterling Ward 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. *See* 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)).

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Ward 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*