

Opinion issued February 17, 2022



In The
Court of Appeals
For The
First District of Texas

NO. 01-20-00337-CR

MICHAEL RATLIFF, Appellant

V.

THE STATE OF TEXAS, Appellee

**On Appeal from the 179th District Court
Harris County, Texas
Trial Court Case No. 1522186**

MEMORANDUM OPINION

Appellant, Michael Ratliff, was charged by indictment with the offense of capital murder. *See* TEX. PENAL CODE § 19.03(a)(7)(A). Appellant pleaded not guilty, proceeded to jury trial, and was convicted of the charged offense. The trial court sentenced appellant to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Because

the State did not seek the death penalty, this sentence was mandatory. *See* TEX. PENAL CODE § 12.31a). Appellant timely filed a notice of appeal.

Appellant's appointed counsel on appeal has filed a motion to withdraw, along with an *Anders* brief stating that the record presents no reversible error and that, therefore, the appeal is without merit and is frivolous. *See Anders v. California*, 386 U.S. 738 (1967). Counsel's brief meets the *Anders* requirements by presenting a professional evaluation of the record and supplying this Court with references to the record and legal authority. *See id.* at 744; *see also High v. State*, 573 S.W.2d 807, 812 (Tex. Crim. App. 1978). Counsel indicates that he has thoroughly reviewed the record and that he is unable to advance any grounds of error that warrant reversal. *See Anders*, 386 U.S. at 744; *Mitchell v. State*, 193 S.W.3d 153, 155 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] 2006, no pet.).

Appellant's counsel has certified that he mailed a copy of the motion to withdraw and the *Anders* brief to appellant and informed appellant of his right to file a response and to access the record. *See In re Schulman*, 252 S.W.3d 403, 408 (Tex. Crim. App. 2008). Furthermore, counsel certified that he sent appellant the form motion for pro se access to the records for his response. *See Kelly v. State*, 436 S.W.3d 313, 322 (Tex. Crim. App. 2014). Appellant was provided a copy of the record and filed a pro se response.

We have independently reviewed the entire record in this appeal and we conclude that no reversible error exists in the record, that there are no arguable grounds for review, and that therefore the appeal is frivolous. *See Anders*, 386 U.S. at 744 (emphasizing that reviewing court—and not counsel—determines, after full examination of proceedings, whether appeal is wholly frivolous); *Garner v. State*, 300 S.W.3d 763, 767 (Tex. Crim. App. 2009) (reviewing court must determine whether arguable grounds for review exist); *Bledsoe v. State*, 178 S.W.3d 824, 826–28 (Tex. Crim. App. 2005) (reviewing court is not to address merits of each claim raised in *Anders* brief or *pro se* response after determining there are no arguable grounds for review); *Mitchell*, 193 S.W.3d at 155. An appellant may challenge a holding that there are no arguable grounds for appeal by filing a petition for discretionary review in the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. *See Bledsoe*, 178 S.W.3d at 827 n.6.

Accordingly, we affirm the judgment of the trial court and grant counsel’s motion to withdraw.¹ *See* TEX. R. APP. P. 43.2(a). Attorney Allen C. Isbell must immediately send the required notice and file a copy of that notice with the Clerk of

¹ Appointed counsel still has a duty to inform appellant of the result of this appeal and that he may, on his own, pursue discretionary review in the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. *See Bledsoe v. State*, 178 S.W.3d 824, 826–27 (Tex. Crim. App. 2005).

this Court. *See* TEX. R. APP. P. 6.5(c). We dismiss any other pending motions as moot.

PER CURIAM

Panel consists of Justices Goodman, Landau, and Countiss.

Do not publish. TEX. R. APP. P. 47.2(b).