

IN THE SUPREME COURT  
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

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2021 ND 177

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Morris Jerome Brickle-Hicks,

Petitioner and Appellant

v.

State of North Dakota,

Respondent and Appellee

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No. 20210073

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Appeal from the District Court of Burleigh County, South Central Judicial District, the Honorable John W. Grinsteiner, Judge.

AFFIRMED.

Per Curiam.

Kiara C. Kraus-Parr, Grand Forks, ND, for petitioner and appellant.

Julie A. Lawyer, State's Attorney, and Jamie Schaible, under the Rule on Limited Practice of Law by Law Students, Bismarck, ND, for respondent and appellee; submitted on brief.

**Brickle-Hicks v. State**  
**No. 20210073**

**Per Curiam.**

[¶1] Morris Jerome Brickle-Hicks appeals from an order denying his application for postconviction relief, claiming the district court erred in denying his application for postconviction relief due to ineffective assistance of counsel. Following a hearing the court found Brickle-Hicks failed to demonstrate that his counsel’s representation fell below an objective standard or that he was prejudiced by the alleged deficient performance.

[¶2] “Courts need not address both prongs of the Strickland test, and if a court can resolve the case by addressing only one prong it is encouraged to do so.” *Rourke v. State*, 2018 ND 137, ¶ 6, 912 N.W.2d 311 (citation omitted). “If it is easier to dispose of an ineffectiveness claim on the ground of lack of sufficient prejudice, which we expect will often be so, that course should be followed.” *Id.* The district court did not clearly err in denying Brickle-Hicks’ application for postconviction relief, and we summarily affirm under N.D.R.App.P. 35.1(a)(2).

[¶3] Jon J. Jensen, C.J.  
Gerald W. VandeWalle  
Daniel J. Crothers  
Lisa Fair McEvers  
Jerod E. Tufte