

IN RE CHILDREN OF JASON S.

Submitted on Briefs January 7, 2025

Decided January 28, 2025

Panel: STANFILL, C.J., and MEAD, HORTON, CONNORS, LAWRENCE, and DOUGLAS, JJ.

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

Jason S. and the mother of his three children appeal from a judgment entered in the District Court (Skowhegan, *Bristol, J.*) terminating their parental rights. *See* 22 M.R.S. § 4055(1)(B)(2)(a), (b)(i), (ii) (2024). Contrary to the father’s contention, the filing of an additional request for a preliminary protection order (PPO) by the Department of Health and Human Services after the entry of a jeopardy order did not necessitate a new jeopardy hearing, because it is the filing of a child protection petition, not the filing of a request for a PPO, that triggers the need for a jeopardy hearing and order, and only one child protection petition was filed in this case. *See* 22 M.R.S. §§ 4032, 4034, 4035(4-A) (2024). Nor did the court err in finding, by clear and convincing evidence, one or more grounds of parental unfitness as to each parent in circumstances where the Department offered many services and the parents were uncooperative, resulting in their continued inability to protect the children from jeopardy and take responsibility for them within a time reasonably calculated to meet the children’s needs. *See* 22 M.R.S. §§ 4041, 4055(1)(B)(2)(b)(i), (ii); *In re Michaela C.*, 2002 ME 159, ¶ 17, 809 A.2d 1245. Finally, the court did not err or abuse its discretion in determining that the termination of each parent’s parental rights—rather than another disposition—is in each child’s best interest given the continuing risks to the children arising from the father’s domestic violence, the parents’ substance misuse and failure to recognize their young children’s needs, and the children’s

particular distress arising from the instability of their placement. *See* 22 M.R.S. § 4055(1)(B)(2)(a); *In re Child. of Christopher S.*, 2019 ME 31, ¶ 8, 203 A.3d 808; *In re Child. of Quincy A.*, 2023 ME 49, ¶ 24, 300 A.3d 832.

The entry is:

Judgment affirmed.

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Skowhegan District Court docket number PC-2022-25  
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