

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

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Tracie K. Lindeman
Clerk of Supreme Court

THOMAS WILLIAM RANDOLPH,
Petitioner,

vs.
THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA,
COUNTY OF CLARK, THE HONORABLE
STEFANY MILEY, DISTRICT JUDGE
Respondents,

and
THE STATE OF NEVADA,
Real Party in Interest.

Case No. 60014

ANSWER TO PETITION FOR EMERGENCY WRIT OF MANDAMUS

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5 THOMAS WILLIAM RANDOLPH,
6 Petitioner,

7 vs.

8 THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
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10 COUNTY OF CLARK, THE HONORABLE
11 STEFANY MILEY, DISTRICT JUDGE

Respondents,

And

THE STATE OF NEVADA,

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12 **ANSWER TO PETITION FOR EMERGENCY WRIT OF MANDAMUS**

13 COMES NOW, the State of Nevada, Real Party in Interest, by MARY-
14 ANNE MILLER, Interim District Attorney, through her Chief Deputy, STEVEN
15 S. OWENS, on behalf of the above-named Respondents and submits this Answer
16 to Petition for Emergency Writ of Mandamus in obedience to this Court's order
17 filed January 11, 2012, in the above-captioned case. This Answer is based on the
18 following memorandum and all papers and pleadings on file herein.

19 Dated this 20th day of January, 2012.

20 Respectfully submitted,

21 MARY-ANNE MILLER
22 Interim Clark County District Attorney
23 Nevada Bar # 001419

24 BY /s/ Steven S. Owens

25 STEVEN S. OWENS
26 Chief Deputy District Attorney
27 Nevada Bar #004352
28 Attorney for Respondent

**MEMORANDUM OF
POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

Statement of Facts and Procedural History

Thomas William Randolph (hereinafter “Randolph”) is charged below in a three-year old capital murder case that has been continued multiple times all at Randolph’s request. Ex. A, Transcript of 1/6/12, 9:38AM at pp. 18, 25-6. There has been at least one prior substitution of retained counsel for Randolph which contributed to some of the delay. Id. at p. 7. Retained counsel also recently sought mandamus relief unsuccessfully from this Court on a separate issue (SC# 59754). Id. at p. 25. The most recent trial setting was for January 3, 2012, but was delayed until January 17th to accommodate the defense. Id. at p. 29. At the calendar call in December, all parties announced they were ready for trial. Id. at p. 24. The State had at least 25 out-of-state witnesses subpoenaed who at considerable expense, time, and effort were all prepared and able to testify. Id. at p. 20. Despite there being multiple pretrial motions filed and evidentiary hearings over the last several years, at no time previously did Randolph request to substitute currently retained counsel. Id. at p. 24.

Several days after having announced ready at calendar call and three days after the trial was supposed to have started, Randolph’s retained counsel orally represented in court on January 6, 2012, that they had been “fired” as counsel. Id. at p. 5. No written motion was ever filed. Due to a short extension that had already been given, this oral request for substitution of counsel came just 11 days before trial was to start on January 17, 2012. Id. at p. 29. The request for substitution of counsel included a request to appoint new counsel at public expense and to vacate and reset the trial date. Id. at p. 13. The district court had previously found that Randolph had become indigent and had authorized the payment of defense investigation and expert fees at public expense. Id. at p. 26. Randolph’s indigent status is not in dispute.

1 Before ruling on the motion, the district court below held several hearings
2 with Randolph personally, with Randolph's counsel, and telephonically with bar
3 counsel, all of which were conducted outside the presence of the trial prosecutors.
4 Ex. B, Transcript from 1/6/12 at 10:19AM, pp. 2-63. The transcripts were sealed
5 so as to protect the defense trial strategy and confidentiality of attorney client
6 communications. Id. In those hearings, the district court made inquiry into the
7 timeliness of the request for substitution of counsel and the extent of Randolph's
8 conflict with his retained counsel. Id.

9 After a full inquiry, the trial judge stated that she did not find sufficient
10 cause to remove retained counsel from the case. Ex. A, Transcript of 1/6/12,
11 9:38AM at p. 23. The trial judge explained that although there had been numerous
12 hearings previously in the case, "[a]t no time has Mr. Randolph ever indicated to
13 this Court, and he's had the ability to do so, that he would like different counsel."
14 Id. The judge further concluded that because the request had come just 11 days
15 before the trial, "the timing alone suggests a dilatory motive on behalf of Mr.
16 Randolph." Id. at p. 24. The judge noted that calendar call had passed and that the
17 parties had announced ready not only in December but also as recently as January
18 3, 2012. Id.

19 The judge found "absolutely no indication" that the retained attorneys had
20 been anything other than diligent in the case in filing pretrial motions and writs and
21 performing a lot of work. Id. at p. 25. Retained counsel and Randolph himself
22 both conceded that there had been frequent contact between them over the last
23 three years. Id. The judge considered the skill of the two retained counsel Bryson
24 and Galanter who were prepared and ready to go to trial. Id. at p. 26. In assessing
25 prejudice if the motion were granted, the trial judge considered that it was just 11
26 days before trial, that both sides had subpoenaed witnesses and paid experts to
27 come on the trial date, that it had taken three years to get the case ready for trial,
28

1 and that it would take a long time to get the case ready for trial again and again due
2 to its complexity. Id. at pp. 25-6.

3 Once the trial judge denied the belated oral request for substitution of
4 counsel and continuance of the trial date, Randolph sought mandamus relief from
5 this Court through the instant petition. This Court's Order directing the State to
6 answer the petition within ten days, left the district court with little choice but to
7 grant a stay of the trial giving Randolph the relief he sought. The State now
8 answers the Mandamus petition.

9 **Extraordinary Relief Is Unwarranted**

10 This Court may issue a writ of mandamus to compel the performance of an
11 act which the law requires as a duty resulting from an office, trust, or station or to
12 control a manifest abuse of or arbitrary or capricious exercise of discretion. NRS
13 34.160; Round Hill Gen. Imp. Dist. v. Newman, 97 Nev. 601, 603-04, 637 P.2d
14 534, 536 (1981). The writ will not issue where the petitioner has a plain, speedy,
15 and adequate remedy in the ordinary course of law. NRS 34.170; NRS 34.330;
16 Hickey v. District Court, 105 Nev. 729, 731, 782 P.2d 1336, 1338 (1989).

17 Any error in the denial of substitution of counsel is an issue that is capable
18 of review on direct appeal after conviction. See e.g., Young v. State, 120 Nev.
19 963, 102 P.3d 572 (2004); Garcia v. State, 121 Nev. 327, 113 P.3d 836 (2005).
20 However, this Court has also entertained a similar issue by way of mandamus.
21 Ryan v. Eighth Judicial Dist. Court ex rel. County of Clark, 123 Nev. 419, 425,
22 168 P.3d 703, 707 (2007). The decision to entertain an extraordinary writ petition
23 lies within the discretion of this Court, and this Court considers whether "judicial
24 economy and sound judicial administration militate for or against issuing the writ."
25 Redeker v. District Court, 122 Nev. 164, 167, 127 P.3d 520, 522 (2006).

26 Mandamus is unwarranted in the instant case because the district court did
27 not manifestly or arbitrarily and capriciously abuse its discretion in refusing to
28 substitute appointed counsel for retained counsel where the request was made on

1 the eve of trial, granting the request would have necessitated a continuance of the
2 trial, and retained counsel was prepared and ready to proceed notwithstanding the
3 defendant's lack of confidence in them. Despite the structural nature of Sixth
4 Amendment error, there was no constitutional violation here that would warrant
5 this Court's intervention. Extraordinary relief should also be denied as the issue
6 has since become moot.

7 **The Petition Should Be Denied As Moot**

8 This writ petition became moot the instant this Court ordered an answer
9 from the State and a supplement from Randolph. The only reason the oral motion
10 to dismiss counsel was denied, was because of its timing on the eve of trial after
11 having announced ready at calendar call and because of the prejudice that would
12 ensue from vacating the trial date yet again. Ex. A, Transcript from 1/6/12 at
13 9:38AM at pp. 23-6. The effect of this Court ordering an answer from the State
14 was that the district court has now granted a stay and vacated the trial date, which
15 is all that this issue was ever about. No one is disputing Randolph's right to retain
16 counsel of his choosing including his right to dismiss retained counsel with or
17 without cause. Rather, the issue presented is whether such right still prevails when
18 it is untimely asserted and would result in undue delay and prejudice to the
19 administration of justice under the circumstances of this case.

20 This Court's duty is to decide actual controversies and not to give opinions
21 on moot questions. Personhood Nevada v. Bristol, 126 Nev. ___, 245 P.3d 572,
22 574 (2010). The question of mootness is one of justiciability. This Court's duty is
23 not to render advisory opinions but, rather, to resolve actual controversies by an
24 enforceable judgment. NCAA v. University of Nevada, 97 Nev. 56, 57, 624 P.2d
25 10, 10 (1981). Thus, a controversy must be present through all stages of the
26 proceeding, see Arizonans for Official English v. Arizona, 520 U.S. 43, 67, 117
27 S.Ct. 1055 (1997); Lewis v. Continental Bank Corp., 494 U.S. 472, 476-78, 110
28 S.Ct. 1249 (1990), and even though a case may present a live controversy at its

1 beginning, subsequent events may render the case moot. University Sys. v.
2 Nevadans for Sound Gov't, 120 Nev. 712, 720, 100 P.3d 179, 186 (2004);
3 Wedekind v. Bell, 26 Nev. 395, 413-15, 69 P. 612, 613-14 (1902).

4 With no pending trial date, there is now no bar to allowing Randolph to
5 dismiss his retained counsel. The posture of the case has now completely changed
6 from what it was. Randolph has made no showing that the court would have
7 denied a timely motion to dismiss retained counsel. Because appointed counsel
8 now will have time to take over the case and prepare for a new trial setting, all of
9 the district court's concerns and rationale for previously denying the motion have
10 been eliminated by this Court's actions of entertaining the petition. This petition
11 should be denied as moot and Randolph can renew his motion below to dismiss
12 retained counsel and appoint other counsel which undoubtedly will be granted.

13 **Statement With Regard To Sealed Transcripts**

14 Before deciding the oral motion to dismiss counsel, the district court below
15 held several hearings with Randolph personally, with Randolph's counsel, and
16 telephonically with bar counsel, all of which were conducted outside the presence
17 of the trial prosecutors. Ex. B, Transcript from 1/6/12 at 10:19AM, pp. 2-63. This
18 was done to protect the attorney-client privilege while satisfying the in-depth
19 inquiry into such matters as required by this Court's precedent. Young v. State,
20 120 Nev. 963, 971, 102 P.3d 572, 577-78 (2004). Great effort was made to
21 separately seal the portions of the transcripts where the prosecutors were excluded
22 from the courtroom. See e.g., Ex. C, Transcript from 1/6/12 at 2:05PM, pp. 11-12.

23 However, Randolph has now voluntarily disclosed and served the contents
24 of those sealed transcripts upon the State by attaching them as exhibits to his
25 petition. It was irresponsible to put the State in this position without advance
26 warning and without expressly waiving the privilege or otherwise seeking
27 protection. One has to wonder if such was not done purposely in an effort to
28 disqualify the District Attorney's Office. The State is left to conclude that such

1 actions constitute an implied waiver of any attorney client privilege as to the
2 information contained therein. NRS 49.385; Wardleigh v. Second Judicial Dist.
3 Court In & For County of Washoe, 111 Nev. 345, 354, 891 P.2d 1180, 1186
4 (1995), *citing* Developments in the Law—Privileged Communications, 98
5 Harv.L.Rev. 1450, 1637 (1985) (“[i]t has become a well-accepted component of
6 waiver doctrine that a party waives his privilege if he affirmatively pleads a claim
7 or defense that places at-issue the subject matter of privileged material over which
8 he has control”). The attorney client privilege was intended as a shield, not a
9 sword. Id. By electing to pursue this claim in a pre-trial petition for mandamus,
10 Randolph has waived his privilege to the extent necessary to resolve his issue.

11 Nonetheless, out of an abundance of caution and to ensure that no conflict is
12 alleged in the future against the trial prosecutors in this case, undersigned counsel
13 has “screened” himself pursuant to NRPC Rule 1.0(k) from the rest of the office.
14 The trial prosecutors who have spent three years preparing for trial are not privy to
15 the contents of either the instant petition or the previously sealed transcripts that
16 might divulge trial strategy or confidential communications of the defense.
17 Undersigned counsel is isolated in the Appellate Division from the trial attorneys
18 and will protect any confidential communications unless this Court concludes that
19 waiver applies.

20
21 **The Trial Judge did not Abuse her Discretion in Balancing the Right to**
Substitute Retained Counsel Against the Fair Administration of Justice

22 Resolution of the issue in this case depends not just upon Randolph’s right
23 to counsel, but the interplay of that right against the government's interest in the
24 fair, orderly, and effective administration of justice. Randolph overlooks that his
25 late request for substitution of counsel was also a late request to continue the trial
26 date. Randolph’s counsel acknowledged that “there would be absolutely no way
27 that of a case of this magnitude that [appointed counsel] could be ready to go,”
28

1 given the untimeliness of the oral motion for substitution. Ex. A, Transcript of
2 1/6/12 at 9:38 AM at p. 13.

3 The Supreme Court has “recognized a trial court's wide latitude in balancing
4 the right to counsel of choice against the needs of fairness ... and against the
5 demands of its calendar.” United States v. Gonzalez-Lopez, 548 U.S. 140, 152, 126
6 S. Ct. 2557, 2565-66 (2006) (*citing* Wheat v. United States, 486 U.S. 153, 159–60,
7 108 S.Ct. 1692, 100 L.Ed.2d 140 (1988); Morris v. Slappy, 461 U.S. 1, 11–12, 103
8 S.Ct. 1610, 75 L.Ed.2d 610 (1983)). Where the accused seeks to change retained
9 counsel, his right to counsel of his choice must be balanced against the public
10 interest in the prompt and efficient administration of justice. Wilson v. Mintzes,
11 761 F.2d 275 (6th Cir. 1985). The appropriateness of a continuance in order to
12 substitute counsel depends upon factors such as the length of delay, previous
13 continuances, inconvenience to litigants, witnesses, counsel and the court, whether
14 the delay is purposeful or is caused by the accused, the availability of other
15 competent counsel, the complexity of the case, and whether denying the
16 continuance will lead to identifiable prejudice. Id.

17 It is well-recognized that the Sixth Amendment right to counsel is not
18 absolute. Id.; see also Ryan v. Eighth Judicial Dist. Court ex rel. County of Clark,
19 123 Nev. 419, 425, 168 P.3d 703, 707 (2007). The district court has broad
20 discretion to balance a criminal defendant's right to choose her own counsel against
21 the administration of justice. Id. Broad discretion must be granted trial courts on
22 matters of continuances and only unreasoning and arbitrary insistence upon
23 expeditiousness in face of justifiable request for delay violates right to assistance
24 of counsel. Morris v. Slappy, 461 U.S. 1, 11-2, 103 S.Ct. 1610 (1983).

25 In the Ninth Circuit, the denial of a continuance four days before trial to
26 allow a defendant, who had appointed counsel, to retain a private attorney did not
27 violate the Sixth Amendment where the court noted appointed counsel's ability to
28 proceed, evaluated defendant's diligence in seeking private counsel, and weighed

1 the potential impact of a continuance on victims and witnesses. Houston v.
2 Schomig, 533 F.3d 1076, 1079 (9th Cir. 2008); see Morris v. Slappy, 461 U.S. 1,
3 13-15, 103 S.Ct. 1610 (1983) (acknowledging that appropriate factors to consider
4 include administration of justice, difficulty in assembling witnesses, bad faith
5 delaying tactics, victims' concerns). Where defendant's private counsel, who had
6 been substituted for court-appointed counsel for a few days before trial, made a
7 motion for continuance on the morning of the trial to have more time to prepare,
8 this Court held that the trial court did not commit error in denying the motion for
9 continuance. Jones v. State, 90 Nev. 45, 518 P.2d 164 (1974). Last minute
10 substitutions only for the purpose of gaining continuances are frowned upon.
11 People v. Schumacher, 256 Cal.App.2d 858, 64 Cal.Rptr. 494 (1967); People v.
12 Phillips, 270 Cal.App.2d 381, 75 Cal.Rptr. 720 (1969).

13 In a criminal case, all motions are to be filed not less than 15 days before the
14 date set for trial and the court may decline to consider any untimely motion.
15 EDCR Rule 3.20. Pursuant to EDCR Rule 7.40(b), counsel in any case may be
16 changed **only** upon written motion served upon all the parties and filed with the
17 court. There was no written motion with the requisite written consent filed in the
18 instant case and the request was simply made orally in open court after calendar
19 call. Furthermore, EDCR 7.40(c) provides that “[n]o application for withdrawal or
20 substitution may be granted if a delay of the trial or of the hearing of any other
21 matter in the case would result.” In a case that had already been delayed for three
22 years, allowing retained counsel to withdraw on the eve of trial would yet again
23 have necessitated a continuance of the trial date.

24 In Young, this Court adopted three factors to consider in reviewing a district
25 court’s denial of a motion for substitution of counsel: “(1) the extent of the
26 conflict; (2) the adequacy of the inquiry; and (3) the timeliness of the motion.”
27 Young v. State, 120 Nev. 963, 102 P.3d 572 (2004). In evaluating the timeliness
28 of the motion, a court must balance a defendant’s constitutional right to counsel

1 against the inconvenience and delay that would result from the substitution of
2 counsel. Id., *citing* U.S. v. Moore, 159 F.3d 1154, 1158-69 (9th Cir. 1998). In
3 Young, this Court found an abuse of discretion in denying a motion for substitution
4 where the motion was made three and a half months before the start of trial and
5 there was no proof in the record that Young filed his motions for dilatory tactics or
6 bad-faith interference with the administration of justice. Young, 120 Nev. at 970,
7 102 P.3d at 577.

8 However, in Garcia, no abuse of discretion was found in the denial of a
9 substitution motion filed at calendar call, just a few days before the trial was
10 scheduled to begin. Garcia v. State, 121 Nev. 327, 336, 113 P.3d 836, 842 (2005).
11 This Court explained that consideration of the timeliness of the motion included
12 the extent to which it will result in inconvenience or delay. Garcia, 121 Nev. at
13 338-39, 113 P.3d at 843. Garcia had months to express his concerns to the court
14 but waited until the eve of trial and filed his motion in open court—a fact this
15 Court noted was suggestive of a dilatory motive. Id. The record further indicated
16 that Garcia's motion, although timely in the sense that it was filed before the actual
17 start of the trial, would have resulted in unnecessary inconvenience and delay, if
18 granted. Id. Although the trial court's inquiry into the extent of the conflict was
19 limited, it was adequate under the circumstances to affirm the denial of relief. Id.

20 The lack of timeliness of Randolph's motion was far worse than that in
21 Garcia, *supra*. Unlike the written motion filed at calendar call in Garcia which this
22 Court characterized as "suggestive of a dilatory motive," Randolph's motion was
23 oral and was made several days *after* the calendar call where all parties had
24 announced ready for trial. The trial judge in this case found that "the timing alone
25 suggests a dilatory motive on behalf of Mr. Randolph." Ex. A, Transcript of
26 1/6/12 at 9:38AM, p. 24. The trial judge further found that although there had
27 been numerous hearings previously in the case, "[a]t no time has Mr. Randolph
28 ever indicated to this Court, and he's had the ability to do so, that he would like

1 different counsel.” Id. Randolph’s assertion that his motion was timely simply
2 because it was orally made “before” the commencement of trial is not supported by
3 law.

4 In assessing prejudice if the motion were granted, the trial judge considered
5 that it was just 11 days before trial, that both sides had subpoenaed witnesses and
6 paid experts to come on the trial date, that it had taken three years to get the case
7 ready for trial, and that it would take a long time to get the case ready for trial
8 again and again. Id. at pp. 25-6. In fact, the trial was actually set to begin on
9 January 3rd, but the trial judge had already delayed the start until January 17th to
10 accommodate the defense. Id. at p. 29. The State represented that it had at least 25
11 out-of-state witnesses who at considerable expense, time, and effort were all
12 prepared and able to testify. Id. at p. 20. In the three years the case had been
13 pending in district court, there had been multiple continuances that had been given
14 all at the defense request. Id. at p. 18. Also, this was not the first time Randolph
15 had delayed the case by changing attorneys. Id. at p. 7.

16 The extent of the trial judge’s inquiry was adequate and reasonable and gave
17 all parties an opportunity to fully express their concerns. Ex. B, Transcript from
18 1/6/12 at 10:19AM, pp. 2-63. Significantly, such inquiry revealed no
19 irreconcilable conflict or complete break-down in the attorney-client relationship
20 such as would violate the Sixth Amendment. Id. The mere fact that the accused
21 lacks trust or confidence in counsel, or disagrees with counsel, or fails to cooperate
22 in good faith with counsel, or that there is a lack of communication between the
23 accused and counsel caused by the accused, does not justify discharge or
24 substitution of counsel. 22 C.J.S. Criminal Law § 392. There is no constitutional
25 guarantee to a meaningful relationship between a criminal defendant and his
26 counsel. Morris v. Slappy, 461 U.S. 1, 14, 103 S.Ct. 1610 (1983). While the client
27 may make decisions regarding the ultimate objectives of representation, the trial
28 lawyer alone is entrusted with decisions regarding legal tactics such as deciding

1 what witnesses to call and what defenses to develop. Rhyne v. State, 118 Nev. 1,
2 8, 38 P.3d 163, 167 (2002). None of Randolph’s purported disagreements or
3 dissatisfaction with counsel amounted to the type of irreconcilable conflict or
4 complete breakdown required to show a Sixth Amendment violation.

5 **Because the Request to Substitute was Untimely, the Analysis is the Same**
6 **Regardless of Whether Counsel is Retained or Appointed**

7 In their argument to the judge below, defense counsel argued against
8 application of the three factors articulated in Young and Garcia, *supra*, to
9 situations involving privately retained counsel. Ex. A, Transcript from 1/6/12 at
10 9:38AM, pp. 8-9. But counsel below provided no authority to the trial judge in
11 support of their argument that Young and Garcia were limited to substitutions of
12 appointed counsel. Id. Having been given no authority to the contrary, the trial
13 judge did not abuse her discretion in concluding that “the factors set forth in those
14 cases are applicable to the incident case. Notwithstanding the distinction that in
15 those cases it happened to be appointed counsel versus in this case it’s retained
16 counsel, the Court finds it’s really a distinction without a difference.” Id. at p. 23.

17 Now for the first time in his mandamus petition, Randolph cites to California
18 case authority for the proposition that in contrast to situations involving appointed
19 counsel, a defendant may discharge his retained counsel of choice at any time with
20 or without cause. People v. Lara, 86 Cal. App. 4th 139, 152, 103 Cal. Rptr. 2d 201
21 (2001); People v. Ortiz, 51 Cal.3d 975, 275 Cal.Rptr. 191, 800 P.2d 547 (1990).
22 Therefore, in cases of discharging retained counsel, an extent-of-conflict inquiry
23 generally is not appropriate or relevant. Id.; but see United States v. Mota-Santana,
24 391 F.3d 42, 47 (1st Cir. 2004) (disagreeing with Ortiz). However, neither Lara
25 nor Ortiz involved an untimely request for substitution of retained counsel that
26 necessitated the continuance of a trial date as in the present case. Notwithstanding
27 that such case authority was not provided to the judge below, none of it controls
28 the present situation.

1 In fact, Lara recognized that the right to discharge even retained counsel is
2 not absolute and the court may still exercise discretion to ensure orderly and
3 expeditious judicial administration if the defendant is “unjustifiably dilatory or ...
4 arbitrarily desires to substitute counsel at the time of trial.” Lara, *supra*, 86
5 Cal.App.4th at 153, *citing* People v. Blake (1980) 105 Cal.App.3d 619, 623-624
6 [164 Cal.Rptr. 480]; People v. Leonard, *supra*, 78 Cal.App.4th 776, 784.
7 Similarly, Ortiz held the defendant's right to discharge his retained counsel was not
8 absolute, and the trial court retained discretion to deny such a motion if the
9 discharge “was untimely and would result in a “ 'disruption of the orderly
10 processes of justice unreasonable under the circumstances of the particular case.' ”
11 People v. Ortiz, *supra*, 51 Cal.3d at p. 982, *quoting* People v. Crovedi (1966) 65
12 Cal.2d 199, 208 [53 Cal.Rptr. 284, 417 P.2d 868]; People v. Turner, 7 Cal.App.4th
13 at p. 918.

14 The Ninth Circuit agrees with Ortiz, *supra*, that the three part extent-of-
15 conflict analysis applicable to a defendant seeking new court-appointed counsel
16 generally does not apply to a defendant seeking to discharge retained counsel.
17 United States v. Rivera-Corona, 618 F.3d 976, 979-80 (9th Cir. 2010). However,
18 Rivera-Corona also explained that this is true “only where delay is not an issue.”
19 Id. The extent-of-conflict inquiry is not relevant “unless the substitution would
20 cause significant delay or inefficiency.” Id. The Ninth Circuit explained that
21 “[c]onflict between the defendant and his attorney enters the analysis only if the
22 court is required to balance the defendant's reason for requesting substitution
23 against the scheduling demands of the court.” Id. The only exception to the
24 application of the three-part test is for situations in which the defendant seeks to
25 substitute retained counsel and timeliness is not a problem; in such cases, the
26 inquiry and conflict factors may be irrelevant. U.S. v. Torres-Rodriguez, 930 F.2d
27 1375, 1380 n. 2 (9th Cir.1991), overruled on other grounds, Bailey v. United
28 States, 516 U.S. 137, 142-43, 116 S.Ct. 501, 133 L.Ed.2d 472 (1995). Because

1 timeliness was a problem in the instant case and the request for substitution had to
2 be weighed against the government's interest in the fair, orderly, and effective
3 administration of justice, the three factor analysis of Young and Garcia continues
4 to control regardless of any retained or appointed counsel distinction.

5 CONCLUSION

6 This Court should not interfere with the trial judge's well-reasoned exercise
7 of broad discretion in denying the motion to substitute retained counsel under the
8 circumstances of this case. The inquiry and rationale of the trial judge are legally
9 sound and did not infringe on any Constitutional right. The right to discharge
10 retained counsel is not absolute. The untimely oral request in this case for
11 substitution of retained counsel on the eve of trial could not overcome the
12 prejudice to the fair administration of justice if this three-year old complex and
13 costly murder case were continued yet again. This Court's actions in entertaining
14 the instant petition have already rewarded Randolph with the trial continuance he
15 so desperately sought. When the public complains about the high cost and delay of
16 capital litigation, this is why. The standard for mandamus is high and it is an
17 extraordinary remedy. Unless this Court is prepared to say that the judge in this
18 case manifestly or arbitrarily and capriciously abused her discretion, mandamus
19 relief must be denied. The record shows a thoughtful, well-reasoned exercise of
20 discretion founded upon sound law. Therefore the State respectfully requests that
21 mandamus be denied.

22 Dated this 20th day of January, 2012.

23 Respectfully submitted,

24 MARY-ANNE MILLER
25 Interim Clark County District Attorney
Nevada Bar # 001419

26
27 BY /s/ Steven S. Owens
28 STEVEN S. OWENS
Chief Deputy District Attorney
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SSO/ed