

SUMMARY STATEMENT

State of Idaho v. James Edward Snapp, Jr.

Docket No. 44642

James Edward Snapp, Jr. was charged with trafficking in methamphetamine and/or amphetamine. After an officer attempted to stop Snapp for speeding, Snapp did not stop but continued down a long driveway, rounded an outbuilding, and pulled up to a residence. While Snapp's vehicle was still moving, Snapp tossed a dark-colored item toward the residence. When questioned about the item, Snapp denied throwing anything. Shortly thereafter, the officer found the item about a foot from the residence, which the officer testified was within reaching distance from the pathway to the front door. The item was a black handbag containing a large Ziploc baggy filled with 119.5 grams of methamphetamine.

Snapp filed a motion to suppress the evidence of methamphetamine, arguing it was obtained as the result of a warrantless search. The district court denied Snapp's motion. Snapp then entered a conditional guilty plea, reserving his right to appeal the denial of his motion to suppress. The district court imposed a unified sentence of seven years, with three years determinate. On appeal, Snapp argued: (1) officers unlawfully searched the curtilage of his residence without a warrant, and the open view doctrine was inapplicable to the circumstance; (2) Snapp had a reasonable expectation of privacy in a bag containing methamphetamine because he did not abandon it; and (3) the plain view exception to the warrant requirement did not apply to the seizure and search of the bag. The Idaho Court of Appeals held Snapp's words, acts, and other objective facts indicated Snapp abandoned his privacy interest in the bag and, thus, did not have standing to challenge the search. The Court affirmed the district court's order denying Snapp's motion to suppress.