

UNPUBLISHEDUNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 24-6233

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

JOSE ARMANDO BRAN, a/k/a Pantro,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, at Richmond. Robert E. Payne, Senior District Judge. (3:12-cr-00131-REP-1; 3:23-cv-00639-REP; 3:23-cv-00640-REP; 3:23-cv-00641-REP)

Submitted: June 17, 2026

Decided: July 9, 2026

Before WILKINSON and RUSHING, Circuit Judges, and FLOYD, Senior Circuit Judge.

Affirmed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Jose Armando Bran, Appellant Pro Se. Jacqueline Romy Bechara, OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, Alexandria, Virginia, for Appellee.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Jose Armando Bran appeals the district court's order construing his postjudgment motions as unauthorized, successive 28 U.S.C. § 2255 motions and dismissing them for lack of jurisdiction.¹ On appeal, we confine our review to the issues raised in the informal brief. *See* 4th Cir. R. 34(b). Because Bran's informal brief does not challenge the district court's conclusion that his motions were unauthorized, successive § 2255 motions, Bran has forfeited appellate review of the court's order. *See Jackson v. Lightsey*, 775 F.3d 170, 177 (4th Cir. 2014) ("The informal brief is an important document; under Fourth Circuit rules, our review is limited to issues preserved in that brief.").

Consistent with our decision in *United States v. Winestock*, 340 F.3d 200, 208 (4th Cir. 2003), we construe Bran's notice of appeal and informal brief as an application to file a second or successive § 2255 motion. Upon review, we conclude that Bran's claims do not meet the relevant standard. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2255(h). We therefore deny authorization to file a successive § 2255 motion.

¹ We previously remanded to the district court for a determination of whether Bran was entitled to a reopening of the appeal period under Fed. R. App. P. 4(a)(6). *United States v. Bran*, No. 24-6233, 2025 WL 1098878, at *1 (4th Cir. Apr. 14, 2025). The district court found that Bran satisfied the requirements for reopening the appeal period. Bran does not require a certificate of appealability to appeal the district court's order. *See Bixby v. Stirling*, 90 F.4th 140, 156-57 (4th Cir. 2024); *United States v. McRae*, 793 F.3d 392, 400 (4th Cir. 2015).

Accordingly, we affirm the district court's order.² We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

AFFIRMED

² On appeal, Bran has filed four motions requesting a variety of relief. (ECF Nos. 6, 7, 12, 21). We deny each of Bran's motions and all relief requested therein.