

Can a Judge Overturn a Jury Verdict?

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Have you ever wondered if a judge can overturn a guilty verdict, or even a not guilty verdict? The results of former West Palm Beach Firefighter Capt. Rick Curtis's trial may leave people wondering – is a jury verdict the final word?

DUI Conviction Overturned

According to the Palm Beach Post, Rick Curtis is fighting to get his job back as a firefighter for West Palm Beach now that his DUI conviction has been overturned. The conviction was overturned after Curtis alleged that the judge had an "intimate relationship" with one of Curtis' adversarial colleagues. Curtis claims he didn't learn of the relationship until after the trial.

City officials are refusing to let Curtis return to the department and are claiming that the conviction wasn't the sole reason he was fired. County Court Judge Paul Damico ordered a new trial Wednesday.

Can a Judge Overrule a Jury Verdict?

In any trial, the judge's decision and opinion has higher authority than anyone else. The fact of the matter is that a judge is an expert on the law and the jury is not. The judge can overturn a guilty verdict and find the defendant not guilty, but not the other way around.

Instead of overturning a guilty verdict, the judge can order a new trial. This is a rare instance that can happen if the judge determines that there was a procedural error or an error with the evidence that was important to the case.

Ultimately, a judge overruling a jury verdict is very rare because jury verdicts are supposed to represent the sentiment of the community.

Criminal Defense

If you are facing charges and fear the results of your trial, you need a [criminal defense lawyer](#) on your side. An experienced [criminal defense lawyer](#) will know how to file a motion to vacate the conviction if you feel that you

have been wrongly convicted based on errors during the trial.

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