

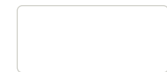


Comments

Subscribe
Starting at 99 cents

Members
Sign In

SJC changes the rules for felony murder for first time since Civil War



16

By [Laura Crimaldi](#) and [John R. Ellement](#) | GLOBE STAFF SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

The state's highest court on Wednesday narrowed the scope of the state's longtime felony murder law, ruling that defendants in fatal crimes can no longer be convicted of first-degree murder unless it is proven that they set out to kill or knew their actions would likely turn fatal.

The ruling affects accomplices who drove the getaway car or otherwise participated in a crime — but weren't the actual "triggerman." It also will affect a person who committed a felony — such as a rape or a robbery — and a victim died sometime later.

The Supreme Judicial Court ruling raises the burden of proof in such cases, making it more difficult for prosecutors to secure first-degree murder convictions, legal specialists said. It is not retroactive.

"A prosecutor is going to have satisfy a jury that

One free article left. [Subscribe now](#) →

intended a robbery and had bad luck.”

Comments

Get **Fast Forward** in your
inbox:

Forget yesterday's news. Get what you need
today in this early-morning email.

Sign Up

Until now, “the intent to commit the felony is sufficient alone to establish malice,” Chief Justice Ralnh D Gants wrote in the ruling

Top 10 Trending Articles

Most Viewed	Most Commented	Most Shared
Should I drink 25 glasses of water like Tom Brady? Experts say no		
After Groton slayings, residents left searching for answers on peaceful Maine island		
Would Amazon suck up all the tech talent in Boston?		
Daylight saving time year round? Some Mass. officials think so		
Chris Sale gets 300th strikeout as Red Sox punch ticket to postseason		
Turkeys are ‘strategizing’ in Cambridge and officials want to do something about it		
Mueller seeks White House documents related to Trump’s actions as president		
Was it really necessary to trot out Chris Sale in the 8th inning?		
Park plan envisions fun — and flood control — along Fort Point		
SJC changes the rules for felony murder for first time since Civil War		

Real journalists. Real journalism. Subscribe to The Boston Globe today
One free article left. Subscribe now →

Subscribe Now

Digital Access
Home Delivery

My Account

Log in
Manage my Account
Mobile Customer Service
Sign Up For Newsletters

Comments

Contact

Help
FAQs
Globe newsroom
Advertise
Order Back Issues

Social

Facebook
Twitter
Google+

More

ePaper
News in Education
Archives
Privacy policy
Terms of service
Terms of purchase
Your Ad Choices
Work at Boston Globe Media

© 2017 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC

One free article left. [Subscribe now](#) →