

Judge Reduces Award for Yogi's Ex-Attorney



Summary: A California judge decided the punitive damages awarded by a jury were too high and the attorney could accept a lower amount or face a retrial.

Minakshi Jafa-Bodden filed a sexual harassment suit against yoga guru Bikram Choudhury and was awarded \$6.4 million in punitive damages by a jury. However a California judge decided the award for the ex-attorney of Choudhury's was too high when compared to actual damages.

Read [Yoga Guru Hit with Multiple Lawsuits](#) to learn more.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mark Mooney reduced the award to \$4.6 million or they could hold a new trial if she was unwilling to accept the new amount. Mooney made this decision after hearing a motion from Choudhury for a new trial. Mooney said in relation to the allegations for the lawsuit and award amount, "Is [Choudhury's] the absolutely worst conduct? Yeah, it was bad. But maybe it should be in the middle range. Maybe a 5-to-1 multiplier. That's still a substantial award."

The jury awarded the plaintiff Jafa-Bodden a punitive award of seven times the compensatory damages of \$924,554. The judge has given her a few days to make her decision.

See [Bikram Yoga Sues Insurance Companies for Not Defending Guru](#).

Choudhury argued for a new trial, citing character evidence and the claims of sexual assault and rape as improper and prejudicial. Choudhury's attorney Robert W. Cohen argues that during the trial, the accusations against his client were presented without qualification. Cohen said, "What we had in this trial was a drumbeat day after day. Not that these were allegations, but that these were facts...that Mr. Choudhury did these acts and therefore should be punished."

Read [Bikram Choudhury to Pay for Sexual Harassment Against Lawyer](#) to learn more.

Choudhury has been hit with multiple lawsuits over the past few years over allegations of discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment.

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