

The Louisiana Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Louisiana Jury Verdicts

February 2026

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

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Civil Jury Verdicts

Timely coverage of civil jury verdicts in Louisiana including court, division, presiding judge, parties, case number, attorneys and results.

Truck Negligence - The plaintiff, a lawyer then age 39 and a former Ragin' Cajun linebacker, suffered a thoracic outlet syndrome injury from a minor sideswipe collision (all imposed on a long history of cervical complaints and then had significant and debilitating complications (cardiac bypass and colorectal) after his vascular surgeon severed an artery during an outlet surgery - in this lawsuit the attorney linked all of these injuries back to the sideswipe crash - the claimed damages were enormous as the attorney (now disabled) was earning millions a year from his personal injury practice - the defense diminished the collision itself and its link to the

plaintiff's injuries - after the parties had made their closing arguments but before the jury deliberated, there was a partial settlement and several defense interests and insurers agreed to pay the plaintiff \$20,000,000 with open claims up to \$50,000,000 against other insurers

Rudick v. TireCo, 91537

Plaintiff: Jerome H. Moroux,

Broussard David & Moroux, Lafayette

Defense: Michael J. Remondet,

Jeansonne & Remondet, Lafayette and

Christopher Kaul and Jordan P.

Parker, *Thompson Coe Cousins & Irons*,

New Orleans

Verdict: \$8,200,000 for plaintiff

Parish: St. Martin

Judge: Lewis H. Pitman, Jr.

Date: 1-23-26



An image of the Rudick pick-up truck after the collision

Products Liability - The plaintiff suffered a serious and disabling injury to his thumb when making a valve repair to his .40 caliber air rifle – air was forced through the muzzle as he covered the muzzle opening with his thumb – in this lawsuit he alleged a combination of a design defect, failure to warn and breach of warranty – the court's jury instructions were confused and clumsy and while the jury exonerated the defendant on liability, the instructions still permitted to apportion fault and award damages in spite of a finding the defendant was not fault – the trial judge has since asked the parties for briefing on how to handle the so-called “inconsistent” verdict

Cornwell v. Texas Machine Parts, 2:24-926

Plaintiff: Peter W. Meissner, River Ridge and Pierre W. Mouledoux and Robert T. Garity, Jr., both of Harahan
Defense: Jonathan N. Walsh and Karina Shaheen, *Deutsch Kerrigan*, New Orleans

Verdict: \$200,000 for plaintiff less 55% comparative fault but verdict also mixed on liability because of court's clumsy jury instructions

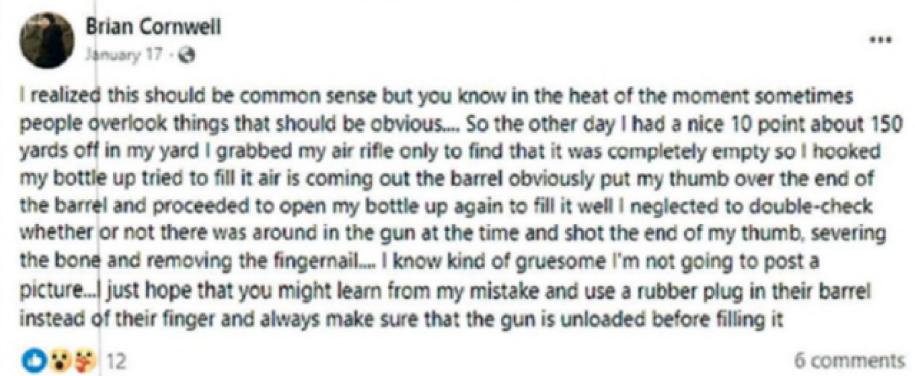
Federal: **New Orleans**

Judge: Eldon E. Fallon

Date: 2-4-26

Brian Cornwell, then age 39, was the owner of a Texas Machine Parts manufactured “Extreme Big Bore” brand .40 caliber air rifle. He bought it online in March of 2021 and had used it for hunting several times. The rifle needed a valve repair and Cornwell so advised Texas Machine Parts. The company sent him a valve and instructions on how to install it.

Cornwell was doing just that on 1-



Brian Cornwell
January 17 · 12

I realized this should be common sense but you know in the heat of the moment sometimes people overlook things that should be obvious.... So the other day I had a nice 10 point about 150 yards off in my yard I grabbed my air rifle only to find that it was completely empty so I hooked my bottle up tried to fill it air is coming out the barrel obviously put my thumb over the end of the barrel and proceeded to open my bottle up again to fill it well I neglected to double-check whether or not there was around in the gun at the time and shot the end of my thumb, severing the bone and removing the fingernail.... I know kind of gruesome I'm not going to post a picture... I just hope that you might learn from my mistake and use a rubber plug in their barrel instead of their finger and always make sure that the gun is unloaded before filling it

12

6 comments

The plaintiff's Facebook post describing the gun accident

11-23. He was following instructions. Cornwell placed his thumb over the muzzle of the rifle as he installed the rifle. Suddenly a rush of air raced down the rifle. The explosive air “eviscerated” his thumb to the first knuckle. It was a devastating hand injury and has impaired Cornwell’s career as a welder.

Cornwell sued Texas Machine Parts and advanced three claims to trial. The first was that the rifle was defectively designed. He also alleged the failure to warn regarding the instructions on making the valve repair. Finally he presented a breach of warranty count. The instructions Texas Machine Parts has sent with the valve indicated that when the rifle is filled with hair, “you may need to cover the barrel with your finger.” That this warning was defective was the key thrust of Cornwell’s case.

The jury could award him medical and lost wages damages, as well as general damages in a single category. His liability experts were Kenneth Comeaux, Gunsmith, Marrero and William Caster, Pneumatics, Folsom. His injuries were discussed by the treating Dr. Nicholas Pappas, Orthopedics.

The case was originally filed in Tangipahoa Parish. Texas Machine Parts removed the case to federal court. It questioned Cornwell’s version of events that the incident happened as he was making the valve repair. He said at the ER after the incident that he saw a large buck in his front yard and forgot there was a bullet in the chamber. He repeated that version in a Facebook post where he warned others to use a rubber plug as opposed to your finger. Texas Machine Parts also denied there was any defect in the gun or its warning about making the repair. The defense air rifle expert was Richard Vasquez, Jacksonville, FL. The record indicates that the rifle was sent to Vasquez and he inadvertently lost it.

Cornwell’s proof burden on the defect count was that the rifle was unreasonably dangerous when it left the defendant’s control or by the reasonably anticipated later use. Cornwell was also required to proof a feasible alternative design that was reasonable. The warnings count required proof of the failure to warn, causation and separately that injury arose from reasonably anticipated use.

However the incident happened

(the defense was now presenting its case) on the following Tuesday after the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. At this time the parties filed a motion to dismiss with prejudice. Each party was to bear its own costs and attorney fees. The joint motion to dismiss (Judge Brown granted the motion) did not mention a settlement.

There was a settlement. The parties compromised the matter and New Orleans agreed to pay Flanks \$2.5 million. Gov. Landry replied to the settlement the next day and criticized it on Facebook. Covering the full 39 years that Flanks was in prison (including for robbery), the settlement would represent approximately \$175 per day in prison. If the settlement was measured at just the time Flanks served for murder (not just robbery), the settlement would represent \$285 per day at Angola.

Gender Discrimination - In a widely watched case in employment circles on a national basis, the EEOC was sued by the plaintiff who alleged she was passed over the field director position of the New Orleans EEOC office because of her gender – the jury was deadlocked on liability – a new trial has been set for April of 2026

Kandan v. EEOC, 2:24-2089

Plaintiff: Tulio D. Chirinos, *Chirinos Law Firm*, Boca Raton, FL, Andrew Lacy, *The Lacy Employment Law Firm*, Philadelphia, PA and Carlos Cano, Metairie

Defense: Jason M. Bigelow and Sandra L. Sears, *Assistant U.S. Attorneys*, New Orleans

Verdict: Mistrial (Jury cannot reach a verdict)

Federal: **New Orleans**

Judge: Eva J. Dossier

Date: 2-9-26

Uma Kandan, a naturalized citizen from Indian, has worked a quarter-century for the EEOC field office in New Orleans. She started in 1999 as investigator and later became an Enforcement Manager in 2014. Kandan filled in 2015 as the Acting Field Director. Kandan did so again from August of 2022 to February of 2023.

As this time Kandan sought to be the permanent Field Director in New Orleans. The office is managed out of Houston. There were two applicants for the position. There was Kandan and a male applicant. While Kandan was that man's supervisor for some 20 months, he worked out of Houston.

The Houston was also run by a man who was also close friends with the other male applicant. The interviews were conducted and Kandan was passed over. The EEOC

explained that Kandan was not selected because she had not interviewed as well.

Kandan believed the non-selection was because of a combination of her gender and national origin. She cited her overwhelming qualifications and experience. Moreover she had supervised the selected male. Kandan also noted that the deciding official had written in his notes that the selected male (a close friend) had been groomed for the position.

The EEOC denied it all and moved for summary judgment. It also noted that while the selected male had less experience at the EEOC, he had similar management experience in the military. Magistrate Judge Dossier denied the motion as to both gender and national origin. However as the trial began, Kandan only advanced the gender claim. This trial was widely watched on a national basis in HR circles because it was the EEOC being sued for discrimination.

The case was tried for five days in New Orleans and the jury deliberated over two of those days. The jury was apparently stuck on the meaning of motivating factor. It asked the court a clever and perceptive question: What percentage is required for her sex to be a motivating factor? 1%? 25%? 50%?

The court replied that there was no numerical factor and in fact, there could be more than one motivating factor. She continued that it didn't have to be the primary factor and the proof only needed to show it played a role.

The jury deliberated further but to no avail. It sent a note to the court that "sadly, no additional information will help us end this standstill." Judge Dossier declared a mistrial. The case has been set for a second trial on 4-

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