

## Lawyers pursue Patriots in Aaron Hernandez slay suit

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**Created:** 7/12/2017 5:13 PM

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Bob McGovern Wednesday, July 12, 2017





Credit: Chris Christo

CIVIL ACTION: George Leontire, left, representing the estate of Aaron Hernandez; and plaintiffs' attorneys William Kennedy, center, and Kenneth Kolpan, were back in court yesterday.

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Aaron

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Hernandez's estate may be close to broke, and attorneys representing the families of two men the former tight end was accused of murdering are calling on the New England Patriots to compensate them for their loss.

“The reality of it is that one of their products is involved — at least in our case — in taking the lives of some people that left some victims behind,” said William Kennedy, who is representing the family of

Safiro Furtado. “There is a way of making amends for that, and I think they are in a position to do that.”

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Furtado and Daniel de Abreu were gunned down during the summer of 2012, and Hernandez, who was then playing for the Patriots, was later indicted in their murders. In April, a jury acquitted Hernandez of the

In April, a jury acquitted Hernandez of the crimes. The former star tight end hung himself in his prison cell less than a week later.

The families of Furtado and de Abreu are continuing their wrongful death lawsuits against Hernandez's estate, and yesterday their attorneys appeared in Suffolk Superior Court to map out the trajectory of the litigation. George Leontire, an attorney for the Hernandez family, told reporters the money simply isn't there.

"We may have an insolvent estate here," Leontire said.

The biggest asset remaining is the North Attleboro home Hernandez owned and lived

in, according to Leontire. However, Furtado, de Abreu, and the family of Odin L. Lloyd all have laid claims to whatever money comes out of the property.

Hernandez was found guilty of the 2013 murder of Lloyd two years ago. Under an old Massachusetts law, that conviction was erased because Hernandez died before he exhausted his appellate rights. The Patriots did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Leontire said there won't be any payout if attorneys for de Abreu and Furtado can't prove Hernandez killed the men.

“Before we start talking about damages, one

has to establish liability,” he said. “There is no established liability in this case. As you are well aware, the jury in the criminal case found Mr. Hernandez not guilty.”

The burden of proof in civil proceedings is lower than in the criminal context — needing a preponderance of the evidence instead of beyond a reasonable doubt.

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