

Dalia Dippolito guilty in murder-for-hire case

Palm Beach County jury takes less than three hours to reach verdict

By [Alexia Campbell](#), Sun Sentinel

Dalia Dippolito is guilty of trying to have her husband killed, a [Palm Beach County](#) jury said Friday afternoon.

After less than three hours of deliberations, the jury announced its verdict in a packed courtroom just before 4 p.m.

Dippolito's eyes widened and her face fell as the verdict was read, but she didn't cry.

Judge Jeffrey Colbath revoked Dippolito's house arrest, and she was handcuffed and led away by two sheriff's deputies.

Her mother, Randa Mohammed, began weeping and stormed out of the courtroom.

Dippolito, 28, is to be sentenced June 16, and faces up to 30 years in prison.

Juror Leigh-Ann Verni said there was some second-guessing during deliberations but not for long.

"We had our ups and downs. We would deliberate about 'What if it was?' and 'What if it wasn't?' But we can't judge it on anything else but the evidence."

Likewise, juror Chadd Milton, 39, of Loxahatchee said it was strictly about the evidence

Significant, he said, was that Dippolito took all her jewelry to the gym with her on the day her husband was to be murdered. If it was a made-for-TV hoax, she wouldn't have taken that risk, the former U.S. Marine said.

And he saw no clear link among Michael Dippolito and Dalia's two lovers, casting doubt on her defense that everything was a hoax.

"I could only see that (Dalia) was the common denominator in the process," he said.

Michael Dippolito, Dalia's husband, arrived in court Friday just minutes before the verdict was read, then stood outside the [Palm Beach County](#) Courthouse, flanked by his three attorneys.

"This is not over for him," attorney Jason Brodie said. "It's been two years. We still have a divorce case to deal with. This is a first step for him to move forward."

Michael Dippolito declined to comment. Brodie said he was "overcome with emotion."

The two alternate jurors — who had sat through the two-week trial and were dismissed before deliberations began at 1 p.m. — waited for the verdict, and followed Michael Dippolito outside.

"I really feel for you, being taken advantage of," said Sandra Clutter, 47, who lives west of [Boynton Beach](#).

She and alternate Diane Holder, 26, of West Palm Beach, both had said they would have voted for a guilty verdict.

Jurors heard nearly five hours of dramatic closing arguments on Friday, with prosecutors describing Dalia Dippolito as "evil and greedy" and her defense attorney describing her husband, Michael Dippolito, as a "conniving con man."

Defense attorney Michael Salnick made a plea to jurors to let Dalia Dippolito "wake up from this nightmare" and reach a verdict of not guilty.