

# R.I. club owners win delay of \$1 million workers comp fine

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PROVIDENCE — The state Supreme Court ruled last week that the owners of a nightclub where 100 people died in a fire can delay paying a more than \$1 million fine levied for their failure to carry workers compensation insurance on club employees.

The stay by the state's highest court will continue while it reviews the fine. There was no indication when the court might rule.

The Station nightclub in West Warwick was destroyed in February after a band's pyrotechnics ignited flammable foam around the stage. Four employees were among the dead.

The state fined Jeffrey and Michael Derderian for not having the insurance during the more than three years they operated the club. The \$1.07 million fine was the maximum — \$1,000 for each day the club operated without the insurance. In July, a Workers Compensation Court judge upheld the fine.

The Derderians appealed, arguing the fine was excessive, unconstitutional and out of line with previous penalties. A three-judge panel disagreed with all of their arguments last month. □

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