

Milwaukee Judge Convicted of Felony Obstruction for Aiding Illegal Immigrant's Escape from ICE

By Cole Harrison



When Americans walk into a courtroom, they expect the judge to uphold the law. That's the deal. The black robe symbolizes impartiality, integrity, and a commitment to justice that transcends personal opinion. Yet we keep seeing activist judges who treat the bench like a protest sign. They decide which laws deserve enforcement based on their politics, not their oath.

Here's the thing: when judges play favorites with the law, everyone loses. Public trust in the judiciary crumbles. Citizens start wondering whether justice is actually blind—or just conveniently squinting. The good news? Americans have made clear they expect accountability from those in power. And this week, a federal jury in Milwaukee delivered precisely that.

From Fox News:

A jury found Milwaukee County Judge Hannah Dugan guilty of obstructing federal immigration agents during an attempt to serve a warrant at a courthouse earlier this year. She faces up to five years in prison on the felony obstruction count...

"Today, a federal jury of her peers found her guilty and sent a clear message: the American people respect law and order. Nobody is above the law. This

Department will not tolerate obstruction, will enforce federal immigration law, and will hold criminals to account — even those who wear robes.”

A Judge Faces Justice

Milwaukee County Judge Hannah Dugan discovered this week that her judicial robe offers zero immunity from the laws she swore to uphold. A federal jury convicted the nine-year veteran of felony obstruction after she deliberately helped an illegal immigrant dodge arrest by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents inside her own courthouse. She's now staring down up to five years in federal prison.

The case is unprecedented. Never before has a state judge gone to trial for obstructing immigration enforcement. On April 18, ICE agents arrived at the Milwaukee County Courthouse to arrest Eduardo Flores-Ruiz. He had illegally re-entered the United States back in 2013 and was appearing before Dugan on battery charges. Not exactly a sympathetic figure.

But rather than let federal agents do their jobs, Dugan decided to intervene. After learning ICE was in the building, she bumped Flores-Ruiz's case to the front of her docket. Then she personally walked him and his attorney through a non-public back door—one reserved for judges and staff—allowing him to evade the waiting agents. He was eventually nabbed after a brief foot chase outside. He's since been deported to Mexico.

“I’ll Get the Heat”

The most damaging evidence? Dugan's own words. Audio recordings captured the judge telling her court reporter that she'd personally escort the defendant out. Her exact phrase: “I'll get the heat.”

This is beyond the pale. She knew what she was doing. She understood there would be consequences. And she did it anyway.

Fellow Milwaukee County Judge Kristela Cervera delivered blistering testimony against her colleague. Cervera told jurors she was “shocked” when she learned what Dugan had done. Her assessment was blunt: “Judges should not be helping defendants evade arrest.” When a sitting judge testifies against a peer about something this basic, you know the misconduct was serious.

Interim U.S. Attorney Brad Schimel made clear this prosecution wasn’t about making examples. “This was necessary to hold Judge Dugan accountable because of the actions she took,” he stated. He also pointed out something important: courthouses are among the safest places to make arrests. Far safer than traffic stops or home raids. Dugan’s interference pushed a wanted criminal back onto public streets.

Accountability Arrives

The conviction carries immediate real-world consequences beyond potential prison time. Under Wisconsin law, Dugan can no longer hold public office. Period. Her career on the bench is finished, regardless of whatever appeals her defense team files.

And here’s a detail that should irritate every Wisconsin taxpayer: Dugan has been collecting her \$175,000 annual salary while sitting at home suspended since April. Nice work if you can get it. The Wisconsin State Supreme Court will now decide whether to finally cut off that paycheck following her conviction.

Her defense attorneys expressed disappointment and promised to keep fighting. They noted that jurors acquitted her on a lesser misdemeanor charge. But the felony conviction stands. A jury of twelve citizens—seven men and five women—deliberated for six hours and concluded she broke the law. No spin changes that reality.

Judge Dugan faced a straightforward choice on April 18. She could honor her oath, respect federal law enforcement, and let ICE agents execute a lawful arrest. Instead, she chose activism. She chose resistance. She chose wrong.

Now she'll have considerable time to reflect on that decision. Americans expect judges to guard the law, not obstruct it. This week in Milwaukee, justice caught up with someone who forgot that basic truth.

Key Takeaways

- Milwaukee Judge Hannah Dugan was convicted of felony obstruction for helping an illegal immigrant evade ICE agents.
- This marks the first time a state judge has been tried for obstructing federal immigration enforcement.
- Under Wisconsin law, Dugan is now ineligible to hold public office—her judicial career is over.
- The verdict sends a clear message: judges who prioritize politics over their oath will face consequences.