

# Rabbi Elon convicted of indecent assault by force against minor

- [Motti Elon: I decided to remain silent](#)

**Prominent national-religious rabbi potentially faces up to seven years in jail for crimes.**



Rabbi Moti Elon 370. (photo credit: Marc Israel Sellem/The Jerusalem Post)

Prominent national-religious figure Rabbi Mordechai Elon was convicted on two counts of indecent assault by force against a minor at the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court on Wednesday. Elon could potentially serve up to seven years in prison for his crime.

Elon had been one of the predominant figures in the national religious world before allegations of misconduct arose and was dean of the renowned HaKotel Yeshiva. His Torah lessons were broadcast on

national radio, he had a television slot and enjoyed a large and devoted public following.

The rabbi's attorney strongly hinted that an appeal against the decision was likely.

Elon did not respond to questions about the conviction as he left the court Wednesday morning.

Later on Wednesday, while the rabbi was giving a Torah lesson back in his home in the northern town of Migdal, a man interrupted the class demanding that Elon admit what he is accused of.

"I suffered sexual assault from a well-known rabbi. Admit your errors... Why do you not have the strength to say 'I sinned'."

The rabbi's students forcibly evicted the man from the room.

Elon has vigorously denied the allegations and his supporters have argued that he was accustomed to giving warm hugs to many of his students and that the incidents for which he was convicted were misinterpreted.

The charges against Elon, brought in 2011, were that during a private meeting in 2005 with a 17-year old youth, known as Aleph whose friend had recommended he speak with the rabbi, Elon stroked Aleph's face and different parts of his body on top of his clothes, sat the boy on his lap and kissed him on the face for a prolonged period.

According to the indictment, in a separate incident Elon met Aleph in Yeshivat Hakotel and took him to his office, closed the door and sat down next to the youth on a couch. He then brought Aleph towards him, sat him on his knees and rubbed his genitals against Aleph's body above his clothes.

Charges regarding a second complainant were dropped in February when the victim refused to testify in court.

Judge Hagit Mak Kalmanovich wrote that she accepted the testimony of Aleph as reliable.

"The witness is credible in my eyes, his testimony is reasonable and logical. Difficulties raised by the defense counsel do not lead to reasonable doubt and that questions raised by Elon's defense counsel did not bring about reasonable doubt.

Only limited details of the ruling were released to the public due to the sensitivity of the case.

The judge wrote that testimony provided by another witness, who was a student at Yeshivat Horev which Elon formerly headed but not a formal complainant, about the behavior of Elon towards him bore similarities to the testimony of Aleph.

Kalmanovich continued, writing that a further witness testified about an incident he witnessed in which saw Elon in an "intimate situation with a youth," saying that although Elon was not charged on these incidents, the testimony of these witnesses strengthened and supported Aleph's version of events.