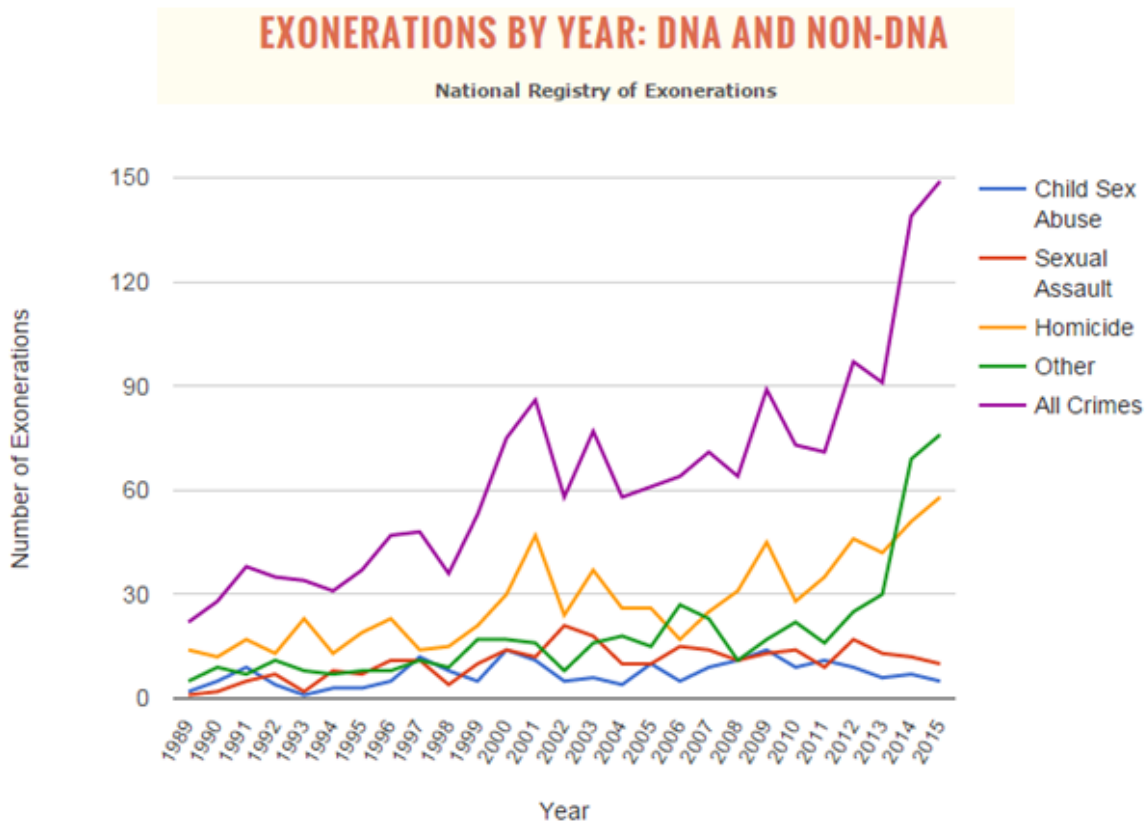


## Another Record Year – 149 Exonerations in 2015

There were [149](#) exonerations in the United States 2015, more than any previous year. (Those are the cases that we know about so far. We will add more as we will learn about them in the months to come.)

2015 also had a record number of homicide exonerations—[58](#)—and a record number of exonerations in drug cases, [51](#).

A detailed report on [Exonerations in 2015](#) was released by the Registry today.



- **The States with the Most Exonerations in 2015** were, in order: Texas ([54](#)), New York ([17](#)), Illinois ([13](#)), Alaska ([6](#)), North Carolina ([5](#)), California ([5](#)), Alabama ([4](#)), Connecticut ([4](#)), Wisconsin ([4](#)), Florida ([3](#)), Pennsylvania ([3](#)), and Virginia ([3](#)).
- **DNA Identification Evidence** was a factor in [26](#) exonerations in 2015, 17% of the total.
- **False Confessions:** [27](#) exonerations in 2015 were for convictions based on false

confessions, another record. More than 80% of these false confessions were in homicide cases ([22/27](#)), mostly by defendants who were under 18 or mentally handicapped or both.

- **Official Misconduct:** We know of official misconduct in [64](#) exonerations in 2015, a record number. Three-quarters of homicide exonerations in 2015 included known official misconduct ([44/58](#)).
- **Guilty Pleas:** [66](#) exonerations in 2015 were for convictions based on guilty pleas, more than any previous year. The great majority were drug cases ([46/65](#)), but eight were homicide exonerations—all of which included false confessions.
- **No-Crime Cases:** A record [75](#) exonerations in 2015 were cases in which no crime actually occurred. Almost two-thirds were drug cases ([48/75](#)), but [six](#) were murder convictions and 14 were convictions for other violent felonies.
- **Prosecutorial Conviction Integrity Units (CIUs)** helped secure a record [58](#) exonerations in 2015.
  - ◆ Almost three quarters of the CIU exonerations in 2015 were in Harris County, Texas, where the District Attorney’s Post Conviction Review Section continued its program of identifying and exonerating defendants who pled guilty to possession of illegal drugs, and were then cleared by lab tests that found no controlled substances in the suspected drugs seized from them. There were 31 such exonerations in Harris County in 2014 and [42](#) in 2015—and more are pending.
  - ◆ [Eight](#) CIU exonerations were in Brooklyn, New York, where the District Attorney’s Conviction Review Unit has continued to focus on a rash of questionable murder convictions from 20 to 30 years ago, most of which were based on investigations by a single corrupt detective, Louis Scarcella. In 2014, the Unit exonerated 10 murder defendants; in 2015 it added [six](#) more murder exonerations.