



Keeping Count, not Keeping Score

Since the creation of the first Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU) in Santa Clara County, California, in 2002, CIUs nationwide increasingly have played an important role in exonerating wrongfully convicted men and women. They've been involved in nearly 700 exonerations. Most CIUs are special divisions in the offices of district attorneys, but some are housed elsewhere, such as the offices of state attorneys general. CIUs not only review and evaluate claims of actual innocence, but also perform a host of other tasks such as education and training.

There are now 97 CIUs in the United States. We maintain two lists for CIUs: The first contains 50 units that have recorded at least one exoneration. Not surprisingly, that list includes many of the nation's largest counties, including Cook County, Illinois, Harris County, Texas, and the boroughs of New York City. The second contains 47 CIUs that have not yet recorded an exoneration.

We keep count of all known CIUs, but we don't keep score. We know their effectiveness isn't just about the number of exonerations they produce. That said, we take note when CIUs become involved in their first exoneration. This happened recently in Wicomico County, Maryland, (population 104,000) on the state's Eastern Shore. The CIU investigated the innocence claims of David Veney (below), who had been wrongfully convicted of rape in 1997. Veney's conviction was vacated and his charges dismissed in 2005, but to receive state compensation, he needed to be declared factually innocent.

The CIU in the Wicomico County State's Attorney's Office investigated Veney's claim and submitted an extensive brief supporting his claim of innocence. On April 10, 2023, an administrative law judge declared Veney factually innocent, and he received \$700,000 in state compensation the next month. It's both a celebratory and sobering milestone, as behind every exoneration lies a wrongful conviction. Patrick Gilbert, a senior assistant state's attorney who heads the Wicomico CIU, captured the moment perfectly. He wrote: "I share your sentiments regarding the joy and tragedy of exonerating a wrongfully convicted

person. And although you can't really reduce CIU sincerity to any one metric, it does feel good to move from the second list to the first.”



David Veney

12 Other Exonerations Published in June

- In 2002, [Jeff Titus](#) was sentenced to life in prison for fatally shooting two deer hunters in 1990 in Kalamazoo County, Michigan. He was exonerated in 2023 after a witness recanted her testimony and further investigation revealed that evidence of a serial killer targeting hunters at the time had not been disclosed to the defense.
- [Daniel Saldana](#), of Baldwin Park, California, was convicted of attempted murder in 1990. He was exonerated in 2023, after his co-defendants told investigators that another man participated in the shooting.

- In 2004, [Dupree Glass](#) and [Juan Rayford](#) were sentenced to life in prison for attempted murder in Lancaster, California. They were exonerated in 2023 after one of the real gunmen admitted to the shooting and said Glass and Rayford did not fire any shots.
- In 1990, [Tyrone Day](#) was sentenced to 40 years in prison for sexual assault in Dallas, Texas. He was exonerated in 2023 after DNA testing excluded him and the complainant said she falsely alleged she was raped.
- In 2011, [Allen Robinson](#) was sentenced to 55 years in prison for a murder in Chicago, Illinois. He was exonerated in 2022 based on evidence that he was elsewhere at the time of the shooting and that his cousin had committed the crime.
- In 2017, [Allen Johnson](#) was sentenced to 15 years in prison after pleading guilty to failing to register as a sex offender in Taylor County, Texas. He was exonerated in 2023 based on records showing that his registration requirement had expired in 2008.
- In 2009, [William Johnson](#) was convicted of murder in the death of an off-duty police officer in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was exonerated in 2023, after an eyewitness recanted her testimony and DNA testing excluded Johnson as a contributor to some items found near the shooting.
- In 2005, [Carl Reed](#) was sentenced to 27 years in prison after falsely confessing to a murder in Chicago, Illinois. He was exonerated in 2023 based on DNA testing that excluded him as the source of the physical evidence in the case and evidence that the lead detective engaged in coercive misconduct during interrogation.
- In 2019, [Hussein Hassan](#) was convicted of sexual abuse of a 13-year-old girl in Pilot Rock, Oregon. He was exonerated in 2022, after a court ruled that a judge erred in barring Hassan from presenting evidence at trial that challenged the victim's testimony.

- [Frank Gable](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole in 1991 for the murder of a state prison official in Salem, Oregon. He was exonerated in 2023 based on admissions by the real killer and the recantations of witnesses who had implicated Gable at trial.
- [Frederick Jeffery](#) pled guilty to drug possession in Houston, Texas, in 2010. He was exonerated in 2013 after the police crime lab determined that the substance seized from him contained no illegal drugs. Jeffery was also exonerated of a 2016 drug conviction in 2022.

In our [Groups Registry](#), we published two new cases.

- The first, from [Raleigh, North Carolina](#), involves seven men wrongfully convicted based on misconduct by a police officer and his confidential informant.
- The second, from [Houston, Texas](#), captures wrongful convictions attributed to misconduct by former Officer Gerald Goines, whose misconduct contributed to a deadly drug raid in 2019. That group currently has six members but is expected to grow in coming years.

With your support, the National Registry of Exonerations can protect the innocent by preventing false convictions.

We find the stories. We painstakingly search for every false conviction in the United States that is overturned and meets our criteria for exoneration. We gather the information, study the cases, and code the data, fueling the most comprehensive public database of exonerations that exists.

We tell the stories. One by one, we write and share the human stories behind each individual exoneration. We bear witness to these incredible injustices to ensure that they are remembered.

And we count the stories. Thousands of exonerees. Tens of thousands of years lost to wrongful incarceration. Untold costs paid by our communities. This independent collection of data allows us to understand how false convictions occur and prevent them from happening in the future.

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