



# The Long Path to Exoneration

For so many of the men and women in the Registry, the path to freedom — to exoneration — is long and hard. Some have their charges dismissed after spending decades in prison. For others, the path can be far more circuitous. [Milton Jones](#), whose case we published last month, is from the latter group. He was convicted of murder and robbery in 1976, and paroled in 1990.

Parole is freedom with an asterisk, and Jones remained on parole for more than 30 years, all the while fighting his wrongful conviction. He built a life for himself, becoming a businessman and a leader in his community. Now 70 years old, Jones works at a Boston nonprofit that helps victims of violence and provides support for people being released from prison.

In December 2022, a judge in Boston agreed with Jones's attorneys — and prosecutors — that his case had been marred by flawed identifications and a failure to disclose exculpatory evidence. After the state dismissed the charges, Jones's attorney said, “We are overjoyed that Mr. Jones’s 47-year nightmare of wrongful conviction is coming to an end, and that this wonderful man, who has helped so many others heal from trauma, can now begin his own process of healing.”



*Milton Jones surrounded by attorneys and students who sought his post-conviction relief. (Photo courtesy of the Boston College Innocence Program)*

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## 25 Exonerations Published in January

Last month, we published 24 other individual exonerations and added one case to our Groups Registry.

In 1985, [Raymond Flanks](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole for a 1983 murder in New Orleans, Louisiana. He was exonerated in 2022 by previously undisclosed police reports that undermined the sole eyewitness's identification.

In 2011, [Dewayne Dunn](#) was sentenced to 58 years in prison for murder in the death of a man in Elkhart, Indiana. He was granted a new trial, and the case was dismissed in 2022 based on medical evidence suggesting the death was the result of an accidental fall.

[Roosevelt Myles](#) was sentenced to 60 years in prison for a shooting that killed a teenager in Chicago, Illinois. He was granted a new trial, and the case was dismissed in 2022 based on evidence that Myles had been falsely accused by a witness who had been pressured by police to lie.

In 1977, [Elvis Brooks](#) was convicted of murder during a bar robbery in New Orleans. He was released from prison in 2019 and exonerated in 2022, after his attorneys found records suggesting prosecutors failed to provide his trial attorney with exculpatory evidence.

In 1993, [Quinton Cook](#) and his brother, [Frank Meadows Jr.](#), were convicted of rape in Jefferson County, Alabama, and each was sentenced to 20 years in prison. They were exonerated in November 2022 based on a previously undisclosed police report in which the victim said two other men had beaten and raped her.

[Kelvin Nolen](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole in 2016 for the murder of a gas station manager in Detroit, Michigan. He was exonerated in 2022 after experts examined video surveillance and concluded he was not the gunman. In addition, a new witness came forward to say that Nolen was not the gunman, and Nolen's sister, who had testified that he was the gunman in the video, recanted her testimony.

[Christopher Moran](#), of Central Falls, Rhode Island, was convicted of armed robbery and other crimes in 1994. His conviction was vacated on a judgment of acquittal in 1997, and he was declared wrongfully convicted and awarded state compensation in 2022.

In 2018, [Aaron Culbertson Jr.](#) was convicted of aggravated robbery in Canton, Ohio. He was exonerated in 2022 after the real perpetrators said Culbertson wasn't pictured in a surveillance photo used to tie him to the crime.

In 2014, [Morris James](#) pled guilty to drug possession in Iberia Parish, Louisiana. He was exonerated in 2016, after the sheriff's deputy who arrested him was found to have falsified police reports.

[C'Quan Hinton](#), [Kino Christian](#), [Dartanion Edwards](#), and [Joshun Edwards](#) were sentenced to life in prison without parole in 2009 for the murder of a 14-year-old boy in Flint, Michigan. All four were granted a new trial and the cases were dismissed in 2022 because the prosecution failed to disclose the initial

[Philip Washington](#) and [Paul Williams](#) were convicted of drug possession in Benton Harbor Michigan. Williams was exonerated in 2008 and Washington in 2009 after one of the officers involved in their arrests was charged with possession of cocaine, found in a lockbox under his desk.

[Madeline Mendoza](#) pled guilty to murder in 1993 and was sentenced to 35 years in prison in Chicago, Illinois. She was exonerated in 2023 after the real killer said Mendoza was not involved and evidence showed the lead detectives had forced witnesses to falsely accuse Mendoza and her co-defendant, Marilyn Mulero.

In 1998, [Darrell Clark](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole for participating in the murder of a 15-year-old boy in Floyd County, Georgia. He was exonerated in 2022 based on evidence uncovered by Susan Simpson and Jacinda Davis for their podcast, [Proof](#), that police had coerced one witness to testify falsely and had taken advantage of a hearing- and speech-impaired witness who they claimed had identified Clark as running from the shooting.

In 2019, [John Navarro](#) pled guilty in federal court in Texas to failing to register as a sex offender and was sentenced to 21 months in prison. The conviction was vacated and dismissed by the U.S. Court of Appeals in 2022 because Navarro had not been required to register.

We also published a new entry in our Groups Registry, where [170 defendants](#) had their convictions vacated and charges dismissed, beginning in 1992, after a police officer in Oaklyn, New Jersey, pled guilty to official misconduct involving theft and falsification of breathalyzer results.

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statement of the only eyewitness, which contradicted his trial testimony.

[Carrody Buchhorn](#) was convicted of second-degree murder in 2017 and sentenced to 10 years and three months in prison for the death of a nine-month old child in her care at a daycare home in Eudora, Kansas. Based on evidence that the child died of natural causes, she was granted a new trial, and the case was dismissed in 2022.

[Bruce Leadon](#) and his brother, [Terence Briscoe](#), were convicted of two robberies at the same Waffle House in Houston, Texas. Briscoe was exonerated in 2010 and Leadon in 2022 based on evidence pointing to another man as the robber.

In 1986, [Maurice Hastings](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole after he was convicted of murdering a woman and the attempted murder of her husband and another man in Los Angeles, California. In 2022, he was exonerated after DNA tests of a rape kit excluded him and identified the true killer, who had died in prison in 2020 while imprisoned for an unrelated kidnapping and rape.

In 1985, [Calvin Duncan](#) was convicted of first-degree murder in New Orleans, Louisiana. He was exonerated in 2021 based on impeachment evidence that undermined the testimony of the police and the eyewitness.

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