



## Conviction Integrity Program

The Middlesex District Attorney's Office is dedicated to identifying potential wrongful convictions and facilitating access to post-conviction DNA testing for viable innocence claims. In 2013, District Attorney Ryan established Middlesex's first Conviction Integrity Program to review post-conviction claims of actual innocence.

The Program was devised to minimize the impact of cognitive biases and respond to such claims in a fair, efficient, and comprehensive manner.

The MDAO Conviction Integrity Committee (CIC) is charged with reviewing claims raised by 278A motions, Rule 30 motions that include a credible claim of factual innocence, or through letter to the MDAO by a convicted defendant, a family member, or an attorney who represented or currently represents a convicted defendant.

It is District Attorney Ryan's firm belief that basic fairness requires that prosecutors' offices be willing to step back and review their work.

## 278A Working Group Membership

Also in 2013, the MDAO joined forces with CPCS, the New England Innocence Project, the Suffolk District Attorney's Office, and the Middlesex Superior Clerk's Office to collectively implement Chapter 278A, which deals with post-conviction access to forensic and scientific analysis (enacted in 2012).

### Some of the Working Group's efforts to date include:

- Development of a Best Practices Manual for Evidence Collection, Handling, Storage and Retention: [https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A\\_www.publiccounsel.net\\_pc\\_httpwww.publiccounsel.netpcinnocence-2Dprogrampurpose-2Dand-2Dcriteria\\_&d=DwIGaQ&c=IDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWLOQWnGCCAfCDz1Bns\\_w&r=v2ud1G6JKdNMX3L-9o46WXs4QeXALCLme\\_4oeuyrv-8&m=x-Q7LOWtLDpBfFPrfB98swpGhBUv162HtywJdDpFVe0&s=zpDLuy2iY\\_YIXc9sVN6Zdy5UCWrLKx04B9Jt3wo bTmc&e](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_www.publiccounsel.net_pc_httpwww.publiccounsel.netpcinnocence-2Dprogrampurpose-2Dand-2Dcriteria_&d=DwIGaQ&c=IDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWLOQWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=v2ud1G6JKdNMX3L-9o46WXs4QeXALCLme_4oeuyrv-8&m=x-Q7LOWtLDpBfFPrfB98swpGhBUv162HtywJdDpFVe0&s=zpDLuy2iY_YIXc9sVN6Zdy5UCWrLKx04B9Jt3wo bTmc&e)
- An agreement among MDAO, CPCS, the New England Innocence Project and the MA State Police Crime Lab to streamline access to information about evidence in the lab's possession. This agreement allows access to initial discovery in Middlesex County cases without engaging in litigation
- Securing grant funding to support police departments in conducting inventories of their evidence to improve access to evidence for testing in the future
- Trainings for attorneys on preparing 278A motions and training for evidence officers to promote uniform protocols and practices for evidence handling, storing, and preservation.
- A pilot hair microscopy case identification project

The MDAO is proud to be a part of such an innovative collaboration and all that it has accomplished.