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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LUCAS COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE EXPANDS CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNIT APPLICATION PROCESS

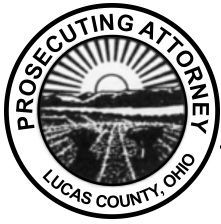
TOLEDO, Ohio – Lucas County Prosecuting Attorney Julia R. Bates announced today that the Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU) within the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office will now accept applications submitted by attorneys on behalf of their clients who present credible claims of actual innocence supported by new evidence. The CIU examines past convictions involving credible claims of actual innocence through a collaborative review process that upholds the integrity of the criminal justice system.

Attorneys must complete the application and prepare the limited waiver form. The application must include information supporting a credible claim of actual innocence based on new evidence. Both documents must be signed, notarized and submitted to the CIU. The change creates an additional avenue for attorneys to present qualifying cases while maintaining the unit's existing internal referral system. The CIU evaluates whether new evidence supports a credible claim that a person is factually innocent, including claims involving overlooked evidence, misidentification, junk science and other relevant information.

The CIU demonstrates the LCPO's commitment to ensuring justice for crime victims while maintaining fairness for all individuals charged with criminal offenses. If the unit identifies a wrongful conviction, the LCPO will take prompt corrective action in accordance with the law.

"As with all new endeavors, we continue to learn as we refine the process," Lucas County Prosecuting Attorney Julia R. Bates said. "We started small because we knew reviewing a case and conducting additional investigation, when necessary, would take time. Reviewing a case can take one to three months and may take longer when additional investigation is necessary. I appreciate the continued support of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners, especially Commissioner Pete Gerken for his dedication to the Conviction Integrity Unit as the unit continues to evolve."

The CIU began its work in July 2024 after the office researched similar units in Cuyahoga, Franklin and Summit counties in Ohio, as well as Wayne County, Michigan. The LCPO also consulted with the



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University of Pennsylvania's Quattrone Center. The Lucas County model incorporates elements from each of those jurisdictions and organizations.

The unit will consider cases that meet the following criteria: the defendant is living and currently incarcerated; was convicted of aggravated murder, murder, kidnapping, rape or arson; was convicted at trial in the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas; presents a credible claim of actual innocence supported by new evidence; and has no pending litigation. The unit will not accept cases involving guilty or no contest pleas unless they present rare and extraordinary circumstances.

Once the review board and the elected prosecutor receive the written reports, they will evaluate the case and determine whether relief is warranted. The final decision will include a statement of the findings related to the claim of actual innocence or wrongful conviction. If the review board and elected prosecutor find the conviction to be unsound or worthy of relief, possible actions include filing a joint petition with the trial court requesting the appointment of counsel to pursue a motion for a new trial or other post-conviction relief, seeking a pardon, or pursuing other appropriate relief based on the procedural history of the case.

Attorneys may download the application and limited waiver form at www.lucascountyprosecutor.org.

Completed documents may be mailed to:

Lucas County Prosecutor's Office
Attn: Conviction Integrity Unit
700 Adams St., Suite 250
Toledo, OH 43604-5659

Completed documents also may be submitted by email to ProsCIU@co.lucas.oh.us.

About the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office

The Lucas County Prosecutor's Office pursues justice, safeguards our community and advocates for victims. We balance accountability with individual rights, partnering with law enforcement to ensure public safety and fair governance. We are committed to integrity, outreach and justice for all.