



COUNTY OF YOLO  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Yolo County District Attorney Creates Conviction Integrity Unit**

(Woodland, CA) – October 7, 2014- Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced today that the District Attorney’s Office has created a Conviction Integrity Unit to review all post conviction assertions of innocence. As the United States Supreme Court recognized in *Berger v. United States*, the aim of the prosecutor “is that guilt shall not escape nor innocence suffer.” While the trial and appellate process has significant safeguards to protect individuals, the criminal justice system is a human institution and mistakes are made in a small number of cases. To combat these wrongful convictions, prosecutors and law enforcement agencies throughout the country have broadened their efforts to review previous convictions to ensure that justice is served and that those wrongfully convicted are exonerated.

In order to serve the citizens of Yolo County the District Attorney’s Office has established a Conviction Integrity Unit. This unit will be headed by an Assistant Chief Deputy District Attorney to review all claims of factual innocence made by persons who have been convicted of crimes. The Unit will conduct an initial inquiry to determine whether further review or investigation is necessary. The Unit will review transcripts, evaluate forensic evidence in light of new scientific knowledge, conduct additional forensic tests, interview witnesses, or conduct any other investigation deemed necessary. This Conviction Integrity process supplements the appellate process already available to defendants and is designed to avoid the possibility of an innocent person being punished for a crime they did not commit.

Defendants, or any other member of the community, claiming that there has been a wrongful conviction should submit their requests in writing to the Yolo County District Attorney’s Office. The claim does not need to be in any format or on a claim form, but the request must raise a meaningful claim of “actual innocence” of a crime. The request

may not be merely an appeal for resentencing, a reweighing of conflicting evidence, or for relief from immigration consequences. The fact that claims have been previously rejected by a trial court or appellate court will not necessarily preclude further inquiry. Whether a case should be dismissed after conviction based upon factual innocence will be carefully considered.

In announcing the establishment of the Conviction Integrity Unit, Reisig stated: “A prosecutor’s role is to ensure that our system achieves justice which includes not only convicting the guilty but also guaranteeing the protection of the innocent. The creation of this Unit helps us to obtain both of these goals.” For more information, visit the Yolo County District Attorney website at <http://yoloda.org>.

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