

Franklin County Prosecutor's Office Conviction Integrity Unit

Mission Statement

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNIT.

Mindful of our ethical duty to seek justice, the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office with the assistance of our community and legal partners is working to ensure that no innocent person is wrongfully convicted.

In order to achieve that goal, the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office (FCPO) has created a Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU) to review and investigate claims of wrongful conviction. The CIU is a newly created unit within the FCPO to ensure that only those that have perpetrated a crime are found guilty and held accountable.

II. PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNIT

The mission of the Conviction Integrity Unit is to review legitimate claims of actual innocence that warrant review and to ensure that the evaluation of these claims is fundamentally fair, transparent to the applicant, legal community and the community-at-large, and to ensure that justice is diligently pursued and achieved during the entire process. The CIU will be led by a Conviction Integrity Unit Director (CIU Director) that reports to the Franklin County Prosecutor (Prosecutor). The CIU Director will direct and lead all reviews and investigations of applications that present a credible claim of actual innocence that are investigated by the Conviction Integrity Unit.

The CIU Internal Review Board (CIU-IRB) consists of a combination of senior-level Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys drawn from various units of the FCPO, except for those prosecutors that previously handled a case that is under review or are involved with the applicant's appeal or other post-conviction matters. The size and composition of the CIU-IRB shall be determined by the Prosecutor. The CIU-IRB shall not exceed 5 members. The CIU-IRB serves at the request of the Prosecutor to review the CIU Director's report and recommendation.

The CIU Director and CIU-IRB may be assisted by a Special Counsel selected from well-respected members of the legal community. The Special Counsel is hired by and serves at the request of the Prosecutor to review the report and recommendations of the CIU Director and/or CIU-IRB as needed.

The Prosecutor makes the final decision on an Applicant's claim and such decision is final and not subject to further review or appeal.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CIU

In order for the Conviction Integrity Unit to conduct a preliminary review of a conviction, the applicant making a claim of actual innocence must meet the following requirements:

- The conviction must have been for a felony offense in the Franklin County Common Pleas Court;
- The Applicant must currently be a living person presenting his or her claim of actual innocence personally or through any person or entity listed in Section IV;
- There must be a claim of actual innocence;
- Credible and verifiable evidence of actual innocence must exist;
- Sufficient facts must exist that are reviewable by the CIU in support of actual innocence of the applicant to warrant or justify initiating or continuing an investigation;
- The claim must not be frivolous; and
- The Applicant must sign a written "limited" waiver of certain procedural safeguards and privileges, agree to cooperate with the CIU, and agree to provide full disclosure regarding all requirements of the Conviction Integrity Unit.

IV. APPLICATION

To submit a claim to the CIU, the CIU Application must be completed and submitted to the FCPO by mail at:

Franklin County Prosecutor's Office
Attention: Conviction Integrity Unit
373 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

The application may be found online at <https://prosecutor.franklincountyohio.gov/conviction-integrity-unit> or may be obtained by contacting FCPO for a copy of the application.

Commented [MKR1]: Potentially add an email address or fax number where applications can be submitted.