

MAIP Data Collection Reference Guide

Thank you for your willingness to participate in MAIP's archival data collection project. This project is the first of its kind to attempt to collect comprehensive data about innocence cases. Please note that you must be able to access Google Drive to work on this project; if your organization is unable to access Google Drive, you will not be able to participate.

This document provides reference materials to help you in your case review. We do not expect our volunteers to be criminal trial attorneys and we would . We welcome your feedback on what additional would help you review cases, both in terms of improving the quality of your work and the efficiency in reviewing cases.

This document includes the following sections:

- How to sign up to participate
- How we will share files with you
- How you will receive case assignments
- A glossary of criminal legal terminology

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback about the project, please send them to dbernstein@exonerate.org and jkamorowski@exonerate.org.

How to sign up to participate

To begin volunteering, you must complete the New Volunteer Signup Form available [here](#). The form asks for affiliation and contact information. The form also includes optional questions asking you about your perceptions of the U.S. criminal legal system regarding false conviction. We will only analyze this data in aggregate and anonymously; your personal information will not be associated with your answers during analysis. You are not required to answer these questions but your input on these questions would be invaluable for our data analysis.

Once you complete the form, you will be entered into our Volunteer Database so we can assign you cases.

How we will share case files with you

We will be using Google Drive to securely share case files with you. We will add your email to a Google Group that controls access to the Google Drive so only approved volunteers are able to access case files. We will not use Google Groups for anything beyond providing access so you should not navigate into Google Groups at all; you will exclusively work in Google Drive for this project.

You will receive an email from Google Groups notifying you that you were added to the Group, the email will have the subject "You have been added to MAIP Data Collection Volunteers".

Please do not click any of the links in that email; you will receive a separate email when we share Google Drive files with you.

The Google Drive files in the folder are organized in the same way that MAIP organized them while the case was being handled. There is no standard structure to the folder structure or files names but the folders should give you some indication of their organization. If you struggle to understand the folder organization and require assistance in locating the right documents, please contact Dan Bernstein (dbernstein@exonerate.org).

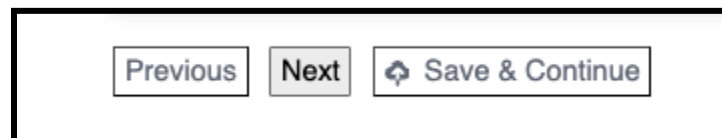
How you will receive case assignments

When you are assigned a case, you will receive an email with two links: one link to the Google Drive folder containing files for your case assignment and one link to a form to complete your review. This form is specific to you and to this client so please do not try to change the link or otherwise manipulate the link.

You will have 30 days to review a case. If you are unable to complete your review within that time period, you can request a one-time 14 day extension by emailing automations@exonerate.org. If you are unable to complete the review by the end of extension, the case will be reassigned.

Can I save my progress when completing the form?

Yes, you can save your progress at any time by clicking the “Save & Continue” button at the bottom of the form (see screenshot below).



Once you click the button, you will be directed to a page that contains a unique link for returning to your form with the progress saved (see screenshot below). Please note that this link is different from the link we initially send you to complete your review. **You must use this new link to return to where you left off.** Please save the link or enter your email address to have it emailed to you.

Please note, this link will expire after 30 days, after which you will lose your progress and have to begin the review again.

If you lose the link, please email Dan and Jenn for assistance.

Link to continue editing later

Please use the following link to return and complete this form from any computer.

[https://exonerate.org/?](https://exonerate.org/?gplp=preview&id=5&unrequire=1&live=1&gf_token=29969c77e05046ae97267ea1412cf10f)

[gplp=preview&id=5&unrequire=1&live=1&gf_token=29969c77e05046ae97267ea1412cf10f](https://exonerate.org/?gplp=preview&id=5&unrequire=1&live=1&gf_token=29969c77e05046ae97267ea1412cf10f)

Note: This link will expire after 30 days.

Enter your email address if you would like to receive the link via email.

Email Address *



Send Link

MAIP Resources for Understanding Innocence Cases

MAIP has many helpful training videos to help you identify key information in the cases available on Youtube, including:

- [Training Session for this project](#) includes an overview of the data collection form
- Common Sources of Leads ([Part 1](#), [Part 2](#)) - Slides available [here](#)
- Brady Violations ([video](#) and [slides](#))

Glossary of criminal legal terminology

This glossary contains common terms in criminal law that you might need while completing your review. This glossary is not exhaustive and will not help you with every term that you encounter in this review. We recommend googling any additional terms that you are not familiar with.

We welcome your feedback on additional terms that we might include here. Please send any suggestions to Dan and Jenn (emails at the top of this document).

Daubert (or the Daubert Standard): “The “Daubert Standard” provides a systematic framework for a trial court judge to assess the reliability and relevance of expert witness testimony before it is presented to a jury. Established in the 1993 U.S. Supreme Court case *Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals Inc.*, 509

U.S. 579 (1993), this standard transformed the landscape of expert testimony by placing the responsibility on trial judges to act as "gatekeepers" of scientific evidence." ([Legal Information Institute](#))

Jailhouse snitch/confidential informant: A "jailhouse snitch" is a person who was incarcerated in the same facility as the client and claimed to have obtained information that implicates the client (typically alleged statements made by the client about their involvement in the crime). A confidential informant (CI) provides information to police about criminal activity in exchange for a benefit, such as money or leniency in their own criminal case(s). The name of the CI typically will not appear in police reports but the government may be required to reveal the identity of the CI to the defense. An incentivized witness is a person who gained a benefit because they served as a witness for the prosecution (the most common situation is a person whose own criminal charges were reduced or dismissed in exchange for providing information to the prosecution and/or appearing in court as a prosecution witness).

Alford Plea: A guilty plea in which a defendant maintains their innocence but admits that the prosecution's evidence would likely result in a guilty verdict if brought to trial.