



## GLOSSARY

*In general, an **exoneration** occurs when a person who has been convicted of a crime is officially cleared based on new evidence of innocence.*

*A more precise definition follows.*

**Exoneration**—A person has been exonerated if he or she was convicted of a crime and later was either: (1) declared to be factually innocent by a government official or agency with the authority to make that declaration; or (2) relieved of all the consequences of the criminal conviction by a government official or body with the authority to take that action. The official action may be: (i) a complete pardon by a governor or other competent authority, whether or not the pardon is designated as based on innocence; (ii) an acquittal of all charges factually related to the crime for which the person was originally convicted; or (iii) a dismissal of all charges related to the crime for which the person was originally convicted, by a court or by a prosecutor with the authority to enter that dismissal. The pardon, acquittal, or dismissal must have been the result, at least in part, of evidence of innocence that either (i) was not presented at the trial at which the person was convicted; or (ii) if the person pled guilty, was not known to the defendant and the defense attorney, and to the court, at the time the plea was entered. The evidence of innocence need not be an explicit basis for the official action that exonerated the person. A person who otherwise qualifies has not been exonerated if there is unexplained physical evidence of that person's guilt.

**Exoneree**—A person who was convicted of a crime and later officially declared innocent of that crime, or relieved of all legal consequences of the conviction because evidence of innocence that was not presented at trial required reconsideration of the case.

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**Arson Case**—the exoneree was convicted of arson, or the exoneration depended at least in part on evidence that the exoneree did not commit arson.

**Child Sex abuse Hysteria (CSH)**—A case in which the exoneree was convicted of child sex abuse as part of a wave of child sex abuse prosecutions in the 1980s and 1990s based on aggressive and suggestive interviews of children who were thought to be victims. These cases generally included bizarre and implausible claims by the supposed victims, frequently featuring satanic rituals.

**Co-Defendant Confessed (CDC)**—A codefendant of the exoneree, or a person who might have been charged as a codefendant, gave a confession that also implicated the exoneree.

**Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU)**—A Conviction Integrity Unit in the prosecutorial office that