

Jeffrey Urdangen

Of Counsel

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Jeffrey Urdangen is an accomplished and seasoned defense attorney whose legal career spans four decades in private practice and legal education. His range of experience brings a wealth of insight and knowledge to our clients.

Jeff represents persons accused of crimes, primarily at the trial and investigation stage. He dedicated sixteen years as a Clinical Professor of Law and Director for the Center for Criminal Defense at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law's Bluhm Legal Clinic, working with students on trial-level criminal cases. Prior to that he had his own criminal defense practice for 23 years.

Some of his notable accomplishments include serving as defense counsel for over 70 federal and state felony jury trials. Among those were five jury trials in state and federal courts in which the prosecution sought the death penalty. Jeff has been counsel for ten different petitioners whose convictions were vacated after serving a combined period of 135 years of wrongful incarceration.



EXPERIENCE

Representative Engagements

- Defense counsel in over 70 federal and state jury trials.
- Counsel for the following petitioners and defendants whose wrongful convictions were vacated: Alan Beaman, Paul Terry, Kenneth Adams, Alejandro Hernandez, Julie Rea, Michael Winston, Jose Vasquez, Juan Rivera, Robert Hill, and Gabriel Solache.
- Appointed as lead counsel on eight occasions, by district judges in five separate federal districts, to represent trial stage capital defendants.
- First attorney in the United States appointed to represent a capital defendant following the 1988 reinstatement of the federal death penalty by Congress.
- Represented defendants in five capital jury trials in state and federal court.
- Counsel at evidentiary hearing stage for numerous state post-conviction and federal habeas petitioners.

Expert Testimony

In each of the four cases below, Jeff was engaged as a testifying expert witness by law firms representing petitioners who alleged their trial lawyer failed to provide an effective defense in violation of the Sixth Amendment. In all but one of these matters Jeff's testimony contributed to the Court ruling in favor of the petitioner.

- *White v. Godinez*, 96-3187, C.D. Illinois. Federal Habeas Corpus (Qualified by Hon. Harold A. Baker - 2001)
- *People v. Davis*, 04 CF 76, Circuit Court of Kane County, Illinois. State Post Conviction. (Qualified by Hon. Timothy Q. Sheldon - 2005)

- *Malone v. Walls*, 04 C 8008, N.D. Illinois. Federal Habeas Corpus. (Qualified by Hon. George Lindberg - 2009)
- *Anderson v. United States*, 13-CV-01734, S.D. Indiana. Federal Habeas Corpus. (Qualified by Hon. Tanya Walton Pratt - 2018)

CREDENTIALS

Education

University of Illinois Chicago School of Law, J.D., 1980
University of Iowa, B.A., 1971

Bar Admissions

Illinois
U.S. Supreme Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Professional Memberships

Cook County Public Defender Advisory Board, Chairperson (2015-2021)
Cook County Public Defender, Member of the Five-Person Selection Committee (2015)
Chicago Police Accountability Task Force, Working Group Member
Northern District of Illinois, Federal Defender Panel (1989-2020)

Teaching Appointments

Clinical Professor of Law and Director of *The Center for Criminal Defense*, Bluhm Legal Clinic,
Northwestern Pritzker School of Law (2003-2019)

Special Appointments – Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP

Director, Associate Litigation Training

Conducting, organizing, and facilitating training programs for the firm's associates with particular focus given to the improvement of pre-trial and trial skills, appellate practice, and negotiating strategies.

Coordinator of Pro Bono Programs and Advocacy

Facilitating the firm's representation of selected indigent clients and fostering partnerships with legal services organizations on projects advancing racial justice and other important initiatives.

Honors & Awards

Illinois Leading Lawyer, *Law Bulletin Media Leading Lawyers* (2003-2021)

PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- “Terrorists, real and imagined,” *Injustice Watch* Commentary (February 4, 2021)
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) American Bar Association, National Convention
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Congressional Sub-committee
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Federal Defender Programs: Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, San Antonio
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Office of the Cook County Public Defender
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Chicago Bar Association
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Kane County Bar Association
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Chicago Council of Lawyers
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) National Legal Aid and Defender Association
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) Federal Capital Resource Counsel Program
- “Trial representation of criminal defendants and capital defendants,” (presenter) National Conference on Wrongful Convictions