

AREAS OF PRACTICE

May 12, 2010

DUI/DWI

Assault

Drug Crimes

Theft

Armed Robbery

Gun Charges

Sex Offenses

Conspiracy

Fraud

Student Charges

Security Clearance

Criminal Definitions

Murder/Manslaughter

Driving While Suspended

Maryland Criminal Law - Ex-Death Row Inmate Attests to the Importance of DNA Testing

DNA testing in the United States has led to the release of over 200 wrongfully convicted people. However, instances still arise where law enforcement officials put people behind bars for crimes they did not commit. Many times, the sentencing following these wrongful convictions is severe, even going as far as the death penalty.

Experienced [Maryland criminal lawyers](#) often see examples of wrongful convictions, particularly in long-standing murder or sexual assault cases. The lives of those wrongfully convicted are changed forever, and their personal liberties and freedoms are unfairly compromised. Kirk Bloodsworth, an innocent convict cleared through DNA evidence, now actively speaks out about his experience sitting on death row for a crime he did not commit.

In 1985, Bloodsworth was wrongfully convicted of Maryland murder charges in the death of a 9 year-old girl in Baltimore, MD. During the initial investigation over 25 years ago, his picture was picked out of a lineup by two boys, 8 and 10, who claimed to have seen the suspect before the murder. Bloodsworth was arrested and a criminal profile prompted his conviction. He was condemned to death row at the Maryland Penitentiary for eight years, 11 months, and nine days.

In the early 1990s, Bloodsworth learned of the first conviction using DNA as evidence. He realized that if DNA testing could be used to prove one's guilt, it could also be used to prove one's innocence. The death row inmate wrote a letter to the prosecuting attorney in his trial, requesting the recovered DNA evidence. The prosecutor falsely claimed that the evidence had been destroyed. Later, a court clerk found the evidence in the judge's chambers. Using this evidence, Bloodsworth's Maryland criminal defense lawyer began testing to compare Bloodsworth's DNA to that recovered during the course of the murder investigation. After one year, the results proved that Bloodsworth had been wrongfully convicted and did not murder the

THE LAW OFFICES OF DAVID BENOWITZ
CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEYS

(301) 761-4842
(410) 734-2675

FREE CONSULTATION
CALL 24/7

AREAS OF PRACTICE

DUI/DWI

Assault

Drug Crimes

Theft

Armed Robbery

Gun Charges

Sex Offenses

Conspiracy

Fraud

Student Charges

Security Clearance

Criminal Definitions

Murder/Manslaughter

Driving While Suspended

young girl.

Since being released in 1993, Bloodsworth began speaking out in favor of DNA testing in innocence claims nationwide. Despite his advocacy efforts and his proven innocence, his conviction still haunts him every day. Years after his proven innocence and release, Bloodsworth says he still receives harassing phone calls. Additionally, all of the monetary compensation received from the state for his wrongful conviction went to pay his lawyers' fees, leaving him with little to show for his time spent behind bars. Despite these obstacles, he continues to advocate on behalf of post-conviction DNA testing, as he can personally attribute to its importance.

An accusation of a crime for which you are innocent is a terrifying process to experience. As illustrated in the example of Kirk Bloodsworth, a wrongful conviction of a Maryland murder charge will be life altering, even if innocence is proved later. If Bloodsworth had not advocated for DNA comparison, he may still be sitting on death row for a crime he did not commit. The severity of this case attests to the importance of enlisting the services of a hard-working and aggressive [Maryland criminal defense attorney](#). Diligent and trustworthy counsel will provide the highest quality legal advice and defense, protecting one's basic freedoms and liberties against a wrongful conviction.