

# News Release



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## **Bergen Vicinage Judge Completes Review of Little Falls Drug Unit Cases**

A review of a decade's worth of drug charges that were potentially compromised by a former New Jersey State Police laboratory technician in Little Falls has been completed, with more than 2,000 charges dismissed and the affected individuals receiving any entitled reimbursements.

Under the direction of Bergen Vicinage Superior Court Judge Edward A. Jerejian, more than 10,000 charges in more than 7,800 cases were reviewed. Authorities were able to determine if defendants were entitled to relief or retesting in more than 95 percent of those cases. The case information for the remaining 523 charges eligible for a dismissal order or refund could not be retrieved, likely due to an expungement granted before the Little Falls review program started.

The Little Falls case originated in late 2015 when a co-worker reported suspicions that a former State Police laboratory technician mishandled a drug analysis. The Attorney General's Office, under an agreement with the Office of the Public Defender, used specialized equipment to retest the purported drug evidence in all the cases handled by the former laboratory technician since the start of his employment in 2005.

The Supreme Court in 2016 designated Judge Jerejian as the sole judge to manage the cases, which spanned 13 counties. The State Police lab updated its testing protocols and employed new equipment and technology to eliminate human error.

In issuing his final report to the Supreme Court, Judge Jerejian thanked the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Defender, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and staff in the affected court vicinages for their support throughout the review program.

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