

# CENTER FOR APPELLATE LITIGATION

120 WALL STREET - 28<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10005 TEL. (212) 577-2523 FAX 577-2535



*ATTORNEY-IN-CHARGE*  
ROBERT S. DEAN

*ASSISTANT ATTORNEY-IN-CHARGE*  
MARK W. ZENO

*SENIOR SUPERVISING ATTORNEYS*  
ABIGAIL EVERETT  
BARBARA ZOLOT  
CLAUDIA S. TRUPP

*MANAGING ATTORNEY*  
DAVID J. KLEM

*SUPERVISING ATTORNEYS*  
ROBIN NICHINSKY  
ARIELLE REID  
BEN A. SCHATZ  
MOLLY SCHINDLER  
KATE SKOLNICK  
MARIANNE C. YANG

*ASSISTANT MANAGING ATTORNEY*  
BRITTANY FRANCIS

*ATTORNEY-IN-CHARGE*  
ROBERT S. DEAN

(212) 577-2523 EXT. 502  
[rdean@cfal.org](mailto:rdean@cfal.org)

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Chief Defender & Colleague

**From:** Bob Dean

**Date:** September 15, 2019

**Subject:** Attached

---

Here is a list of significant criminal cases pending in the New York Court of Appeals and the issues presented. Cases that the Court has selected for SSM consideration are generally not included. Leave grants were to the defendant unless otherwise noted.

The Center does this update every two months for its own attorney staff. As a matter of professional courtesy, we also send it to Chief Defenders who do substantial appellate work. Feel free to distribute copies to any members of your staff. This update is also available on our web site ([www.appellate-litigation.org](http://www.appellate-litigation.org)).

Although every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the summaries, no express or implied guarantees are made. If your office is handling one or more of these cases and wishes to share some insight not apparent from the intermediate appellate court decision or the Clerk's summary of issues, please feel free to contact me. Your input will be added to the next edition.

We offer a special feature to our online visitors. Our online "Eye on Eagle" section (NYCA link) includes pdf links to all decided cases, and, for selected cases, a short CAL blog flagging what we think is important or noteworthy about the cases.

Happy reading!

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

**CRIMINAL CASES CURRENTLY PENDING IN  
THE NEW YORK COURT OF APPEALS**

**I. Cases Scheduled For Argument**

People v. Michael Cubero

AD3 order dated April 26, 2018, affirming, with dissents, a judgment of conviction. Decision below: 160 AD3d 1298, 75 NYS3d 658. Lynch, J. (AD dissenter), granted leave June 20, 2018. Argued September 4, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: A constitutional challenge to a statute creating a Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs (Exec. Law § 522[2]), vesting it with the authority to prosecute crimes involving abuse or neglect of people with disabilities, was not interposed by defense counsel. The appellate record is silent as to whether the District Attorney granted the special prosecutor authority to prosecute the case, so as to render the proceedings constitutional. Whether, pursuant to its interest of justice jurisdiction or by its inherent authority, the Appellate Division may remit the matter for fact-findings. (Assigned counsel: George J. Hoffman, Jr., P.O. Box 264, East Greenbush, NY 12061.)

People v. Robert M. Neulander

AD4 order dated June 29, 2018, reversing judgment of conviction, with dissents. Decision below: 162 AD3d 1763. Smith, J. (AD Dissenter), granted leave to People August 7, 2018. Argued September 5, 2019.

ISSUE PRESENTED: Whether the trial court abused its discretion in failing to grant defendant's CPL 330.30 motion based on juror misconduct. The juror had engaged in numerous text messages with third parties during the trial and regarding the trial ("make sure he's guilty!"); when discovered, the juror sought to cover up her activities and lied about them under oath.

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People v. Mouhamed Thiam

AT1 order dated March 16, 2018, reversing judgment of conviction. Decision below: 59 Misc.3d 126 (A), 2018 WL 1371548. Stein, J., granted leave to People July 25, 2018. Argued September 10, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Where a defendant is charged only with misdemeanors or lesser charges in a multi-count accusatory instrument and at least one misdemeanor count is facially sufficient, does the trial court have jurisdiction over the defendant such that it may accept a plea to any count in the accusatory instrument, even those that are facially insufficient. (2) Whether a defendant may plead to a misdemeanor that is of an equal or higher grade than the misdemeanor charge that is facially sufficient.

People v. Rong He

AD2 order dated December 27, 2017, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 156 AD3d 907, 68 NYS3d 130. Hall, J. (AD dissenter), granted leave March 2, 2018. Argued September 11, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the failure to disclose contact information for multiple non-testifying eyewitnesses constituted a Brady violation. (2) Whether a statement obtained from defendant after a Payton violation was sufficiently attenuated from the illegal arrest. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. Manuel Rodriguez

AD1 order dated October 24, 2017, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 154 AD3d 594, 63 NYS3d 46. Rivera, J., granted leave April 10, 2018. Argued September 11, 2019.

ISSUE PRESENTED: The sufficiency of the evidence to establish third-degree grand larceny of the proceeds of a stolen check, where defendant exercised dominion and control over the funds (deposited by

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

someone into her bank account) but not the stolen check itself. (Assigned counsel: Christina A. Swarns, Office of the Appellate Defender, 11 Park Place, Suite 1601, NYC 10007.)

People v. Omar Deleon

AD1 order dated January 30, 2018, reversing lower court's order dismissing and reducing counts of an indictment. Decision below: 157 AD3d 649, 70 NYS3d 460. Wilson, J., granted leave June 28, 2018. Argued September 11, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: The defendant placed a "fishing device" (a water bottle coated with a sticky substance) in a mailbox into which a law enforcement task force had inserted more than \$3,000 in money orders, but was arrested before he extracted it; no evidence was presented that any of the envelopes containing money orders had stuck to the device. Whether the lower court erred in finding that the attempted grand larceny charges required evidence of an intent to steal a certain value. (Assigned counsel: Tina Luongo, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

People v. Stan Xuxui Li

AD1 order dated November 30, 2017, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 155 AD3d 571, 67 NYS3d 1. DiFiore, Ch. J., granted leave June 25, 2018. To be argued October 17, 2019.

ISSUE PRESENTED: A physician prescribed a combination of opioids and alpraxolam to patients, who later overdosed. (1) The sufficiency of the evidence of reckless manslaughter. (2) Whether there is sufficient evidence of reckless endangerment, in that the defendant placed the patients at imminent risk of death.

People v. Victor Thomas

AD1 order dated February 1, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 158 AD3d 434, 70 NYS3d 190. Fahey, J., granted leave May 10, 2018. To be argued October 23, 2019.

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

**ISSUES PRESENTED:** (1) Whether the carelessly-executed appeal waiver validly forfeited the Huntley issue where (a) the defendant first learned of the waiver mid-way through the plea proceeding, after he had already allocuted, (b) the waiver, up to that point, had not been by discussed by the parties, (c) the court told appellant that the waiver covered any “challenge to this plea and this sentence,” and (d) the written waiver’s terms, requiring that the defendant forfeit the right to even file a notice of appeal, had been struck down as invalid and unconscionable over two months earlier by the Appellate Division. (2) Whether the police conducted the functional equivalent of interrogation of the un-Mirandized defendant by confronting him with a highly incriminating photograph and telling him, “You’re here to speak about this.” (Assigned counsel: Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

**People v. Nicole Green**

AD4 order dated April 27, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 160 AD3d 1422, 72 NYS2d 870. Wilson, J., granted leave September 18, 2018. To be argued October 23, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether the appeal waiver covered an excessive sentence claim where the defendant was not told of the period of PRS she would receive until she had already executed the waiver. (Assigned counsel: David C. Schopp, The Legal Aid Society of Buffalo, Inc., 290 Main Street, Suite 350, Buffalo, NY 14202.)

**People v. Storm U. Lang**

AD4 order dated October 5, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 165 AD3d 1584, 85 NYS3d 642. DiFiore, Ch. J., granted leave January 31, 2019. To be argued October 23, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether defendant’s waiver of the right to appeal (a) the validity of his waiver of indictment, and (b) the denial of YO, was valid, in light of the waiver’s misrepresentation of the defendant’s appellate rights. (Assigned counsel: David C. Schopp, The

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

Legal Aid Society of Buffalo, Inc., 290 Main Street, Suite 350,  
Buffalo, NY 14202.)

People v. Clarence Rouse

AD1 order dated March 20, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction.  
Decision below: 159 AD3d 530, 73 NYS3d 45. Rivera, J., granted  
leave August 6, 2018. To be argued October 24, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the trial court wrongly restricted  
cross-examination of a police witness concerning his prior instances of  
lying to a federal prosecutor, and two prior federal criminal cases  
where both courts had found the same officer incredible; (2) Whether,  
during cross-examination, the trial court’s persistent interruptions and  
belittling of counsel in front of the jury deprived appellant of his right  
to a fair trial; (3) Whether the trial court erroneously excluded two 911  
calls which contradicted the police officer’s observations of the crime  
scene. (Assigned counsel: John Vang and Robert S. Dean, Center for  
Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

**II. Cases Waiting to be Scheduled**

People v. Cadman Williams

AD1 order dated February 8, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction.  
Decision below: 158 AD3d 471, 71 NYS3d 23. Rivera, J., granted  
leave August 16, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the court abused its discretion as  
a matter of law in refusing to hold a Frye hearing to assess the general  
acceptance within the scientific community of the Low Copy Number  
Typing and the Forensic Statistical Tool used by OCME, where no  
appellate court had found general acceptance and courts of co-ordinate  
jurisdiction considering the issues had reached conflicting results. (2)  
Whether counsel was ineffective for failing to challenge the court’s  
erroneous justification instructions, where, because the deceased  
sustained two independently fatal gunshot wounds, the court should not  
have charged that the jury had to determine whether each shot was  
justified; nor should the court have included an “initial aggressor”

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

charge against appellant. (3) Whether the admission of appellant's recorded call, made while he was in pretrial detention in Rikers Island, contravened Federal and State wiretapping laws. (Assigned counsel: Mark W. Zeno and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Elijah Foster-Bey

AD2 order dated February 7, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 158 AD3d 641, 67 NYS3d 846. Wilson, J., granted leave August 23, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) The failure to hold a Frye hearing regarding Low Copy Number DNA testing and the Forensic Statistical Tool used by the OCME. (2) Whether the admission of DNA evidence violated defendant's right to confrontation. (3) Coercive Allen charge. (Assigned counsel: Dina Zloczower & Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. Ramee McCullum

AD2 order dated January 31, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 159 AD3d 8, 70 NYS3d 222. Rivera, J., granted leave July 24, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether an occupant of a rental apartment, after a warrant of eviction has been issued, retains 4th Amendment standing to challenge a search, when a City Marshall has tendered "legal possession" of the premises to a landlord without physical eviction. (2) Whether, where the People and the court both commit an error of fact, the defendant is justified in relying on that error for purposes of preservation of an argument. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. David Mairena

AD2 order dated May 31, 2017, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 160 AD3d 986, 75 NYS3d 246. Fahey, J., granted leave July 26, 2018.

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

**ISSUES PRESENTED:** (1) Whether the court erred by, after informing the parties prior to summations that it would instruct the jury on the specific instrumentality of death in its first-degree manslaughter charge, then failing to include that language in its charge following summations. (2) Whether harmless error analysis is applicable. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

**People v. Clinton Britt**

AD1 order dated April 5, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 160 AD3d 428, 74 NYS3d 207. Wilson, J., granted leave July 31, 2018.

**ISSUES PRESENTED:** (1) The sufficiency of the evidence that the defendant planned to pass off the counterfeit bills he possessed, so as to establish “intent to defraud, deceive or injure another,” as required by the first-degree forgery statute (PL 170.30). (2) Stop & Frisk: when defendant’s running away constituted “active flight.” (Assigned counsel: Justine M. Luongo, Legal Aid Society Criminal Defense Practice, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

**People v. George Tsintzelis**

AD2 order dated August 2, 2017, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 153 AD3d 558, 59 NYS3d 741. Feinman, J., granted leave July 30, 2018.

**ISSUES PRESENTED:** (1) Whether the trial court erred in denying defendant’s discovery request pursuant to CPL 240.20 (1) (c) for the electronic raw data used to develop his DNA profile. (2) Whether the admission of DNA lab reports through the testimony of an analyst who didn’t perform or supervise the DNA testing violated defendant’s confrontation clause rights. (Assigned counsel: Justine M. Luongo, Legal Aid Society Criminal Defense Practice, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)



**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People v. Ganesh Ramlall

AT2 order dated April 6, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 59 Misc.3d 134 (A), 2018 WL 1735440. Rivera, J., granted leave August 2, 2018.

ISSUE PRESENTED: State constitutional speedy trial (CPL 30.20): Whether the 30.20 motion as to the traffic infraction of “driving while ability impaired” (VTL 1191 [1]) should have been denied where the CPL 30.30 motion as to the misdemeanor (VTL 1192 [3]) had been granted. (Assigned counsel: Justine M. Luongo, Legal Aid Society Criminal Defense Practice, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

People v. Tyrell Cook

AD1 order dated May 31, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 161 AD3d 708, 78 NYS3d 314. Rivera, J., granted leave September 25, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether hearing judges are allowed to reopen suppression hearings even after the prosecution has had a full and fair opportunity to present its evidence, so long as the judge has not yet decided the motion. (2) The denial of the motion to set aside the verdict based upon a juror’s introducing extra-record facts into deliberations. (3) The sufficiency of the evidence of “physical injury.” (Assigned counsel: Lexie Mitter and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Anonymous

AD1 order dated May 1, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 161 AD3d 401, 77 NYS3d 10. DiFiore, Ch. J., granted leave October 24, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the People were entitled, pursuant to CPL 160.50(1)(d)(ii) to an order unsealing the defendant’s record on a previous case for the purpose of making a sentence recommendation on the instant case, and (2) if not, whether the defendant was entitled to a new sentencing proceeding. (Assigned counsel: Christina A. Swarns,

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

Office of the Appellate Defender, 11 Park Place, Suite 1601, NYC 10007.)

People v. Jose Perez

AD2 order dated June 27, 2018, affirming level-two SORA risk determination. Court of Appeals granted leave October 16, 2018.

ISSUE PRESENTED: Whether the SORA hearing court erred in assessing defendant 30 points for risk factor nine (“Number and Nature of Prior Crimes”) based on a prior New Jersey conviction for “lewdness,” deemed a “misdemeanor sex crime” – per the SORA Guidelines – even though it is not the New York equivalent of a “sex offense” (Corr. Law 168-a(2)) and is not otherwise codified in Article 130 of the Penal Law. (Assigned counsel: Justine M. Luongo, Legal Aid Society Criminal Defense Practice, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

People v. Sixtus Udeke

AT1 order dated December 13, 2017, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 59 Misc. 3d 136(A), 2018 N.Y. Slip Op. 50524(U), 2018 WL 1749903 (Table). Wilson, J., granted leave December 13, 2018.

ISSUE PRESENTED: Whether a plea is knowing and voluntary where, during the allocution, the court tells the defendant he would have no right to a jury trial if the prosecution proceeded on a B misdemeanor, but, because he is an immigrant who faces deportation as a result of his conviction, he would have a right to a jury trial under People v. Suazo, 2018 N.Y. Slip Op. 08056, 2018 WL 6173962 (2018). (Assigned counsel: Benjamin Wiener & Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Cesar Garcia

AT1 order dated June 3, 2019, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 63 Misc.3d 158(A), 2019 WL 2347176. Wilson, J., granted leave August 29, 2019. (New leave grant.)

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether the defendant was denied his right to trial by jury under People v. Suazo, where he was (as it turned out) acquitted after a bench trial of the top counts (which would have resulted in automatic deportation) and convicted only of a lower count (which would not have). (Assigned counsel: Mark W. Zeno and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

**People v. Jose Delorbe**

AD1 order dated October 18, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction and summary denial of CPL 440.10 motion. Decision below: 165 AD3d 531, 83 NYS3d 900. Fahey, J., granted leave December 27, 2018.

**ISSUES PRESENTED:** (1) Whether the Appellate Division properly grafted a preservation requirement on a Peque error (22 N.Y.3d 168), simply because the prosecution handed a generic form to the defendant, one year earlier, advising of potential immigration consequences. (2) The summary denial of a CPL 440.10 motion based upon a presumed lack of prejudice. (Assigned counsel: Robin Nichinsky and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

**People v. Jose Velez**

AD2 order dated August 8, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 164 AD3d 622, 78 NYS3d 671. Fahey, J., granted leave December 19, 2018.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether the electronic raw data underlying the results of a DNA test conducted by the NYC OCME is discoverable as of right pursuant to CPL 240.20(1)(c). The Second Department said no, because the material was not in the prosecutor's possession or control. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People v. Damon Wheeler

AT 9 & 10 order dated September 27, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 61 M3d 30, 85 NYS3d 329. Rivera, J., granted leave December 13, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether an accusatory instrument alleging Obstructing Governmental Administration must allege sufficient facts demonstrating that the underlying governmental function was authorized. (2) Various trial errors. (Assigned counsel: Richard L. Herzfeld, 112 Madison Avenue, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10016.)

People v. Kendel R. Gregory

AD2 order dated July 18, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 163 AD3d 847, 81 NYS3d 472. Rivera, J., granted leave December 13, 2018. (SSM.)

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the trial court properly denied defendant's application to go pro se, because defendant sought to proceed on the theory that the court lacked jurisdiction to prosecute him because he was a secured party creditor under the UCC. (2) Whether the knapsack discarded by the defendant during a police pursuit should have been suppressed. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. Gerald Francis

AD1 order dated September 6, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 164 AD3d 1108, 82 NYS3d 401. Rivera, J., granted leave December 18, 2018.

ISSUE PRESENTED: Whether CPL 470.15(1) prevents an intermediate appellate court from reviewing the denial of a CPL 440.20 illegal sentence claim, in that the denial of the motion was not "adverse" to the defendant; his claim was that the sentence was illegally low, with the ultimate intention to withdraw his guilty plea. (Assigned counsel: Janet E. Sabel, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People v. David R. Lang

AD3 order dated August 2, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 164 AD3d 963, 82 NYS3d 229. Rivera, J., granted leave December 18, 2018.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Where defendant raised an intoxication defense, whether he was entitled to a curative instruction because the police failed to conduct a timely blood alcohol level test. (2) Whether the judge properly discharged a sworn juror as unavailable without first consulting with defense counsel. (3) Whether the prosecutor's comments during summation, prefacing conclusions with "I think" and "I don't believe," were improper.

People v. James Forbes

AD1 order dated November 8, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 166 AD3d 414, 88 NYS3d 6. Wilson, J., granted leave January 29, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) The "identity" or "modus operandi" exception to the Molineux rule: whether defendant's identity as to two separate theft incidents was "conclusively established." (2) Whether CPL 200.20 (2)(c) eliminates the discretionary analysis by the trial court as to whether prejudice outweighs probative value. (Assigned counsel: Janet E. Sabel, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

People v. Robert Maffei

AD2 order dated October 24, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 165 AD3d 1173, 86 NYS3d 201. Rivera, J., granted leave January 31, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether defense counsel's failure to challenge a juror who stated he was not certain he could be impartial deprived the defendant of the effective assistance of counsel. (2) Whether this claim raised a "mixed question" of IAC that had to be brought via CPL 440.10 rather than on direct appeal. (Assigned

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. Donna Middleton

Washington County Court order dated July 25, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Feinman, J., granted leave January 30, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the information charging attempted official misconduct (PL 195.00 [1]) sufficiently established the “intent to obtain a benefit” element. (2) Whether the acts charged fell outside defendant’s official duties.

People v. Mauricio Altamirano

AT2 order dated May 11, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 61 Misc.3d 1, 77 N.Y.S.2d 594. Feinman, J., granted leave February 11, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether, where the trial judge initially denied defense counsel’s timely request to instruct the jury on the defense of temporary innocent possession of a weapon, the judge erred in sua sponte giving the jury that instruction without allowing defense counsel to then reopen his summation. (2) Whether the error was harmless because in the Appellate Term’s view, the evidence did not warrant such an instruction. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. Jonathan Batticks

AD1 order dated October 30, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 165 AD3d 591, 84 NYS3d 769. Fahey, J., granted leave February 1, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: Where a juror made an outburst during cross-examination of a prosecution witness, whether the judge erred in refusing to conduct a Buford inquiry as to whether the juror was grossly unqualified. (Assigned counsel: Janet E. Sabel, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People v. Javon Loney

AD2 order dated August 1, 2018, modifying and otherwise affirming the judgment of conviction. Decision below: 164 AD3d 523, 77 NYS3d 879. Wilson, J., granted leave March 1, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) The refusal to instruct the jury that the voluntariness of the possession is an element of weapon possession under PL 265.02 (7); (2) the denial of the motion to suppress physical evidence; (3) prosecutorial misconduct on summation. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. David M. Holz

AD4 order dated December 21, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 167 AD3d 1417, 90 NYS3d 724. Whalen, J. (AD dissenter), granted leave February 25, 2019.

ISSUE PRESENTED: The defendant was indicted for two separate burglaries, one on October 1st and one on October 3rd. The defendant challenged the refusal to suppress jewelry related only to the October 3rd burglary. The defendant pleaded guilty to the count relevant to the October 1st burglary, to cover the count related to the October 3rd burglary. Whether the Appellate Division has the jurisdiction pursuant to CPL 710.70(2) to review the denial of the motion to suppress. (Assigned counsel: Timothy P. Donaher, Monroe County Public Defender, Monroe County Public Defender, 10 N. Fitzhugh St., Rochester, NY 14614.)

People v. Marcelino Allende

AD1 order dated January 10, 2019, modifying judgment of conviction. Decision below: 168 AD3d 464, 89 NYS3d 621. Rivera, J. granted leave to People April 2, 2019. (SSD.)

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether, to sustain a conviction for Robbery in the First Degree (Penal Law § 160.15(4)), the People must prove that the person whose property was stolen was also the person

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

who observed the defendant display a firearm. (2) Whether the Court of Appeals may review an unpreserved legal issue relied on by the Appellate Division in conducting weight of the evidence review. (Assigned counsel: Megan Byrne and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Limmia Page

AD4 order dated November 9, 2018, affirming suppression of evidence. Decision below: 166 AD3d 1472, 87 NYS3d 409. Wilson, J., granted leave to People April 3, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether a marine interdiction agent with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations effected a valid citizen's arrest (CPL 140.30). (2) Whether evidence seized as a result of an invalid citizen's arrest is subject to suppression. (Assigned counsel for respondent: David C. Schopp, The Legal Aid Society of Buffalo, Inc., 290 Main Street, Suite 350, Buffalo, NY 14202.)

People v. Rickey Alston

AD1 order dated January 22, 2019, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 169 AD3 1, 92 NYS3d 18. Renwick, J. (AD dissenter), granted leave April 30, 2019. (SSM.)

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether defendant's conviction for possessing a "gravity knife" should be dismissed in light of the recent legislation decriminalizing "gravity knives" as a per se weapon, and since his case is still pending on direct appeal. (2) Whether the court violated the plain language of C.P.L. 200.60 by forcing Mr. Alston to decide whether to admit his prior conviction before the trial commenced. (3) Whether the court erred in admitting two video recordings taken from a police officer's cell phone of surveillance video allegedly depicting the incident, where the prosecution failed to lay an adequate foundation. (4) Whether a conviction under a Washington D.C. statute can serve as a valid predicate felony conviction. (Assigned counsel: Ben Wiener and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)



**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People ex. rel. Negron v. Superintendent, Woodbourne

AD3 order dated January 16, 2019, granting Article 78 petition. Decision below: 170 AD3d 12, 94 NYS3d 703. Third Department granted leave to Attorney General May 3, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Third Department found the “unambiguous” reading of Executive Law § 259-c (14) to be that sex offender residency restrictions apply to individuals being released to parole supervision if their SORA risk level has been set to Level 3 AND they are being released to supervision for the enumerated sex offense that led to the Level 3 adjudication. The statute does not apply if the individual was previously adjudicated at Level 3 for a prior sex conviction but is currently on parole supervision for a non-enumerated offense. *NB* The Fourth Department took the opposite position in People ex rel. Garcia v. Annucci, 167 A.D.3d 199 (4th Dept. 2018). The Negron opinion does not discuss the separate statutory requirement of residency restrictions for individuals on supervision for an enumerated sex offense involving an under-age complainant. (Assigned counsel to Petitioner-Respondent: Janet E. Sabel, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

**III. New Leave Grants**

People v. Howard Powell

AD2 order dated November 7, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 166 AD3d 660, 87 NYS3d 31. Rivera, J., granted leave April 26, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether the trial court erred in denying, after a Frye hearing that demonstrated the proffered testimony’s relevance to the specific circumstances of the case, defendant’s motion to present expert testimony on the topic of false confessions. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

People v. Edward Hardy

AT2 order dated February 1, 2019, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 63 M3d 6, 92 NYS3d 536. Fahey, J., granted leave April 18, 2019.

ISSUE PRESENTED: Whether a local criminal court accusatory instrument can be amended by altering its factual allegations (here, a significant date change) pursuant to the court’s “inherent authority” – as opposed to CPL 100.45, which would not permit such an amendment. (Assigned counsel: Paul Skip Laisure, Appellate Advocates, 111 John St., 9th Floor, NYC 10038.)

People v. Rashid Bilal

AD1 order dated March 7, 2019, reversing judgment of conviction. Decision below: 170 AD3d 83, 96 NYS3d 1. Tom (AD dissenter), J., granted leave to People May 14, 2019. (SSM.)

ISSUES PRESENTED: Search and Seizure (1) Whether the police had only a level-one Debour predicate based solely upon a radio run with a vague description that defendant did not even meet. (2) Whether the defendant voluntarily “abandoned” the gun during the illegal police pursuit. (3) Whether the Appellate Division’s determinations were mixed questions of law and fact. (Assigned counsel for respondent: Matthew Bova and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Zhakariyya Muhammad

AD1 order dated April 4, 2019, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 171 AD3d 442, 98 NYS3d 55. Renwick (AD dissenter), J., granted leave June 4, 2019. (SSM.)

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether the trial court coerced a verdict by granting the jury’s request to continue deliberations on a Friday afternoon, after two deadlock notes, without addressing the schedule conflict presented by the unavailability of three of the jurors as of the following Monday. (2) Whether the two Allen charges to the deadlocked

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

jury were appropriate. (3) Whether the court erred in giving its final charge to the jury in writing without first obtaining defense counsel's consent. (4) Whether the sentencing court improperly considered acquitted counts. (Assigned counsel: Mark W. Zeno and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Tyrone D. Gordon

AD2 order dated February 6, 2019, affirming granting of motion to suppress physical evidence. Decision below: 169 AD3d 714, 91 NYS3d 716. Wilson, J., granted leave to People April 22, 2019.

ISSUE PRESENTED: Whether a search warrant of a particular house at a certain address also covered two vehicles not described in the warrant but located on the property.

People v. Reginald Goldman

AD1 order dated April 23, 2019, reversing judgment of conviction. Decision below: 171 AD3d 581, 99 NYS3d 257. Fahey, J., granted leave to People June 18, 2019.

ISSUES PRESENTED: (1) Whether, pursuant to Matter of Abe A., 56 N.Y.2d 288, the hearing court erred in precluding defense counsel from reviewing the People's application for a search warrant to obtain a saliva sample for DNA purposes. Whether being in custody or an unrelated matter voids the People's obligation pursuant to Abe A. (2) Whether the People properly authenticated a music video posted on social media, where no one testified who was there during the filming or who participated in editing it. (Assigned counsel for Respondent: Alexandra L. Mitter and Robert S. Dean, Center for Appellate Litigation, 120 Wall Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Floor, NYC 10005.)

People v. Robin Pena

AT1 order dated October 29, 2018, affirming grant of motion to suppress. Decision below: 61 Misc.3d 134A, 2018 WL 5584501. Garcia, J., granted leave to People May 14, 2019.

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether a police officer made an “objectively reasonable mistake of law” in stopping defendant’s vehicle, which had working brake lights on the right and left side as required by the VTL, but had a defective center brake light, which is not required by the VTL.

**People v. Robert Hinshaw**

AD4 order dated March 22, 2019, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 170 AD3d 1680, 96 NYS3d 445. Whalen, J. (AD dissenter), granted leave June 4, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Search & Seizure. Reasonable Suspicion For Car Stop. Whether the State trooper had reasonable suspicion to stop defendant’s car based solely on a DMV computer check, which indicated that the car had been impounded, but which also stated that “it should not be treated as a stolen vehicle hit” and “[n]o further action should be taken based solely on the impound response.” The trooper testified that he was entitled to simply ignore that language.

**People v. Sergio Del Rosario**

AD2 order dated March 6, 2019, affirming level-three SORA adjudication. Decision below: 170 AD3d 759, 93 NYS3d 580. Court of Appeals granted leave June 3, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Whether the courts below erred in concluding that defendant’s familial relationship with the victim was an aggravating circumstance not adequately taken into account by the SORA risk assessment instrument, thus justifying an upward departure. (Counsel for defendant: Clare J. Degnan, Westchester Legal Aid Society, 150 Grand Street, 1st Floor, White Plains, NY 10601.)

**People v. Frederic Badji**

AD1 order dated April 9, 2019, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 171 AD3d 499, 95 NYS3d 808. Garcia, J., granted leave June 19, 2019.

**COURT OF APPEALS UPDATE -  
Center for Appellate Litigation**

---

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** The sufficiency of proof of larceny of the victim's credit card where there was no proof that defendant possessed a physical credit card when he used intangible credit card information to make purchases. (Assigned counsel: Janet E. Sabel, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)

**People v. Victor Diaz**

AD4 order dated April 26, 2019, affirming order designating defendant a SORA level-two sex offender. Decision below: 171 AD3d 1511, 97 NYS3d 567. Court of Appeals granted leave September 5, 2019.

**ISSUE PRESENTED:** Does a bare allegation of "forcible compulsion," unaccompanied by any factual description of defendant's conduct, constitute clear and convincing evidence to support the assessment of 10 points under SORA risk factor one. (Assigned counsel: Timothy P. Donaher, Monroe County Public Defender, Monroe County Public Defender, 10 N. Fitzhugh St., Rochester, NY 14614.)

**People v. Tyrone Wortham**

AD1 order dated April 5, 2018, affirming judgment of conviction. Decision below: 160 AD3d 431, 75 NYS3d 570. Stein, J., granted leave August 15, 2019.

**ISSUES PRESENTED:**(1) Whether admissions made in response to routine pedigree questions during the execution of a search warrant are admissible under the pedigree exception to the Miranda requirement if, although the question was not designed to elicit an incriminating response, the answer was nonetheless reasonably likely to be incriminating. (2) Whether defendant was entitled to a Frye hearing on the reliability of FST DNA evidence. (Assigned counsel: Janet E. Sabel, Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau, 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038.)