



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

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In Brief

- **Partner of Wagstaff + Cartmell LLP**
- **See Notable Litigation**
- **Served as the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel Representative for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri**

P.J. is an experienced trial attorney and an aggressive litigator. His cases involve a wide variety of criminal matters including all types of fraud, drug crimes, computer or internet crimes, violent crimes, driving while intoxicated crimes and many more. P.J. defends clients who are being investigated, have been accused, or have been charged with violating federal, state, or municipal laws. His experience in both federal and state court is invaluable in helping clients make informed decisions as they try to resolve their legal issues.

As a former Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri in the Kansas City Office and as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office he handled major felony offenses.

P.J. served as the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel Representative for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri. He was appointed to that position in 2007 by the Honorable Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., Chief District Judge for the Western District of Missouri and was again nominated and reconfirmed to this position by the Honorable David Gregory Kays who currently serves as the Chief District Judge in the Western District of Missouri.

Notable Litigation

DISMISSED CASES

Kansas City man charged with five counts of Murder 1st Degree and facing five Life Sentences without parole in Firebombing Arson of a residence. As result of our extensive investigation. All Charges were Dismissed. Case featured in Kansas City Magazine Article "Man in the Streets." Read more here.

College bound Scholar Athlete was charged with Murder 2nd Degree and Armed Criminal Action in Jackson County, Missouri and facing two potential Life Sentences. As a result of our investigation and proving the Police had the wrong person charged, All Charges were Dismissed. The real perpetrator was subsequently charged.

Ray County man was Indicted in 30-year-old cold case with two counts of Murder 1st Degree in the deaths of his wife and daughter was facing two Life Sentences Without the Possibility of Parole. As a result of our investigation and depositions of witnesses, All Charges were Dismissed.

Members of a professional football team in Kansas City for a game were accused of Forcible Rape in Jackson County and facing potential Life Sentences. As a result of our investigation and the deposition of the alleged victim, All Charges were Dismissed.

Milan, Missouri man was charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Arson and Insurance Fraud. As a result of our investigation, All Charges were Dismissed.

Kansas City Police Officer in the line of duty at a traffic stop accused of Murder 2nd Degree. As a result of our investigation, All Charges were Dismissed.

Blue Springs woman charged with Murder 2nd Degree of her niece. All Charges were Dismissed after depositions and our investigation.



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

Four Kansas City Police Officers charged with Felony Theft. All Charges were Dismissed and fully re-instated with back pay as a result of our investigation.

Jefferson City man charged with two counts of Murder 2nd Degree. All Charges were Dismissed as a result of our investigation.

Commercial airline passenger charged in Federal Court with Interfering with Flight Crew on a flight from San Francisco to Kansas City. All Federal Charges were Dismissed.

Kansas City Police Deputy Chief charged with Sexual Harassment. As a result of our investigation, All Charges were Dismissed and was Reinstated with Back Pay and Full Benefits.

Independence Fire Captain charged with Assault 1st Degree and facing a potential 15 years imprisonment in Jackson County. As a result of our investigation, the Charge was Dismissed.

Kansas City Police Officer accused of wrongdoing. All Charges were Dismissed and was Awarded Back Pay and Re-Instated as a result of our investigation.

Kansas City Police Captain Cleared of DWI Charge.

Kansas City woman charged with Assault 1st Degree and Armed Criminal Action in road rage incident. All Charges were Dismissed as a result of our depositions and investigation.

Two teenage residents of Wichita, Kansas charged with Possession of Marijuana and Drug Paraphernalia in Johnson County, Kansas. Both clients had All Charges Dismissed before the preliminary hearing based on our legal research of probable cause for car stop.

A Smithville real estate agent charged in Wyandotte County, Kansas District Court with Murder 1st Degree in 27-year old cold case, facing a Life Sentence. After a Motion Hearing to Exclude Certain Evidence and a Preliminary Hearing, District Court Judge Dismissed the Murder 1st Degree Charge.

Kansas City Police Detective accused in Clay County of Assaulting a prisoner in his custody, cleared of All Charges as a result of our investigation.

California resident going to college in Kansas City charged in Jackson County with Assault 1st Degree and Armed Criminal Action facing a potential 15 year sentence. As a result of our investigation and depositions, All Charges were Dismissed.

Cass County man charged with Assault 1st Degree and Armed Criminal Action in shooting of trespasser on his property, facing a potential Life Sentence. After our investigation All Charges were Dismissed.



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

TRIALS

Kansas City teenager charged with Vehicular Involuntary Manslaughter, driving while intoxicated. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Daughter charged with Murder 1st Degree of her mother and facing a Life Sentence without the possibility of parole. Found Not Guilty by a Jasper County Jury. Case featured on Oprah Winfrey Show.

Court TV "FBI STING MURDER TRIAL" Nationally televised trial, Nancy Grace gives John an A+.

Kansas City liquor store owner charged with Murder 2nd Degree and Armed Criminal Action facing two Life Sentences. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury. Case featured in Kansas City Magazine Article "Man in the Streets". Read more here.

Navy Seal charged with Assault 1st Degree, Kidnapping, and Armed Criminal Action facing two potential Life Sentences and 15 years. Found Not Guilty by a Buchanan County Jury.

Police Officer working off duty involved in a shooting incident and charged with Murder 2nd Degree and facing a potential Life Sentence. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Kansas City Attorney and Councilwoman charged with Assault of a Police Officer and facing a potential 15-year sentence. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Decorated Army Veteran charged with Assault 1st Degree and Armed Criminal Action against Kansas City Police Officers and facing two Life Sentences. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Kansas City woman charged with Involuntary Vehicular Manslaughter facing a potential 15-year sentence. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Kansas City man charged in Federal Court for the District of Kansas with Sale and Distribution of Cocaine. Found Not Guilty by a Federal Jury.

Kansas City man charged with Robbery 1st Degree and Armed Criminal Action of a local pharmacy facing two Life Sentences. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury. Prominent Kansas City Doctor charged with Possession of Child Pornography. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Kansas City Attorney charged with Aggravated Assault in barroom fight. Found Not Guilty by Judge.

Kansas City man charged with Murder 2nd Degree in a drive-by shooting. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Kansas City man charged with cheating at local casino for \$14,000. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

Kansas City man charged with Solicitation of a Prostitute. Found Not Guilty by Judge. Kansas City man charged with Murder 2nd Degree and Armed Criminal Action. Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

Kansas City Police Officer charged with Involuntary Manslaughter in a shooting while on duty. After a jury trial, Found Not Guilty by a Clay County Special Judge Assigned by the Missouri Supreme Court.

Kansas City man charged with Possession of Cocaine with Intent to Distribute, Found Not Guilty by a Jackson County Jury.

PROBATION CASES

Kansas City man charged with vehicular injury DWI in Jackson County. Received Probation.

Local Mortgage Broker charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Wire Fraud and Money Laundering with a loss amount in excess of \$2.5 million. Received Probation.

Kansas City Police Officer charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Theft of Government Funds by Fraud or Deceit. Received Probation.

Kansas City Attorney charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Federal Tax Evasion. Received Probation.

Kansas City Attorney charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Stealing \$142,000.00 from an estate. Received Probation.

North Carolina resident charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine and Marijuana facing 10 years to Life. After our investigation and negotiation, client pled to reduced charge of conspiracy to distribute marijuana only. Received Probation.

Olathe, Kansas resident indicted for Conspiracy to Defraud the Food and Drug Administration, Mail Fraud and Falsifying Records in Federal Court in the District of Kansas. After a negotiated plea agreement, client faced a guideline sentence between 18-24 months. After our motion for downward variance and arguments at sentencing, Received Probation and had to pay restitution.

Federal Employee charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with using computer at work to promote prostitution. Received Probation.

Independence Police Officer Indicted in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri for Distribution of Anabolic Steroids. Received Probation.

Kansas City Businessman investigated for Income Tax Fraud by the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service. Prior to being charged, we negotiated a waiver of indictment in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri. After a negotiated plea, client pled guilty to tax fraud and Received 6 Months of Home Detention and Probation.

Wichita resident charged with Aiding and Abetting a Felon in Possession of a Firearm in Federal Court in the District of Kansas facing 10-years in the Bureau of Prisons. After negotiation and argument at sentencing, Received Probation.

Kansas City man charged in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri with Aiding and Abetting the Disposal of Hazardous Waste Without a Permit. Received Probation.



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

Kansas City Woman Indicted in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri for Possession with Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance (900 plus Ecstasy Pills). Received Probation.

In Lafayette County, Military Student charged with Forcible Rape. Pleads to a reduced charge of a non-sex offense. Did not require sex offender registration. Received Probation.

Texas native charged in Lafayette County with Possession with Intent to Distribute 600 plus pounds of Marijuana. Received 120 Day Sentence and Probation.

Platte County man charged with 1st Degree Statutory Sodomy and Deviant Sexual Intercourse in Platte County. After our investigation and negotiation, client pled guilty to the amended charge of Child Endangerment. Received Probation.

Kansas City woman charged with 2nd Degree Murder and Armed Criminal Action in Jackson County. After our investigation and negotiation client pled to Involuntary Manslaughter. Received Probation.

Cass County man charged with Manufacturing a Controlled Substance within 2,000 feet of a school and Distribution within 2,000 feet of a school. Received 120 Day Sentence and Probation.

Ray County woman charged in Ray County with Fraud over \$300,000. Received 120 Day Sentence and Probation.

Kansas City Police Sergeant charged with Sexual Assault while on-duty. Received Probation.

Prominent Kansas City Dentist charged in Jackson County with Rape. Received Probation.

Juvenile charged in Jackson County Juvenile Court with Child Molestation. Received Probation.

Kansas City Police Officer charged in Jackson County with Misconduct in the Administration of Justice and Theft. Received Probation.

Lone Jack, Missouri Police Chief charged in Clay County with Possession of Drugs. Received Probation.

Warrensburg woman charged with Arson 1st Degree and Murder 1st Degree. After two days of trial, State dismissed Murder 1st Degree charge and defendant pled guilty to Arson 2nd Degree. Received Probation.

Harrison County Man charged with Child Molestation and facing a 15 year Sentence, pled guilty to reduced charges of Harassment. Received Probation.

Platte County man charged with Attempted Sodomy 1st Degree facing a potential Life Sentence. Received Probation.



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

Daviess County man charged with Vehicular Involuntary Manslaughter DWI. Received Probation.

Georgia Contractor charged in Clay County with multiple counts of Stealing/Theft over \$25,000.00 facing a potential 15 year sentence. Received Probation.

MISCELLANEOUS CASES

Johnson County businessman indicted for Conspiracy to Distribute Oxycontin and Oxycodone in Federal Court in the Western District of Missouri. After a negotiated plea agreement, client faced a guideline sentence between 46-57 months. After our objections to the presentence investigative report, sentencing memorandum and arguments at sentencing, client Received One Year and One Day Sentence and had to pay restitution.

Warrensburg resident investigated for Social Security Disability Benefits Fraud. Prior to being charged, we negotiated a waiver of indictment. Upon a plea to theft of government money, client was facing between 21-27 months after the presentence investigative report was complete. After our objections to the presentence investigative report, sentencing memorandum and arguments, client Received a Six-Month Sentence, followed by a term of supervised release and had to pay restitution.

Columbia businessman charged with Bank Fraud (approx. three million dollars) in Federal Court for the Western District of Missouri. Client faced a 78-97 month sentence after the presentence investigative report was completed. Based on our objections to the presentence investigative report, a sentencing memorandum and arguments at the sentencing hearing, our client Received 27 Months and was ordered to pay restitution.

Grandview businessman charged with Interstate Transportation of Stolen Property and Aiding and Abetting Others in the interstate transportation of stolen property in the Federal Court in the District of Kansas. After negotiation and agreement, the defendant pled to a reduced charge of misprision of a felony and received an eight-month split sentence. Received Four Months in Prison and Four Months on House Arrest.

Battered wife in Columbia, Missouri charged with Murder 1st Degree and Armed Criminal Action facing Life without Parole. Found Guilty of Lesser Offense of Involuntary Manslaughter by a Boone County Jury.

Independence man charged with Murder 2nd Degree in road rage incident facing a Life Sentencing. Found Guilty of Lesser Offense of Involuntary Manslaughter by Jackson County Jury.

Johnson County, Kansas man charged with Federal Bank Robbery and Use of a Weapon in a Crime of Violence in the Federal District of Kansas and facing a 30-year sentence. After a Trial by Jury, the Jury was unable to agree on defendant's guilt. The Judge declared a Hung Jury. After the Hung Jury, a plea was negotiated with the Government and the Bank Robbery Charge was Dismissed and the defendant pled Guilty to five years on the gun charge. Case featured in Missouri Lawyers Weekly Article "John O'Connor Challenges Fingerprint Identification". [Read more here.](#)

Ray County resident investigated in the Western District of Missouri for Embezzling or Stealing from a Government Agency. Prior to being charged, we negotiated a waiver of



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

indictment. Upon a plea to theft concerning programs receiving federal funds, client was facing between 18-24 months after the presentence investigative report was complete. After arguments at the sentencing hearing, our client Received a Downward Variance to 4 Months followed by supervised release and had to pay restitution.

Independence woman charged with Murder 1st Degree of her husband in Jackson County, Missouri, facing a Life Sentence without Parole, pleads guilty to Conspiracy to Commit 1st Degree Murder and Received an 8 year Sentence.

An IRS agent charged with Murder 2nd Degree of his wife and facing a Life Sentence is found guilty of the lesser offense of Voluntary Manslaughter by a Johnson County, Kansas jury and Received a 49 month sentence.

Practice Areas

P.J. handled criminal law. John is an expert for criminal law cases. John has 56 years of criminal law experience and have been trusted by many to aggressively represent their interests, with results that speak for themselves. John has an unparalleled reputation in the legal community and results have garnered local and national media attention.

His practice area include:

FEDERAL CRIMES

White Collar Crimes and Corporate Criminal Investigations

Fraud / Embezzlement / Theft

Health Care Fraud

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Violations / Antitrust Violations

Public Corruption / Bribery / Perjury and False Statements / Grand Jury Investigations

Money Laundering

Mortgage / Real Estate Fraud

Computer / Internet Crimes

Drug Conspiracy / Distribution / Possession / Trafficking / Importation / Production

Felon in Possession of Firearms or Ammunition / Carjacking

Bank Robbery and other Hobbs Act Violations / Interstate Transportation of Stolen Property

Capital Murder and Kidnapping

RICO / Racketeering

Fish and Wildlife Violations

STATE CRIMES

Sex Crimes

Murder

Armed Criminal Action

Assault All Forms (Domestic)

Drugs

Robbery / Stealing / Embezzlement / Theft in General

Bad Checks / Forgery

Tampering

Domestic Violence

DUI/DWI

Weapons / Firearms Offenses

Arson

Appeals



P.J. O'CONNOR

Partner

Probation and Parole Hearing
Post Conviction Hearings
MUNICIPAL CRIMES / ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS
DUI / DWI
Driving While Suspended or Revoked
Domestic Violence
General Ordinance Violations

Prior Work Experience

Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office in the Western District of Missouri
Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Jackson County Prosecutor's Office

Education

- J.D., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2001
- B.S. in Political Science, Rockhurst College, 1995

Professional Organizations

TBD

Admissions

[Missouri](#)

[U.S. District Court, District of Kansas](#)

[U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri](#)

[U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit](#)

Honors and Awards

National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys

CJA Panel Attorney for the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri

Kansas City Magazine "Super Lawyers" Rising Stars – 2009-2014

Board of Directors for the Bishop Sullivan Center