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## Prosecutors Plan To Drop Thousands Of Cases Linked To Disgraced Chemist Farak

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By [WBUR Newsroom](#)



**Editor's note:** You can read and listen to Deb's feature report [here](#).

Prosecutors across Massachusetts said Thursday they plan to dismiss thousands of convictions related to the misconduct of a former state chemist.

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Sonja Farak [pleaded guilty](#) in 2014 to stealing drugs and tampering with evidence at the Amherst lab where she worked.

The Northwestern, Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex district attorneys announced they plan to dismiss all cases in which Farak was the testing chemist.

Hampden District Attorney Anthony Gulluni said his office will dismiss all district and juvenile court convictions linked to Farak, totaling about 3,940

cases. A spokesman for the office said there are some Superior Court cases still under review.

The Northwestern district attorney, in western Massachusetts, said it would drop 1,497 criminal cases.

In eastern Massachusetts, the Middlesex County district attorney agreed to dismiss charges in 245 cases; in Suffolk County, 134 cases; in Norfolk County, 76 cases. The Essex district attorney did not release exact numbers.

“Given the nature and extent of her misconduct, re-testing the substances at issue is unlikely to yield a reliable result,” Suffolk DA Dan Conley said in a statement. “The most appropriate step is to notify the court that we will not pursue any further litigation in any of the identified cases.”

Thursday was the court-ordered deadline for Massachusetts DAs and the state attorney general to say how many drug convictions they plan to dismiss of the thousands tainted by Farak's misconduct.

The AG is involved because a judge [ruled](#) that two former assistant attorneys general committed misconduct in handling the evidence of Farak's drug use.

Prosecutors have to submit the convictions that might be designated for dismissal to the state Supreme Judicial Court for approval. All district attorneys in Massachusetts reviewed cases linked to Farak.

In April, the court [dismissed](#) more than 20,000 criminal convictions because of misconduct by another former state chemist, Annie Dookhan.

*With reporting by WBUR's [Deborah Becker](#) and the Newscast Unit*

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