

DEAN A. KHARASCH

Private Investigator, Digital Evidence Specialist & Expert Witness

Cybersecurity Consulting | Criminal & Civil Investigations

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Investigator and digital evidence specialist with over two decades of experience spanning law enforcement, computer and mobile device forensics, corporate cybersecurity, and private investigations. Provided expert witness testimony in **more than 200 criminal and civil cases** and conducted digital evidence examinations supporting **more than 50 law enforcement agencies**. Combines hands-on investigative experience with executive breach simulation and incident response consulting to explain complex evidence, identify gaps in interpretation, and support informed decisions.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Investigator, Cyber Incident Response Team

Verizon & HCLTech

- Developed breach simulations and tabletop exercise materials aligned with technical scenarios and customer objectives, including briefings, discussion questions, and expected outcomes.
- Supported hotline emergency situations and assisted victim companies under cyber attacks.
- Prepares client observations, improvement suggestions, and verbal debriefs addressing executive decisions, escalation, communications, and coordination among security, legal, and leadership teams.
- Supports rapid response retainer customer intake, engagement summaries, and scopes of work; helps coordinate dark web hunting objectives, reporting expectations, and estimated effort with specialist teams.

Private Investigator

Private Investigation Services & Security

- Conducts witness interviews and prepares comprehensive investigative reports for private investigation matters, drawing on extensive law enforcement and digital evidence expertise.
- Performs background and due-diligence investigations for individuals and organizations.
- Provides protective-service assignments and security-related investigative support.
- Conducts surveillance assignments and documents observations and investigative findings.
- Conducts witness interviews for criminal and civil matters and prepares detailed reports for attorneys and clients.
- Performs consent-based examinations of computers and mobile devices in family and other sensitive matters, emphasizing confidentiality, evidence preservation, and careful handling of private information.
- Supports Internet-safety and child-protection matters involving suspected online predators, inappropriate communications, and other Internet dangers.
- Provides educational presentations for parents, organizations, and community groups on Internet safety, online threats, and protection of children and families.

Former Special Investigator

Lake County State's Attorney's Office | Waukegan, IL

Joined 2001 | Cyber Crimes Division assignment began 2006

- Established and maintained the Cyber Crimes lab, supporting digital evidence examinations for law enforcement agencies and equipping the lab with forensic computers, servers, and examination tools.
- Examined computer and mobile device evidence and provided expert testimony in cases involving homicide, identity theft, computer fraud, sexual assault, crimes against children, and public corruption.
- Served as a liaison to the FBI, Illinois Attorney General's Office, and Department of Homeland Security in investigations involving crimes against children.
- Provided forensic support during search warrant execution, including on-scene evidence examination and suspect and witness interviews.

CORE EXPERTISE

Mobile & Computer Forensics
Timeline Reconstruction
Forensic Cross-Validation
Expert Witness Testimony
Witness & Suspect Interviews
Litigation Support
Incident Response Scoping
Breach Simulation & Tabletop
Evidence Preservation

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION SERVICES

Background Checks & Due Diligence
Protection Assignments
Surveillance
Criminal & Civil Witness Interviews
Consent-Based Computer & Phone Examinations
Internet Safety & Child Protection
Confidential Investigative Matters
Internet-Safety Presentations

CERTIFICATIONS & TRAINING

Former EnCE - EnCase Certified Examiner
Cellebrite UFED Certified Examiner
Lantern Certified Examiner
Paraben Certified Handheld Device Examiner
FieldSearch Certified Forensic Instructor
U.S. DOJ Image Scan Forensics
Illinois Certified Peace Officer (PTI)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Former Special Investigator

Lake County State's Attorney's Office | Waukegan, IL

Cyber Crimes Division

- Developed digital evidence preservation and collection training, including instruction and certification in field forensic triage tools; delivered hundreds of internet safety and security presentations to law enforcement, businesses, schools, colleges, and parent groups.
- Introduced a second-shift Cyber Crimes schedule to improve investigative coverage and refurbished hundreds of seized and forfeited computers for forensic lab and law enforcement use.

Drug Prosecutions Division (2001 - 2006)

- Served concurrently as a Special Lake County Deputy Sheriff handling drug asset forfeiture responsibilities and developed law enforcement training on forfeiture procedures.
- Investigated violent crimes, executed search warrants, collected evidence, and interviewed suspects in drug and gang cases; collaborated with the FBI, DEA, ATF, and U.S. Secret Service.

Police Officer & Detective

North Chicago Police Department, IL | 1996 - 2000

- **Detective (1998 - 2000):** Investigated felony and misdemeanor cases, including multiple homicide cases, and conducted suspect and witness interviews.
- Participated in undercover operations, warrant squads, and the Lake County Gang Task Force.
- **Patrol Officer (1996 - 1998):** Secured crime scenes, collected evidence, interviewed witnesses, made arrests, and participated in specialized drug trafficking and warrant operations.

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Digital Evidence Instructor

Wicklender-Zulawski & Associates, Inc. | Began 2015

- Taught digital evidence collection in the 5-day Lead Homicide Investigator Certification Course, developing materials on crime scene processing, evidence preservation, and forensic triage.
- Trained investigators on preserving digital evidence when encountering password protection and encryption at crime scenes.

EDUCATION

Illinois State University

1986

Police Training Institute

University of Illinois, 1996

RECOGNITION & HONORS

2014 Law Enforcement Award

Lake County Juvenile Officers Association

2011 Law Enforcement Award

Lake County State's Attorney's Office & CAC

2000 Police Officer of the Year

North Chicago Police Department

INVESTIGATIVE STRENGTHS

Digital Evidence Examination

Evidence Preservation

Timeline Reconstruction

Expert Testimony

Criminal & Civil Investigations

Witness & Suspect Interviews

Litigation Support

Cyber Incident Response