

**DAASNY President Thomas Zugibe Talks Prosecutorial Ethics, Emphasizes New York's
Leadership Role**
"The Right Thing" – Ethics Handbook Distributed to Every Prosecutor in the State

*District Attorneys Association of the State of New York distributes revised version of "The Right Thing" –
A Prosecutor's Handbook to Complying with Ethics Obligations.*

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(NEW CITY, NY – February 5, 2016) The District Attorneys Association of the State of New York (DAASNY) announced today that every prosecutor in New York State has been provided with an updated guide to complying with statutory, regulatory, and case law on a wide range of ethical obligations. "[The Right Thing](#)," first penned in 2011, has been reviewed and revised in light of evolving ethical obligations of New York State's 2800 local prosecutors.

DAASNY President Thomas Zugibe (DA Rockland County) said that while this important training and reference tool was critical for prosecutors, the most important deliverable is that a constant emphasis on ethics will create an atmosphere in which ethical compliance is second nature for every single prosecutor in the state.

New York is widely praised for at the forefront in terms of training not only prosecutors, but other members of law enforcement in their ethical obligations, particularly in terms of the information that must be turned over to the defense in a criminal case. Since 2010, the DAASNY Best Practices Committee has met regularly to discuss procedures that reduce wrongful convictions and improve the justice system. Dozens of states have modeled their own practices on those established in New York, and have adopted "[The Right Thing](#)" as a guide.

The Right Thing distills the prosecutor's role:

- Keep an open mind;
- Seek the truth;
- Define success as exonerating the innocent as well as convicting the guilty;
- Know and abide by all ethical rules that govern prosecutorial conduct;
- Emphasize the primacy of ethical conduct at all levels in an office.
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The crux of "The Right Thing" is that "a prosecutor's worst nightmare is not losing a major case or watching a dangerous criminal go free, it's convicting an innocent person," because, the Handbook explains, "Nothing is more repugnant to our core principles of truth and justice."

DA Zugibe echoed that sentiment, saying, "The District Attorneys Association, comprised of every elected DA in the State, remains committed to ensuring that justice is served. Our members place our ethical obligations, and the search for true justice, above conviction rates. We know that the vast majority of Assistant District Attorneys are ethical, hardworking public servants dedicated to true justice. We also know that an ethical lapse on the part of the prosecutor shakes the very foundation of our justice system. Innocent people can be wrongly convicted while the guilty may be left free to commit serious crimes. Victims are re-victimized and communities suffer when cases are not pursued ethically. That is why I am proud to be leading DAASNY, an organization that has done more to advance prosecutorial ethics than any public or private entity nationwide."

An article on the evolution of ethics training in New York can be found [here](#).