

NEWS RELEASES

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Husch Blackwell Earns First Trial Win as Part of the Missouri Coalition for the Right to Counsel

Husch Blackwell successfully represented a 19-year-old Missouri man charged with 12 counts of assault, armed criminal action, and unlawful use of a weapon when, after a three-day trial in St. Louis, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty on all counts after just an hour of deliberation.

The victory was the firm's first verdict in a jury trial while representing clients as a member of the Missouri Coalition for the Right to Counsel (MCRC), a nonprofit group launched in 2017 to ease the strains on Missouri's overburdened public defender system by tasking lawyers in private practice with providing pro bono legal services to defendants.

"This was a case of mistaken identity with a chief witness of dubious credibility," said Kyle Seelbach, the partner who led Husch Blackwell's trial team. "But developing this defense required creativity, resources, and attention to detail, and this is precisely where the Coalition is making a difference. I'm proud of my firm for participating, particularly when the stakes are so high for the people we represent."

If convicted, the client in this case faced a minimum of 15 years in prison and up to life imprisonment.

The Husch Blackwell team was led by Seelbach and included Jonathan Schmalfeld, Shannon Peters, and Lisa Carter.

Prior to this jury trial victory, Husch Blackwell also secured a pair of dismissals on behalf of two clients referred to the firm by MCRC.