Dréa Becker

Junior Counsel - Under 15 Years

CALLED 2012

"A dedicated defender whom clients adore. She is a name to watch."

CHAMBERS UK, 2023

Dréa defends in serious and complex cases. She is experienced in handling cases across the spectrum of criminal offences including serious violence, drugs, robbery, fraud and sexual offences. When defending, she is often instructed to represent young and vulnerable defendants.

Dréa was previously instructed by a leading international law firm on a bribery and fraud investigation, and also previously instructed by an offshore firm in a confidential financial services regulatory investigation. This involved a detailed understanding and application of the anti-money laundering and counter terrorist-financing regulatory framework.

Background and Expertise

Before coming to the Bar, Dréa had a career working in humanitarian aid and human rights. She has extensive practical experience and knowledge of the Middle East, specifically Lebanon, Palestine, and Israel. She has experience living in the refugee camps in Lebanon, where she worked as country director for a non-governmental organisation between 1998 – 2001. Following her work in Lebanon, Dréa worked with Oxfam between 2001 – 2003 and lived

in the occupied Palestinian territory at the height of the re-invasion of the West Bank, managing refugee-related programming in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Between 2004 – 2005, she managed Christian Aid's programme in Israel and Palestine. Between 2007 – 2011, Dréa was the Director of Advocacy at Medical Aid for Palestinians, leading the organisation's advocacy, policy and media work in Europe and the Middle East.

Dréa was a lecturer on the LL.M in International Criminal and Human Rights Law at London South Bank University between 2013-2017. She taught the masters' level module on the Law of Armed Conflict, an international law course focusing on the conduct of hostilities, means and methods of warfare, the legality of weapons, and the law of occupation.

Dréa was awarded the Lord Mansfield Scholarship in 2011 by Lincoln's Inn, the top grant awarded to prospective barristers. She is a Commonwealth Scholar.

Notable Cases

Financial Crime

R v Layne Perry, 2023

The defendant committed a series of 'long game' confidence frauds against three older individuals (with several others under investigation across several forces in England and Wales), befriending them, impressing them with his wealth (properties, horses, gambling winnings), before "assisting" them with their finances, thereby taking over and ruining their financial lives. Complex and voluminous financial documentation.

Cardiff Crown Court

Read more:

- BBC News
- BBC News

R v LP, 2019

Representing defendant, a government employee, on trial for £30,000 fraud on her employer. Acquittal.

Southwark Crown Court

R v MF, 2018

Junior defence counsel for lead defendant on trial for tobacco smuggling conspiracy, charged as a tax fraud and prosecuted by HMRC.

Snaresbrook Crown Court

Financial Crime

Firearms

R v LM, 2023

Client found not guilty of possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life. Gangs unit stop of vehicle with five occupants, loaded firearm found in backseat. Instructed by McQueens Solicitors.

Kingston Crown Court

R v SLM and Others, 2023

At the funeral for Lemar Urquhart, a high profile drill artist and gang member who was shot dead in October 2022, firearms police carried out targeted arrests, including forced stop of a Mercedes G-Wagon. A loaded firearm was found in the backseat. The Crown's case is that those in the G-Wagon were patrolling for rival gang members to avenge the death of Mr Urquhart. Following a five week trial, Ms Becker's client was acquitted; the driver and two others were convicted of s.16 Possession of a Firearm with intent to endanger life, and possession of ammunition.

Kingston Crown Court

Firearms

General Crime

R v JB, 2023

Successful appeal against sentence; the Court of Appeal quashed the restraining order imposed in the Crown Court, where the (unrepresented) defendant had agreed to the non-conviction restraining order in 'exchange' for the Crown offering no evidence.

Court of Appeal Criminal Division

R v EB, 2021

Robbery, where defendant was accused of robbing vulnerable victim at knifepoint along with one other. Acquittal.

Wood Green Crown Court

R v AS, 2020

Appeared for the respondent, where Attorney General sought leave to refer sentence for (several) armed robberies as unduly lenient. Court of Appeal refused leave to refer. See Callum-Smith [2020] EWCA Crim 596.

Court of Appeal Criminal Division

Crime

Immigration, Nationality and Asylum

R v AJ, 2022

Led junior in multi-handed case conspiracy to smuggle migrants in hidden compartments of delivery vans. Acquittal based on detailed examination of phone evidence, rebutting prosecution assertions of adjacent immigration offences.

Southwark Crown Court

R v RM, 2021

Sole acquittal in multi-handed case of conspiracy to breach immigration law, where defendant was accused of smuggling illegal entrants into the United Kingdom.

Canterbury Crown Court

Immigration, Nationality and Asylum

Murder and Manslaughter

R v SM, 2021

Led junior in multi-handed case of murder and s.18 wounding. Successful submissions against the introduction of ‘gang’ related bad character; jury directed to return verdicts of not guilty following successful submission of no case to answer.

Kingston Crown Court

Murder and Manslaughter

Rape and Sexual Offences

R v MA, 2024

Client found not guilty of multiple counts of rape of his wife, where extended family sought his deportation. Instructed by Lawtons Solicitors.

St Albans Crown Court

R v AH and another, 2023

Mr AH (D1) was on trial along with Mr DA for kidnap (of two female complainants) and charged with six counts of rape/assault by penetration of one complainant. The co-defendant was charged with one count of (oral) rape on the second complainant. This case also involved allegations (not charged) of drink spiking, club security guards intervening query whether the complainants were sober enough to depart the nightclub with the defendants. The case drew media attention also in part as the victims were asylum seekers.

Isleworth Crown Court

Read more:

- The Standard
- Daily Mail
- Mirror

R v TH, 2022

Successful appeal against sentence; the Court of Appeal found there was insufficient evidence to justify the imposition of a Sexual Harm Prevention Order; the order was quashed.

See Hamilton [2022] EWCA Crim 127, and the Youth Justice Legal Centre article on the case.

Court of Appeal Criminal Division

R v RP, 2022

Led junior in historic rape and indecent assault case, involving six complainants. The allegations

spanned almost 20 years, and offences took place within several family settings as well as role play theatre groups.

Croydon Crown Court

R v AM, 2016

Acquittal of defendant accused of sexually assaulting a stranger on the London Underground.

Blackfriars Crown Court

R v MO, 2015

Acquittal in case where the defendant, who worked as a porter in a care facility, was accused of sexually assaulting a vulnerable patient.

Isleworth Crown Court

Rape and Sexual Offences

Terrorism

R v AB, 2017

Successful half-time submissions on the nature of explosive devices, leading to the acquittal of defendant on trial for a terrorism offence. This case showed that there is a lacuna within terrorism legislation relating to bomb threats and bomb hoaxes.

Central Criminal Court

R v G, 2017

Successful half-time submissions on the nature of explosive devices, leading to the acquittal of defendant on trial for a terrorism offence. This case showed that there is a lacuna within terrorism legislation relating to bomb threats and bomb hoaxes.

Central Criminal Court

Crime

Violence

R v MB, 2019

Representing defendant accused of s.18 wounding with intent with a meat cleaver. Acquittal.

Woolwich Crown Court

R v RC, 2016

Represented client charged with violent disorder. This case involved over 27 defendants involved in a large-scale violent disorder, arising of an illegal rave at Twyford Woods.

Lincoln Crown Court

R v JS, 2015

Defended a 17-year-old on trial for robbery and grievous bodily harm with intent. The defendant was accused of stabbing one victim in the face as part of a robbery on another group of teenagers.

Luton Crown Court

Violence

Achievements

Memberships

- International Bar Association
- Criminal Bar Association
- The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

Education

- BA, Politics and International Development, McGill University, 2000
- MA - Middle Eastern Politics, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2004
- LLM - International and Human Rights Law, Utrecht University, 2007
- Graduate Diploma in Law, BPP University, 2011
- Bar Professional Training Course, City University, 2012