Force Forum 2027 Agenda

Law Enforcement Immunity:
The Path to No Bills, Dismissals, and Qualified Immunity

April 27-29, 2027

Atlanta Marriott Northwest at Galleria
200 Interstate North Pkwy. SE.
Atlanta, GA 30339

Monday, April 26

1500-1700 **Registration Opens**
Atlanta Marriott Northwest at Galleria

Tuesday, April 27

Welcome Remarks and Conference Overview

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

Force Forum begins with an overview of the conference mission and a look at why law enforcement immunity remains one of the most important—and misunderstood—issues facing public safety today. This opening session sets the stage for three days of practical discussion, legal analysis, and professional collaboration focused on preparing officers, agencies, and attorneys for the legal challenges that follow critical incidents.

Current Case Law on Criminal and Civil Immunity

Ken Davis, Esq.
Managing Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm

Jim Dahlquist, Esq.
Associate Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm

The law doesn't stand still, and neither can the people responsible for protecting those who serve. This session examines the latest state and federal decisions affecting criminal immunity, qualified immunity, and civil liability. Rather than simply reviewing cases, the presenters will explain what these decisions mean in the real world and how they influence investigations, litigation strategy, and courtroom advocacy.

Immunity: Trending, Trashed, Undermined, and Essential

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

Few legal concepts have generated more confusion than law enforcement immunity. Political rhetoric has replaced thoughtful legal discussion, leaving many people with a fundamentally flawed understanding of why immunity exists and how it works. This presentation cuts through the noise by examining the legal foundations of criminal and civil immunity, the challenges facing those protections, and why preserving due process ultimately protects both officers and the communities they serve.

Working Lunch
Officers Who Have Lived the Fight

Panel Discussion with LEO Clients

Court opinions explain legal outcomes. Officers explain what those cases cost. During this candid discussion, officers who have faced criminal investigations, civil litigation, or both will share their experiences navigating the legal system while trying to protect their careers, their families, and their futures. Their stories remind us that every case file represents a human being whose life changed in an instant.

Preparing for the Immunity Hearing:
What Your Expert Needs and Needs You to Know

TBA

The strongest legal arguments can be undermined by poor preparation. This session explores the relationship between attorneys, investigators, officers, and expert witnesses, focusing on the evidence, documentation, and communication necessary to build a credible and persuasive immunity defense. Learn what experts need before they take the stand and how early preparation can influence the outcome long before the hearing begins.

Wednesday, April 28, 2027

Case Studies and Continuing Battles in Trial and Appellate Courts

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

Ken Davis, Esq.
Managing Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm

William Lewinski, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Force Science

Behind every appellate opinion is a real incident that changed lives. Through detailed case studies, this session examines how investigations unfolded, why legal strategies succeeded or failed, and what today's litigation teaches us about tomorrow's cases. The discussion goes beyond legal theory to identify practical lessons that attorneys, agencies, and officers can apply immediately.

The Role of the Agency in the Quest for Immunity

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

An officer's legal defense begins long before anyone enters a courtroom. Agency leadership, policy development, training, documentation, and post-incident decision-making all influence whether officers receive the fair process they deserve. This session examines how agencies can strengthen legal preparedness while supporting accountability, professionalism, and public trust.

The Good, the Bad, the Tragic, and the Lessons Learned:
When Agencies Are Absent

Detective Sergeant Brian Keely
Retired, Michigan State Police

Marc Curtis, Esq.
Officer Rights and Trial Attorney, Defender of the Blue

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

Some lessons are learned through success. Others come at an extraordinary personal cost. Through firsthand experience and legal analysis, this session examines what happens when agencies fail to provide the leadership, communication, and support officers need during the most difficult moments of their careers. The presenters will identify practical lessons every law enforcement executive should carry back to their agency.

1:30 pm-2:30 pm **"We Are with You Win or Tie": Opportunities Lost and Maximizing Outcomes**

William Lewinski, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Force Science

Success in litigation often depends on decisions made long before anyone enters a courtroom. Dr. Lewinski examines the investigative, scientific, and strategic considerations that influence legal outcomes while identifying opportunities too often overlooked during the early stages of a critical incident investigation.

Thursday, April 29, 2027

Continuity of Defense: Coordinating Criminal, Civil, and Administrative Battles

Thomas Mitchell, Esq.
Carothers & Mitchell

Doug O'Connell, Esq
O'Connell West, PLLC

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

A critical incident rarely produces just one legal proceeding. Criminal investigations, civil litigation, administrative reviews, and internal affairs inquiries often move forward simultaneously, each capable of affecting the others. This session explores how attorneys, agencies, and officers can coordinate those efforts while protecting constitutional rights, preserving evidence, and avoiding strategic missteps.

Advocacy Under Your Gold Dome:
Forging Foundational Tools Before the Fight Starts

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

TBA

Meaningful advocacy begins long before a critical incident occurs. This presentation examines how legislative engagement, sound public policy, and professional advocacy shape the legal protections available to officers and agencies. Participants will gain insight into how legal professionals, law enforcement leaders, and policymakers can work together to strengthen the legal foundation upon which effective public safety depends.

Peer Counselors and Professionals: One Goal and One Mission

Tina Jaeckle, Ph.D., LCWS
Clinical Operations/Responder Support Services

Jamy Steinberg
Special Agent in Charge, Georgia Bureau of Investigation

Lt. Chris Mabe
Retired, Cobb County Police Department

The legal battle is only one part of surviving a critical incident. Officers also face emotional, psychological, and professional challenges that can affect every aspect of their lives. This discussion explores how peer support, behavioral health professionals, agency leadership, and legal counsel can work together to provide meaningful assistance while protecting both officer wellness and legal interests.

Call to Action: Looking Back on Our Successes and Looking Forward to Our Wins

Lance J. LoRusso, Esq.
Principal Attorney, LoRusso Law Firm/Blue Line Lawyer Institute

Force Forum concludes with a challenge to every attendee. The fight to preserve fairness, due process, and sound public policy continues long after the conference ends. This closing presentation reflects on the lessons learned throughout the week and it offers practical strategies for strengthening agencies, supporting officers, advancing meaningful advocacy, and ensuring that justice remains rooted in facts rather than public opinion.