

## CEP Magazine – July 2023



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### Repetition and intent

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By Gerry Zack, CCEP, CFE, CIA

I've written about proving intent before, but a recent session (and subsequent conversation) at a conference reminded me of its importance, as well as a common misconception. Not all laws require intent be proven; some are strict liability laws. But in many criminal and civil cases, the outcome rests upon whether the subject intended to do wrong.

The discussions I referred to above involved what I would call a fixation on repetition as a sign of intent. Prosecutors often use the expression "pattern of wrongdoing" to describe criminal behavior. But equating repetition with a pattern of wrongdoing would be a mistake.

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