

Premal Dharia Bio

Premal Dharia is the Executive Director of the Institute to End Mass Incarceration at Harvard Law School, which aims to draw together organizers, scholars, activists, policymakers, lawyers, and students who are committed to new approaches to ending mass incarceration and to undoing the effects of decades of unjust criminal laws and policies. For nearly fifteen years, Dharia worked on the criminal legal system's front lines, representing individual clients as a public defender. In that role, she represented people in local and federal courts, supervised and trained attorneys, led teams in complex cases, and tried numerous cases before judges and juries. Dharia then shifted to impact litigation as the Director of Litigation for Civil Rights Corps. Prior to her current role, Dharia founded and directed the Defender Impact Initiative, which has advanced the role of public defenders as systemic change agents. Dharia graduated from Brown University with a degree in History and African-American Studies and from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.