

Working Group to Improve Processing of Evidence in Sexual Assault Cases

May 6th, 2016

- Make-up
 - Law enforcement, Investigative officers
 - Sexual assault forensic examiners
 - Forensic Laboratory
 - Prosecutors
 - Victim advocates

Division of Scientific Services Objectives

- Inventory unsubmitted kits
 - CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence (formerly CONNSACS)
 - Survey findings published July 2015
 - 961 unsubmitted kits, 879 kits require testing (remainder being anonymous)
- Submission of unsubmitted kits (on-going)
 - 657 kits received (73 of which are anonymous)
- Testing (on-going)
 - 57 kits tested in house and completed
 - Outsource ~300 kits
- Track all data for submitted kits (ongoing)
 - Purchase/Implement tracking software (planning)
 - Track from date of collection to adjudication
 - All stakeholders will have access

Tracking Challenges

- Coding, unique identifiers not included in original survey
- Laboratory using date of incident to decipher potential unsubmitted kits
- Some agencies have submitted more kits than originally identified through the survey

Public Act 15-207

- Effective October 1, 2015
 - Law enforcement has 10 days from date of collection to submit kits to Laboratory
 - Laboratory has 60 days from date of collection to test kits
- Currently receiving ~50 kits/month
 - Before Public Act receiving ~30 kits/month
 - 67% increase, shows more kits are coming in
- Law Enforcement Agencies and Laboratory are maintaining compliance
 - Offense to Submission is currently 6 days (median)
 - Offense to Laboratory completion is 51 days (median)
- Working in the unsubmitted SAKs from Inventory in between current kits- with focus on 5 year statute kits (which have been completed)

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2015 National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) FY 2015 Competitive Grant

Overview

The National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI), administered by BJA, provides funding through a competitive grant program to support multidisciplinary community response teams engaged in the comprehensive reform of jurisdictions' approaches to sexual assault cases resulting from evidence found in previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits (SAKs). Unsubmitted kits (those in police custody that have never been submitted to a crime laboratory for testing) and untested kits (those that have been submitted to crime labs but are delayed for testing for longer than 30 days, e.g., as a result of a backlog of work in the laboratory) are separate and distinct issues. **The focus of this effort is on those unsubmitted kits that have never been submitted to a crime laboratory.**

Grant Objectives

- Create a coordinated community response to ensure resolution and prevent future unsubmitted kits
- Inventory, Test, and Track unsubmitted kits
- Form multidisciplinary Working Group to address and identify strategy/issues around unsubmitted kits to include policy development and implementation
- Improve practices related to investigation, prosecution, and victim engagement and support in connection with evidence and cases resulting from the testing process.

Funding Summary (Highlights)

- Grant Period October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2018
- \$1.4 million
 - \$188k on outsourcing 300 kits
 - \$383k on supplies for testing kits in house
 - \$165k to Victim Advocate Groups
 - Funds to hire SAKI Program Coordinator

Working Group Objectives

- Assessment of training needs (site visit by SAKI TTA- end of June tentatively)
- Cross-disciplinary training among group members
- What contributed to, and continues to drive unsubmitted kits
- Establish victim-centered protocols for victim engagement, notification, and support
 - Unsubmitted kits could be years in the past, re-traumatized
- Initiate training in relation to kits collection, DNA technology, victimization
- Development of processes for sharing of critical data