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## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **AG Kaul Announces New Data from the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Initiative**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today announced updates detailing Wisconsin’s progress in obtaining justice for survivors of sexual assault and the prosecution of perpetrators now that all sexual assault kits designated for testing have been tested. Additional data has been updated and added to [wisaki.doj.wi.gov](https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov) including new prosecution progress details.

“The Wisconsin Department of Justice continues to work with law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim advocates to fight for justice for survivors,” said AG Kaul. “Prosecuting the violent offenders who commit sexual assault is critical to keeping our communities safe.”

As of January 31, 2020, 1,038 kits with foreign DNA identified have been added to a national database of DNA profiles, out of 4,472 tested sexual assault kits. The latest data can be found at [wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/data-results](https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/data-results). Testing was complete for all kits designated for testing in the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative in November 2020.

#### **Additional Updated Data**

In tandem with local jurisdictions, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) has reviewed 1,406 cases and continues to review cases. These case reviews include examining police reports, identifying potential safety risks to the public and the survivor(s), identifying legal impediments to a renewed investigation or prosecution such as statute of limitations concerns or plea agreements, assessment of whether

survivor notification is appropriate, and whether additional samples are needed from a suspect(s).

At this time, 40 cases have been referred for a charging decision. Some of these cases are referred back to DOJ for possible prosecution, and some have not resulted in criminal charges.

A total of 12 criminal cases related to SAKI kits have been filed. A breakdown of the status of these cases can be found [here](#).

As of January 31, 2020, a decision has been made to notify survivors about the results of 127 sexual assault kits; notification was not able to be made in connection with 33 of those kits. At this time, notification is not being made about the results of the testing of 1,105 sexual assault kits. Cases associated with 419 sexual assault kits remain in the review process for possible survivor notification about kit results. The decision whether to notify a survivor can change over time.

Reasons provided by a multi-disciplinary team or local law enforcement for not notifying survivors include:

- Sexual assault kit testing was inconclusive, not identifying a suspect;
- The case related to the sexual assault kit was already prosecuted or there is already a warrant issued but the suspect has not been located;
- Case currently not proceeding to prosecution because the DNA testing provided no new information or investigative leads;
- The survivor connected with the sexual assault kit chose not to report to law enforcement; and,
- Notification might not be safe or appropriate at this time depending on survivor or dynamics of the case.

**For survivors looking for information about their kit, contact the law enforcement agency where the assault was reported, a local sexual assault service provider, or the DOJ Office of Crime Victim Services at 1-800-446-6564.**

A sexual assault can be one of the most traumatic experiences in a survivor's life, often having a long-term impact. Any attempt to notify a survivor of testing results or to offer them the opportunity to re-engage with the criminal justice system must be victim-centered, trauma-informed, and protective of their confidentiality and privacy. This includes:

- Respecting the survivor's choice not to engage;
- Attending to the survivor's emotional safety, as well as their physical safety;

- Empowering the survivor by offering options and providing ongoing information, resources, services, and support; and,
- Educating responding professionals and the general community about the impact of trauma on survivors' health and well-being.

For more information and data about Wisconsin's effort to end the backlog of sexual assault kits, go to [wisaki.wi.doj.gov](https://wisaki.wi.doj.gov).

- Testing results by county: <https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/testing-results>
- DNA matches by county, and matches to other states: <https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/codis-hits>
- Survivor Notification: <https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/survivor-notifications>