



Josh Kaul
Wisconsin Attorney General

P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

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. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

“The Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Initiative has enhanced our understanding of how Wisconsin’s criminal justice system has addressed sexual assault,” said Attorney General Kaul. “The information learned through this initiative assists us as we work to strengthen the state’s response to sexual assault.”

As of April 23, 2020, 1,711 kits with foreign DNA identified have been added to a national database of DNA profiles, out of 4,471 tested sexual assault kits. The latest data can be found at wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/data-results.

In tandem with local jurisdictions, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) has reviewed 1,439 cases and continues to review cases. A decision has been made to notify survivors about the results of 132 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 1,163 sexual assault kits. Cases associated with 416 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.

Additional Updated Data

The website also now includes an interactive dashboard showing the number of victims who reported a sexual assault to local law enforcement as captured through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program as well as the number of SAKs collected during that time period. This timeframe aligns with the collection of a majority of kits that were previously unsubmitted but have now been processed through the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Initiative.

From 2010 to 2015 in Wisconsin, there were 31,634 reported victims of sexual assault, and forensic nurses collected more than 7,600 sexual assault kits from victims. Out of those collected kits, 3,781 kits were not submitted for testing and were inventoried as part of the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Initiative.

This data including county-by-county information is available here: <https://wisaki.doj.wi.gov/numbers/sexual-assault-wisconsin-prior-wisaki-project>

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.

- 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>