



Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 14, 2017

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Kansas becomes the first state to complete statewide sexual assault kit count with 100% voluntary law enforcement participation

TOPEKA – The Kansas Bureau of Investigation, (KBI) recently completed a statewide inventory of all previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits in Kansas. This count was accomplished with voluntary participation of each of Kansas’s 383 city and county law enforcement agencies.

Kansas is the first state in the nation to complete a statewide inventory by gaining voluntary responses from every law enforcement agency surveyed. Thirteen other states have completed similar counts, but only after legislative mandates or executive action.

“We are especially encouraged by the voluntary and widespread participation of our law enforcement partners in this important initiative,” KBI Director Kirk Thompson said.

In the past, some sexual assault kits were not submitted for testing due to a variety of reasons. For instance, policies for submission can vary greatly between jurisdictions and laboratory resources are often insufficient to test all kits. As technological advances and information sharing capabilities have improved nationally, the value of testing sexual assault kits to identify serial offenders and link cases together has been increasingly recognized.

The effort to conduct the statewide inventory began in August 2014 when the KBI first surveyed the state’s law enforcement community to determine how many unsubmitted sexual assault kits exist in Kansas. Then, in September 2015, the KBI received a \$2 million grant from the Department of Justice as part of a nationwide effort to address the accumulation of kits.

In late February 2017, after continued efforts to obtain kit information from all law enforcement, the final agencies responded with a tally of the kits they possess. So, by early March the completed statewide count indicated Kansas had 2,220 unsubmitted kits in the possession of 86 law enforcement agencies. To accomplish this milestone, the KBI was assisted by representatives from the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police and the Kansas Sheriffs’ Association.

While the statewide inventory was being conducted, the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) has made additional progress. One such stride was the formation of the SAKI multidisciplinary working group which is comprised of members of law enforcement, prosecutors, laboratory professionals, medical professionals, and victim advocates from across the state. The group is tasked with evaluating the financial, legal, and systematic barriers to sexual assault kit testing and is working to develop a proactive plan to reduce the current inventory and make recommendations to prevent further accumulation of kits.

The KBI has also worked with local agencies to certify the kits in their possession, a process to document additional information associated with each case. Approximately 1,200 of the 2,220 kits have now been submitted to a forensic laboratory. The process to certify the remaining inventory and complete testing is ongoing and is being accomplished with grant dollars.

“The SAKI project, while extensive, is progressing and reaching major milestones,” said Director Thompson. “One of our main goals is to identify perpetrators of sexual assault, including serial offenders, and bring justice to more victims. While there is still much work to do, we are hopeful that this collaboration will produce lasting results.”

Included is a document depicting the progress and status of the SAKI project.

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Kansas Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI)

Progress as of March 7, 2017

