

Florida Sexual Assault Kit Project
Frequently Asked Questions
September 2019

Background

When and why did this project start?

- The 2015 Legislature asked FDLE to conduct a statewide assessment of unanalyzed sexual assault kits. FDLE surveyed sheriff offices and municipal police departments statewide to identify the number of unanalyzed kits in their possession. We reported our findings from the assessment in January 2016. The assessment can be found here: <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/docs/SAKResults.pdf>.
- The assessment identified 6,661 sexual assault kits in jurisdictions served by FDLE labs. In addition, approximately 2,000 older kits had been submitted to FDLE labs prior to the assessment.
- This estimated total of 8,600 was referred to as “the sexual assault kit backlog.” Legislative funding, federal grant funds, and a grant from the District Attorney of NY were used to outsource SAKs to private labs for processing. SAKs were also processed in house. We estimated that it would take three years to clear this backlog.

What was considered a backlogged sexual assault kit for this project?

- The sexual assault kits considered part of the backlog had offense dates prior to July 1 2016 and at least a 90-day gap between the offense date and lab submission date.

Today

How did this work?

- Local law enforcement agencies, who submit their evidence to FDLE, began submitting older sexual assault kits to FDLE in 2015. While FDLE did process some kits in house, the majority were sent to private labs for processing. Once the private labs returned the results, FDLE scientists completed reviews on the data and reports and uploaded eligible DNA profiles into CODIS (Combined DNA Index System).

How many sexual assault kits were completed as part of this project? How many hits were made?

- From 2015 through June 2019, more than 8,000 sexual assault kits were processed. More than 1,800 CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) hits were made. A hit is made when DNA evidence is matched to a sample in the DNA database. The database profile may be from an offender, arrestee, or another forensic sample.

Does Florida have any additional older sexual assault kits that should be submitted?

- Because of the willingness of Florida law enforcement agencies to participate in this program, we believe the majority of older sexual assault kits that should have been submitted to a lab for processing, have been submitted.
- While this project is complete, we continue to urge our law enforcement partners to submit older sexual assault kits if they identify more that should be submitted. FDLE will process them with our normal workload.

Were any crimes solved as part of the initiative?

- Local law enforcement agencies that received hits will know whether or not any crimes were solved as a result of this initiative. We provide hit information back to the local agencies, but they don't report back to us regarding progress of their case.