



**U.S. Department of Justice**

Office of Justice Programs

*Bureau of Justice Assistance*

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Washington, D.C. 20531

December 18, 2024

Matthew Gamette  
700 S. Stratford Drive  
Meridian, ID 83642

Dear Mr. Gamette:

This responds to your letter to the Bureau of Justice Assistance dated July 26, 2024, regarding your concerns about the FY 2024 Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) notice of funding opportunity (NOFO), specifically the use of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Genealogy Unit and the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) provision about unidentified remains. We appreciate the feedback from the field and will take this information under advisement as we continue to craft the FY 2025 SAKI NOFO to balance the Congressional intent of the appropriation as well as the needs of the field.

The FY 2024 SAKI NOFO<sup>1</sup> states that:

SAKI funding may NOT be used for the tree building portion of FGG unless this activity is being conducted in-house by the awardee. In the interest of fiscal responsibility, the awardee must leverage the FBI's free resources for the tree building portion of FGG if the awardee does not have in-house genealogy capabilities. Exceptions to the policies outlined herein will be considered on a case-by-case basis by BJA. (p. 15)

Please note that the FBI investigative genetic genealogy (IGG) team has significantly expanded, with more than 200 certified genealogists across the country available to assist local and state law enforcement. Because the FBI works so closely with each submitting agency, they are aware of, and abide by, any state FGG policies. Using the FBI IGG is free for grantees and can save them an average of \$4,000 per case. As the FY 2024 NOFO states, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis—for example, if a grantee wishes to use a private genealogist. SAKI funding is also available for grantees to hire their own in-house genealogists.

The FY 2024 SAKI NOFO states that:

For unidentified human remain cases, STR and mtDNA profiles must be uploaded to CODIS before proceeding to FGG. Please note that familial searching is not required for unidentified human remains prior to proceeding to FGG, unless mandated by the awardee's state. (p. 16)

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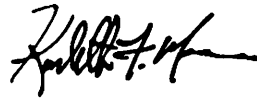
<sup>1</sup> BJA FY24 National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. Available at <https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/O-BJA-2024-172187.pdf>.

Matthew Gamette  
Page Two

Regarding the FY 2024 NOFO requirement to provide mtDNA profiles before proceeding to FGG, SAKI's training and technical assistance Purpose Area 2 provider, awarded to the Center for Human Identification at the University of North Texas (UNT), offers all SAKI sites free, expeditious DNA testing on sexually motivated homicide Jane/John Doe victims for CODIS upload, as well as subsequent FGG if no CODIS hits occur. Hence, there is no wait list or burden placed on SAKI grantees regarding this requirement. Additionally, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

We hope this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact Shane Tolley, Office of Communications, Office of Justice Programs, at 202-598-7441 if you have further questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karlton F. Moore', written in a cursive style.

Karlton F. Moore  
Director