



*American Academy of Forensic Sciences
American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors
International Association for Identification
International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners
National Association of Medical Examiners
Society of Forensic Toxicologists*

October 7, 2026

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Re: Immediate action on FY 2025 and FY 2026 Sexual Assault Kit Initiative grants

Dear Attorney General Blanche:

On behalf of the Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO), we respectfully urge the Department of Justice to announce awards without further delay under the FY 2025 National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) competitive grant solicitation and to promptly post the FY 2026 SAKI funding opportunity. Timely action is essential to preserve investigative capacity, sustain victim-centered services, and prevent interruptions in work that holds violent offenders accountable.

The FY 2025 SAKI solicitation was posted on September 17, 2025, closed on November 3, 2025, and identified approximately \$38.5 million for awards. Existing grantees seeking additional funding have developed staffing, laboratory, investigative, and victim-service plans that depend on continued support, yet award decisions remain pending as of October 7, 2026. As of that date, no FY 2026 site-based SAKI solicitation has been posted. This uncertainty is already forcing state and local agencies to prepare for the loss of highly experienced personnel with specialized expertise and the suspension of critical, time-sensitive casework.

SAKI has produced measurable public-safety results nationwide. The SAKI Training and Technical Assistance website reports more than 245,000 sexual assault kits inventoried, more than 97,000 kits tested to completion, over 39,000 DNA profiles uploaded to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), and more than 19,000 CODIS hits—including thousands associated with serial sex offenders and serial violent and non-sex offenders. Those efforts have initiated more than 30,000 investigations, supported charges in more than 3,000 cases, and contributed to more than 1,500 convictions. These outcomes represent crimes solved, repeat offenders identified, and long-awaited answers for victims and families. The national SAKI website features numerous accounts of how SAKI-supported work has advanced cold cases.

The consequences of delay are concrete. At one SAKI site alone, current SAKI-supported work includes collecting tens of thousands of lawfully owed DNA samples, triaging hundreds of cold homicide and sexual assault cases, supporting forensic investigative genetic genealogy, developing state and national protocols and best practices, and applying more sensitive DNA methods to previously tested sexual assault kits. Without continued funding, this SAKI-funded program anticipates the loss of 12 specialized positions and the curtailment of services relied upon by at least 117 law enforcement agencies. Similar disruptions could occur in jurisdictions across the country.

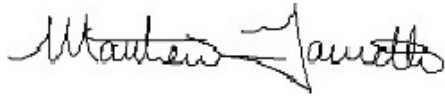
SAKI funding has supported vital criminal justice work at 96 sites currently and previously funded sites across 44 states and the District of Columbia.

We therefore ask that you direct the Office of Justice Programs and the Bureau of Justice Assistance to: (1) complete and announce the FY 2025 SAKI awards immediately; (2) publish the FY 2026 site-based SAKI solicitation as soon as possible, with a workable application period; and (3) communicate a clear timeline to applicants and current grantees so that they can retain personnel and maintain continuity of operations.

SAKI is not simply a grant program; it is an established national public-safety infrastructure connecting forensic science, law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim services. Prompt decisions now will protect past federal investments, prevent the loss of highly experienced personnel with specialized expertise, and ensure that evidence continues to generate investigative leads and support just outcomes, while preventing renewed backlogs.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the operational impacts of these delays and to provide additional information from affected laboratories and law enforcement agencies. I can be reached at matthew.gamette@thecfso.org or 208-608-2301.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Gamette". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" and last name "Gamette" clearly distinguishable.

Matthew Gamette
CFSO Chair, on behalf of the CFSO Board of Directors
