

DNA CLEARANCE PROJECT - UPDATE

PUBLIC SAFETY MEETING – JANUARY 28, 2014

- **Assistant Chief M. D. Slinkard**

Houston Police Department, Forensic Services Command

- **Assistant Chief D. R. McKinney**

Houston Police Department, Criminal Investigations Command

- **Captain J. L. Evans**

Houston Police Department, Special Crimes Division

DNA CLEARANCE PROJECT

- On February 27, 2013, City Council approved a plan to outsource all legacy backlog Sexual Assault Kits and active cases awaiting DNA testing to Bode and Sorensen Laboratories.
- Outsource testing will be accomplished via 3 main funding sources totaling **\$4.4 million**
 - 2011 & 2012 NIJ DNA backlog grants totaling \$2.2 million
 - \$2.2 million of General Fund monies allocated for this purpose when the Houston Forensic Science LGC, Inc. was created.

DNA NEWSLETTER

- Issue 1, March 26, 2013
 - **5,381** cases outsourced to Bode & Sorenson for testing
- Issue 2, September 23, 2013
 - **9,060** cumulative cases outsourced
 - **2,797** reports received
- Issue 3, December 19, 2013
 - **9,419** cumulative cases outsourced
 - **4,661** reports received

DNA OUTSOURCE AS OF JANUARY 21, 2014

Cases Outsourced	Forensic Reports Completed	Technical Reviews in Progress	Technical Reviews Complete
9,565	6,170	2,410	3,760

No Investigative Benefit:	
Category	Number
Negative Screening	1,415
No DNA Result	68
No DNA found foreign to complainant	636
Excessive number of contributors	74
Insufficient data for CODIS entry	212
Sample type not CODIS eligible	87
Total to Date	2,492

Possible Investigative Benefit:	
Category	Number
CODIS entries to date	1,268*
* These cases represent those where a profile was developed meeting CODIS guidelines and a CODIS entry has been completed.	

All completed forensic reports are forwarded for investigative follow-up.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

- An investigative team within the Special Crimes and Juvenile Divisions has been formed to conduct follow-up investigations pertaining to the DNA Clearance Project and new sexual assault cases.
- Sexual Assault Investigation team consists of:
 - **3** Lieutenants
 - **8** Sergeants
 - **33** Investigators
- All of these resources have been dedicated to this project until the completion of the DNA Clearance cases.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

- Initial Screening of CODIS Hits
 - Is someone incarcerated?
 - Does the CODIS hit match the suspect?
 - ✓ Yes?
 - Arrest confirmation –assigned for follow up and / or case closure.
 - ≠ No?
 - If there is indication of a false arrest- assign immediately for follow-up investigation.
 - Determine if suspect is charged (incarcerated) on other evidence- assign for follow up investigation.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

- After Initial Investigative Screening, cases are prioritized for follow-up investigation based on the following criteria:

- **Adult Cases:**

- Statute of Limitations on CODIS name hits
- Suspect incarcerated and possibly released soon

- **Juvenile Cases**

- Stranger cases with no arrest
- Statute of Limitations (if the case was from 2007 or earlier)
- Juvenile Suspect

All cases are assessed individually on various factors.

SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIM INFORMATION LINE

- The Houston Police Department has worked in partnership with numerous entities to improve sexual assault investigations. One of the outcomes of that collaboration is our new dedicated sexual assault information line and email address for victims to contact us on their own terms.
- Sexual Assault Information Line: [713-308-1400](tel:713-308-1400)
- Sexual Assault Information email address: sainfo@houstonpolice.org
- The Information Line is staffed by trained personnel in crisis counseling to ensure callers will be provided with counseling and additional resources should they need it.