

Report from End the Backlog on Alaska

Alaska



- [Back to the Full Map](#)

Backlog Snapshot



UNTESTED KITS:

1,506*

TESTING:

In Progress

DOES ALASKA...

INVENTORY UNTESTED RAPE KITS?

Yes, recurring inventory.

TEST BACKLOGGED RAPE KITS?

Yes, testing in progress.

TEST NEWLY COLLECTED RAPE KITS?

Yes, all newly collected kits are being tested.

GRANT VICTIMS RIGHTS TO NOTICE AND BE INFORMED?

No.

TRACK RAPE KITS?

No tracking system exists.

APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR RAPE KIT REFORM?

Yes, one-time.

**Results from a 2019 [statewide audit report](#)*

[Learn more about how we track reform](#)

In 2015, Alaska Governor Bill Walker began a preliminary rape kit inventory. As of August 2016, the governor's office announced approximately [3,800 untested kits](#) statewide. In 2017, Alaska [enacted a law](#) requiring the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to conduct a one-time statewide inventory of untested rape kits. The [inventory report](#), released in November 2017, identified 3,484 unsubmitted kits in possession of law enforcement agencies statewide. The [2018 inventory report](#) indicated the number of untested kits in the state fell to 2,568.

In 2015, [The Accountability Project](#) issued an open records request to bring the number of untested kits in [Anchorage](#) to light. In September 2016, the Northern Light reported that the Anchorage Police Department (APD) had [1,691 untested kits](#) in storage. Through our correspondence with APD, we confirmed that number, and discovered that these untested kits date as far back as 1993.

In 2016, the [U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance \(BJA\)](#) awarded DPS \$1,090,450 to process nearly 1,000 pieces of evidence which included 707 rape kits, investigate and prosecute cases, and re-engage survivors. In 2017, the [BJA](#) awarded DPS an additional \$443,727 to sustain this work.

In 2018, Alaska legislators [appropriated](#) \$2.75 million in the state capital budget to process and store rape kits. DPS provides progress updates on [their website](#). Alaska also [enacted a law](#) requiring an annual inventory of untested rape kits, law enforcement training in sexual assault, and standard definitions for two different categories of sexual assault reports. [Read Joyful Heart's letter of support](#).

In 2019, legislators [introduced a bill](#) that would require law enforcement agencies to submit kits to a laboratory for DNA analysis within 30 days of receipt. The agency would ensure that the laboratory tests the submitted kit within one year of receipt and would also make a reasonable effort to notify the survivor that their kit has been tested within two weeks of testing. If an agency determines a kit is scientifically unviable, does not meet eligibility requirements for upload in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), or was collected from a survivor wishing to remain anonymous, the kit would be deemed as ineligible for testing. Additionally, this legislation would require DPS to include in their annual reports information regarding the number of kits determined ineligible for testing and the reasons the kits were determined to be ineligible. [Read our testimony in support of the bill](#). This bill was included in an omnibus criminal justice reform bill, H.B. 49, and was signed into law on July 8.

