



DNA Backlog Clearance Project

Volume 1, Issue 1: March 26, 2013

Focus of update:

This newsletter is designed to provide regular updates pertaining to the DNA Backlog Clearance Project. The project will continue until all testing is complete, reports issued by the external vendors, and technical reviews finalized. This newsletter will serve as a medium for updating stakeholders relative to the project and important milestones along the way.

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The plan is presented and approved:

On February 27, 2013 the Mayor and City Council approved the RCA for new DNA outsource contracts with Bode and Sorenson Laboratories. This was the culmination of many months of planning, organizing, and negotiating the contracts with the selected vendors. Approval came two weeks subsequent to a special Mayor's Report on the backlog of Sexual Assault Kits (SAKs) and other cases awaiting testing.

This was a coordinated effort including Support Operations, Forensic Services Command, the Office of Budget and Finance, City Legal, the Crime Laboratory and the Chairman of the Houston Forensic Science, LGC. The new approach leverages volume pricing to test all cases awaiting DNA analysis in the custody of the Houston Police Department. All testing is to be completed within 12 to 14 months. An anticipated 1,000 new SAKs coming in over the next year will also be tested through this effort. The testing will be accomplished with the use of three main funding sources: FY 11 and FY 12 NIJ DNA Backlog Grants and General Fund monies set aside for this purpose

when the new Houston Forensic Science LGC was created.

This backlog clearance will in essence affect approximately 10,000 cases awaiting DNA testing. At the conclusion, the City of Houston will be one of only a few major cities to have eliminated the backlog of DNA testing.

For a full copy of the Mayor's Press Release and report presented to City Council please follow this link: <http://www.houstontx.gov/mayor/press/20130213.html>



SAKs at the HPD Property Division



Mayor Parker and LGC Chairman Hochberg addressing the media

Sexual Assault Kit Project Update

Mayor's Report
Houston City Council
February 13, 2013

Executive Assistant Chief T. N. Oettmeier
Assistant Chief M. D. Slinkard
Scott Hochberg, Chairman, Houston Forensic Science, LGC.

SAK REPORT

Follow this link to the full SAK backlog report presented by EAC Oettmeier, AC Slinkard and Chairman Hochberg:

<http://www.houstontx.gov/mayor/press/k20130213.pdf>

The shipping of cases begins:

The Forensic Services Command has assembled a team of employees within the Crime Laboratory and the Property Division to work closely with the selected vendors to begin the shipping of cases for DNA testing. The process is starting with cases already in the Crime Laboratory

and three shipment dates are now complete. Upon completion of items being shipped from the Crime Laboratory the team moved on to the Property Division for the pulling of evidence and preparation for shipment. The vendors are on-site helping to facilitate this process. This aggressive

shipping schedule will allow the vendors to begin work immediately under the new contracts. Smaller shipments of evidence will occur throughout the contract to send out those new SAKs that are received. New non-SAK DNA cases will be completed at the Crime Lab. Personnel at the Property Division and the

Crime Lab have done an outstanding job in preparing for the outsourcing of all of these cases. Their diligence and dedication has been remarkable.



SAKs being packaged for shipping

Progress by the Numbers:

Three of our four shipment dates are now complete and except for 60 priority cases that are being worked in-house, all cases awaiting DNA testing that were in the Crime Lab and half from the Property Division are now outsourced to the vendors.

Location	To Bode	To Sorenson	Total to Date
Crime Lab	1,310	1,368	2,678
Property Division	2,703	shipment date forthcoming	2,703
Total to Date	4,013	1,368	5,381

What's to come?:

Future editions of this internal newsletter will serve to update the Command Staff and other stakeholders on the progress of the DNA backlog clearance project. Regular production reports will be received from the vendors

and an enormous amount of technical review will be required of the Crime Lab personnel. The vendors will spend the first two months accomplishing the majority of biological screening on the evidence and reporting

out first those cases where no biological matter exists for DNA testing.

“Today is an important day for rape victims and the city as a whole,” said Mayor Parker. “With this plan we will finally be able to say the backlog is gone.”
 February 13, 2013