



# ENDING THE NATIONAL RAPE KIT BACKLOG

Funded by the Office of Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., the **Sexual Assault Kit Backlog Elimination Grant Program** addresses a women's and human rights issue that has been overlooked for decades.



Testing backlogged rape kits helps identify suspects, convict perpetrators, prevent future offenses, exonerate the innocent, and bring long-awaited justice to survivors.

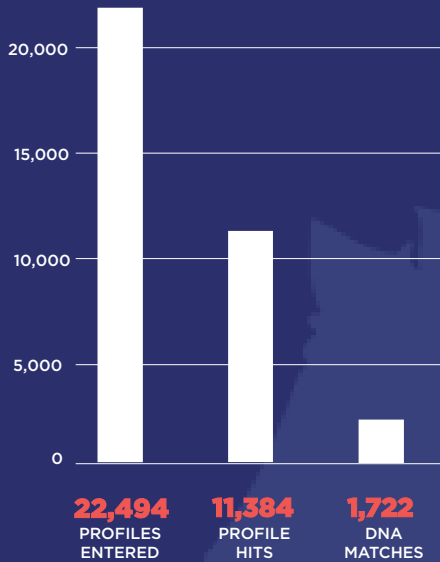


**STATES FUNDED:** Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.

No city or state that reported a backlog was turned away. Each jurisdiction that applied for funding received it through either the Manhattan District Attorney's Office or through the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

## ARRESTS & PROSECUTIONS





**"CODIS" HITS:** Of the **22,494 DNA profiles** newly entered into CODIS\* using Manhattan DA's Office grants, there have been **11,384 CODIS hits** to date. Of the total hits to date, **1,722**, or approximately **15%**, matched DNA from other sexual assault cases, indicating that many of these profiles are from serial rapists.

**4,776 hits** identified an unknown assailant, meaning a previously unidentified forensic sample hit to a known offender sample.

**3,638 hits** were "confirmatory," meaning DNA testing confirmed the identity of a convicted perpetrator or a suspect named by a law enforcement agency during an investigation prior to DNA testing.

\*CODIS = A national DNA databank used to solve crimes.

## NOTABLE CASES

**City of Memphis Division of State Police Services:** Michael Love, a 46-year-old man from Horn Lake, MS, received six life sentences in federal prison after being found guilty of kidnapping and raping six women in Memphis, TN, and attempting to kidnap and rape a seventh woman. These assaults occurred between 2008 and 2015. In each case, Love raped his victim in a remote location, such as a dead-end or uninhabited industrial area, before driving away- leaving each woman abandoned. Through this initiative, the City of Memphis Division of Police Services tested DNA evidence from one of these assaults. The DNA profile hit to Love, who, following a 2015 arrest, had an offender sample entered into CODIS.

**Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department:** In January 2018, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department arrested Reno resident Arthur Sewall, 51, after a previously untested sexual assault kit connected him to the May 1997 murder and sexual assault of a woman in Las Vegas. Sewall is charged with murder and sexual assault, both with a deadly weapon.

**Maricopa County Attorney's Office (Arizona):** In December 2017, DNA from a previously untested rape kit led to the indictment of Michael Paladino, 28, for a 2005 sexual assault. Further investigation connected Paladino to five other sexual assault cases between 2003 and 2006, including many where the victims were minors at the time of the assault. Paladino was sentenced to 5.25 years in prison and lifetime supervised probation. He must also register as a sex offender.

## THE NYC MODEL

- ★ In the late 1990s, there were roughly **17,000 untested rape kits** in New York City, representing thousands of unsolved cases, and thousands of victims waiting for justice.
- ★ The **Sex Crimes Unit at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office** and City of New York led an initiative to test every rape kit in the City's custody.
- ★ Clearing the backlog enabled the Office to file **49 indictments** based on DNA cold case hits. Combined, those offenders are now serving more than 900 years in jail.