



Cumberland County District Attorney's Office

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Cumberland County DA statement:

Cumberland County District Attorney's Office Awarded Federal Grant

District Attorney Jacqueline Sartoris announces that her office has received notice from the United States Department of Justice and Senators King and Collins of a nearly 2.5 million dollar 3-year federal grant award for the Cumberland County Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. Historically in Maine, and all across the country, only a very small percentage of sexual assault kits were tested. The reasons varied, but we now know the best practice is to test all non-anonymous ('reported') kits as often there is evidence in the kits that links up to other crimes and serial perpetrators. The grant will allow the District Attorney's Office, working with many partners, to inventory and track all sexual assault kits held currently in the county, test all appropriate kits in line with national standards, fully investigate, and vigorously prosecute eligible cases. It is anticipated that approximately 500 sexual assault examination kits currently stored in Cumberland County at various law enforcement departments will be transported for testing out of state during the three-year grant period.

This vital work includes numerous partners, including the Maine State Police Crime Lab, the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office, Sexual Assault Response Service of Southern Maine, and the Office of the Attorney General.

The Cumberland County District Attorney's Sexual Assault Kit Initiative grant means that Maine will no longer be the sole state that has not embarked upon this vital work. We anticipate that the training, policies, and practices developed from the work this grant will enable will make Cumberland County a leader in pursuing and securing justice for sexual assault survivors. We also expect to prevent any backlog of untested kits in the future.