



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Public Safety

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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To Sexual Assault Response Community:

Technology and science are continually improving. Consequently, it is critical that protocols and policies are evaluated continually to ensure they reflect current capabilities and best practices. Recently the Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory, or Crime Lab, recommended that all police departments and subsequently all agencies that operate as part of a sexual assault response team (SART) or multidisciplinary team (MDT) increase medical-forensic exam authorization limits from **96 hours to 7 days** post assault for adult victims. The recommended time will remain three days for cases in which the medical provider would use a pediatric sexual assault kit (SAK); longer if recommended by the medical provider on a case specific basis.

The Crime Lab is bringing a new technology online that will enhance the ability to obtain useful DNA results from evidence collected during the investigation of a sexual assault. Specifically, Y-STR analysis will enable the lab to generate interpretable male DNA profiles from SAKs for an extended period of time. Having reviewed available resources, they intend to update their practices.

To ensure that victims can access comparable services regardless of jurisdiction, all agencies participating in sexual assault response are strongly encouraged to revise their policies and practices to reflect the authorization limit as **7 days** post assault in adult cases. This may require changes to memorandum of agreements and team protocols for SARTs and MDTs. I understand this will take time to plan for and implement within municipal and private agencies. Though the Crime Lab will be moving forward with their changes immediately, I ask that the remaining impacted agencies, including law enforcement, forensic nursing programs, and other partners make necessary changes by April 30, 2018.

I thank each of you for your dedication to victims of sexual assault in Alaska. Your work is vital and appreciated. Together we will continue to look for ways to improve our responses to sexual assault crimes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Walt Monegan".

Walt Monegan

CC: Governor Bill Walker

References:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25647409>

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<https://sakitta.org/resources/docs/SAKI-Y-STR-Testing.pdf>

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/248682.pdf>

<https://ncfs.ucf.edu/research/biological-evidence/publications-presentations/>