LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR

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Report Highlights

Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System and Outstanding CODIS Hits

Louisiana State Police Crime Lab

Audit Control # 40250022
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Why We Conducted This Audit

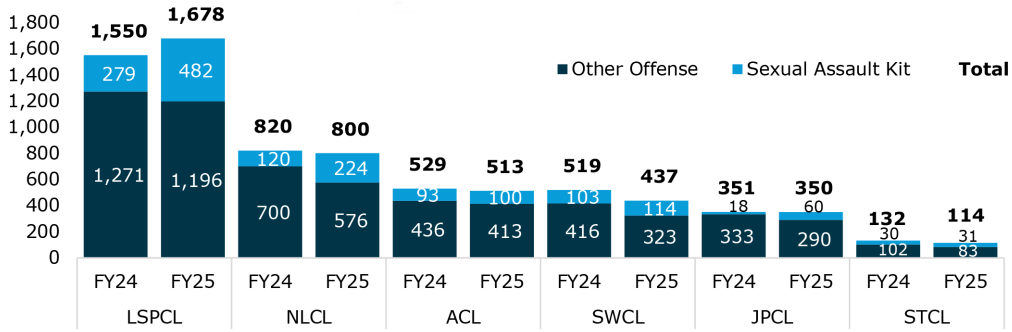
Since 2023, the Louisiana legislature has implemented several laws to improve accountability and transparency for the handling of sexual assault kits (kits). We conducted this audit based on a legislative request to evaluate Louisiana's processes related to the Sexual Assault Kit Tracking System (Kit Tracking System) implemented in July 2024. The request also asked us to evaluate processes related to outstanding Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) hits, which are investigative leads generated when DNA profiles obtained from evidence, such as kits, match with profiles in CODIS. The Louisiana State Police Crime Lab (LSPCL) oversees the Kit Tracking System and is Louisiana's State CODIS Administrator.

What We Found

Overall, LSPCL has implemented a sexual assault kit tracking system in compliance with state law. However, additional legislative changes could strengthen requirements in state law, and LSPCL could make modifications to the system to improve the information it tracks and displays for survivors. In addition, as LSPCL develops a new tracking system for outstanding CODIS hits, it should consider incorporating best practices for CODIS hit notifications and tracking CODIS hit follow-up, as well as encouraging law enforcement to develop CODIS policies. Specifically, we found the following:

- **As of February 2026, of the 1,879 reported kits collected from July 2024 through December 2025, law enforcement had not submitted 337 (17.9%) to a crime lab for testing, as required by state law. In addition, state law does not explicitly state that all kits submitted to crime labs must be tested, resulting in inconsistency among law enforcement and crime labs regarding which kits must be tested.** Clarifying in law which kits must be tested would help ensure kits are tested as necessary while also accounting for crime labs' workload. The following exhibit shows the number of DNA testing requests for cases with kits and other offenses by crime lab for fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

Number of Sexual Assault Kit Cases and Other Offense Cases with DNA Requests Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025



Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using laboratory system data provided by the state's six crime labs.

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What We Found (Cont.)

- **The Kit Tracking System does not always display the accurate location and status of a kit because the system has limited status options and not all required entities participate in the system.** As a result, survivors may not always see accurate, complete information about their kit in the system.

- **According to the Kit Tracking System, at least 560 (26.2%) of the 2,138 kits collected from July 2024 through December 2025 did not meet statutory timeframes for law enforcement pickup and/or submission to a crime lab for testing. In addition, unlike some other states, Louisiana law does not establish timeframes for medical providers or crime labs.** LSPCL could expand its use of automatic alerts in the Kit Tracking System to notify entities when kits approach or exceed expected timeframes.

- **Ensuring that entities comply with statutory Kit Tracking System requirements and required timeframes is challenging because there is no oversight authority and state law does not include penalties for noncompliance. Reporting on noncompliance in LSPCL's annual report could increase transparency and encourage compliance.** LSPCL completed an annual report for the first year of the Kit Tracking System's operation, but it did not submit this report to legislative committees as required.

- **LSPCL could improve the accuracy of data collected through the Kit Tracking System by adding system controls to minimize errors, requiring case numbers, and implementing detailed statewide policies for system administration and data entry.** Collecting accurate information is important to support survivors' rights and required annual reporting.

- **At least 39 (2.7%) of the 1,424 kits collected in fiscal year 2025 resulted in a CODIS hit during fiscal year 2025.** DNA profiles entered into CODIS could also result in hits in the future, as 76.7% of CODIS hits confirmed in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 across all crime types were from cases in prior years.

- **Effective August 1, 2026, state law requires LSPCL to create a statewide outstanding CODIS hit tracking system to increase accountability and transparency regarding law enforcement follow-up on CODIS hits.** LSPCL, crime labs, and law enforcement agencies should incorporate best practices into the new system and related processes, including creating consistent CODIS hit notification processes, tracking CODIS hit follow-up by law enforcement, and encouraging law enforcement to develop CODIS-specific policies and procedures.

We made 13 recommendations and four matters for legislative consideration. LSPCL agreed with all of the recommendations. See Appendix A in the report for LSPCL's full response.

View the full report, including management's response, at **www.lla.la.gov**.