

Idaho's Sexual Assault Kit Initiative:

The Effect of HB528 on Sexual Assault Clearance Rates

Below are 6 recommendations following the preliminary study on the effects of Idaho's initial SAK testing statute on sexual violence crimes.



1

Expansion of Victim Services

It is recommended that the legislature fund an expansion of all forms of victim services in Idaho with particular attention to more rural/remote locations and smaller communities.



2

Modify Statute 39-6316

Under Idaho statute, it is currently required that, at the time of reporting, policing agencies provide information on available services to victims of domestic violence. It is recommended that this statute be modified to include victims of sexual violence.



3

Connecting Victims to Services

It is recommended that 39-6316 be modified to require policing agencies to put victims in touch with available services at the time of reporting. Additionally, it is recommended that victim service agencies such as the ICASDV and ICDVVA provide assistance in developing these partnerships between victim service and policing professionals.



4

Training

In 48% of the cases in our sample, policing professionals noted victim credibility issues, which were shown to have a possible effect on case clearance. Given these findings, it is recommended that all policing professionals receive specialized training on the neurobiological effects of trauma, rape myths, societal stigma faced by sexual violence victim, and active strategies they can use in their response.



5

Continue to prioritize the testing of SAKs

There was overwhelming support for requiring the testing of all SAKs among policing professionals in our survey and a majority of these professionals indicated that forensic evidence was the most critical type of physical evidence in sex crime investigations.



6

Invest in a Statewide Victimization Survey

Following the major tenants of the National Crime Victimization Survey, it is recommended that the State of Idaho invest in a scientifically-rigorous statewide survey on victimization in Idaho. Due to small sample sizes in locations like Idaho, the national survey does not provide us with local data to understand Idaho residents' experiences with victimization.