



Ventura County
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jim Fryhoff - Sheriff | John Reilly - Undersheriff



Ventura County
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Erik Nasarenko - District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

May 20, 2026

Ventura County Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Surpasses 2,000 Kits Tested

VENTURA Calif. – After years of coordinated investigative and forensic work, the Ventura County Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (VCSAKI) has now tested more than 2,000 sexual assault kits from agencies throughout Ventura County.

To date, 2,038 sexual assault kits have been tested from an inventory of 2,846 kits countywide dating back to the 1970s. While many of these kits were tested using technologies available at the time, they are now being tested using advanced DNA testing. Through the dedicated efforts of the Ventura County Sheriff's Forensic Services Bureau, the initiative has uploaded 923 DNA profiles into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), which has generated 329 CODIS hits connected to potential suspects or linked cases. VCSAKI investigators and prosecutors have investigated and closed 125 cases and notified 21 victims that their case was solved due to advancements in DNA testing.

“This milestone represents years of dedicated work focused on victims, accountability, and the pursuit of truth,” District Attorney Erik Nasarenko said. “The purpose of VCSAKI has never been simply to prosecute cases. Our mission is to conduct thorough investigations, follow the evidence wherever it leads, and provide victims with answers and, whenever possible, a sense of closure. Even when prosecution is no longer an option due to the statute of limitations or other legal constraints, victims deserve to know that their case mattered and that every available effort was made to uncover the truth.”

Since 2021, VCSAKI has been funded by federal grants awarded by the United States Department of Justice, along with funding from the County of Ventura, to address previously untested sexual assault kits dating back to the 1970s. The initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Ventura County District Attorney's Office and Ventura County Sheriff's Office, Forensic Services Bureau.

“This achievement reflects our unwavering commitment to victims and to the integrity of the justice system,” said Ventura County Sheriff Jim Fryhoff. “Every kit represents a person who deserved to

be heard, and through the dedication of our Forensic Service Bureau and our partners, we are ensuring those voices are not forgotten. Advancements in DNA technology are giving us the ability to revisit these cases with renewed purpose. Bringing answers, strengthening accountability, and reinforcing our promise to pursue justice, no matter how much time has passed.”

Not only has VCSAKI testing assisted in solving Ventura County cases, but it has also helped solve cases elsewhere. In Arizona, the testing of a 1994 Ventura County sexual assault kit revealed the identity of a previously unknown serial rapist who is currently pending trial for four cold case sexual assaults. Testing also led to the identification of serial rapist Sean Patrick McNulty, who was linked to six rapes across Ventura County, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio dating back to 1982.

VCSAKI has also led to renewed investigations in unsolved sexual assault cases outside of the 2,846 inventoried kits. To date, investigators and prosecutors on the VCSAKI team have made seven arrests and obtained five convictions.

Of the original inventory, 808 kits remain to be tested. The VCSAKI team continues to prioritize testing remaining kits using advanced DNA technology to generate new leads, solve cold cases, and bring closure to victims.

More information on VCSAKI can be found at saki.venturacounty.gov, including regularly updated data on the status of sexual assault kit testing. Victims of past sexual assaults can also utilize this website to access support services including free counseling in some instances, or to get assistance in determining the status of their sexual assault kit.

Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: DA's Office Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@venturacounty.gov

Approved: BN
Release No.: 26-064