



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

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Legislative Report Department of State Police Forensic Services Report on Sexual Assault Kits January 13, 2026

ORS 181A-324(5) directs the Department of Oregon State Police (OSP) to submit a report describing progress made on the backlog of untested sexual assault forensic evidence kits ("SAFE kits") to the interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to the judiciary by January 15th of each calendar year.

SAFE KIT ANALYSIS

The OSP Forensic Services Division (FSD) continues to work with agencies to ensure compliance with requirements outlined in SB 1571. The SAFE kit backlog remained in the low 500s for the bulk of 2025, even dropping to 482 at the end of February, but saw an uptick toward the end of the year. As of December 31, 2025, the FSD had custody of 638 SAFE kits pending analysis, up slightly from 600 at the end of 2024. The average SAFE kit turn-around time in December 2024 was 166 days, which decreased to 144 days in December 2025.

In 2025, the SAFE kit backlog was impacted by external forces as well as internal resource allocation choices. One major new factor affecting overall DNA production was the Oregon vs. Wideman decision, which increased the number of scientists subpoenaed for any given trial. DNA scientists spent almost twice the amount of time in court in 2025, as compared to 2024, which reduced the amount of time available for forensic analysis.

Federal grants have historically been used for backlog reduction overtime and to fund multiple DNA positions. The uncertainty and delays experienced in the 2025 grant application and management process led to a more conservative approach to overtime spending. Grant-funded overtime was reduced, primarily within the Biology Processing discipline, to ensure that there was sufficient budget for necessary equipment, software, and positions. The DNA section is currently averaging approximately 200 hours of backlog reduction overtime a month.

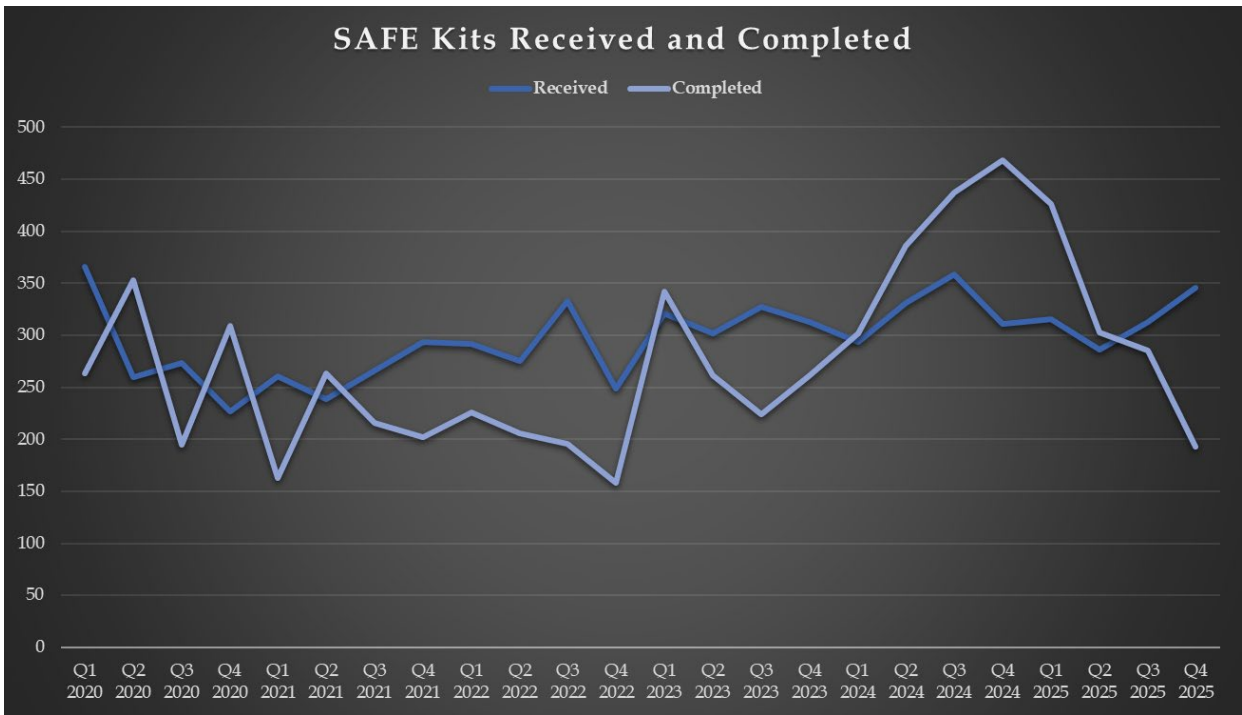
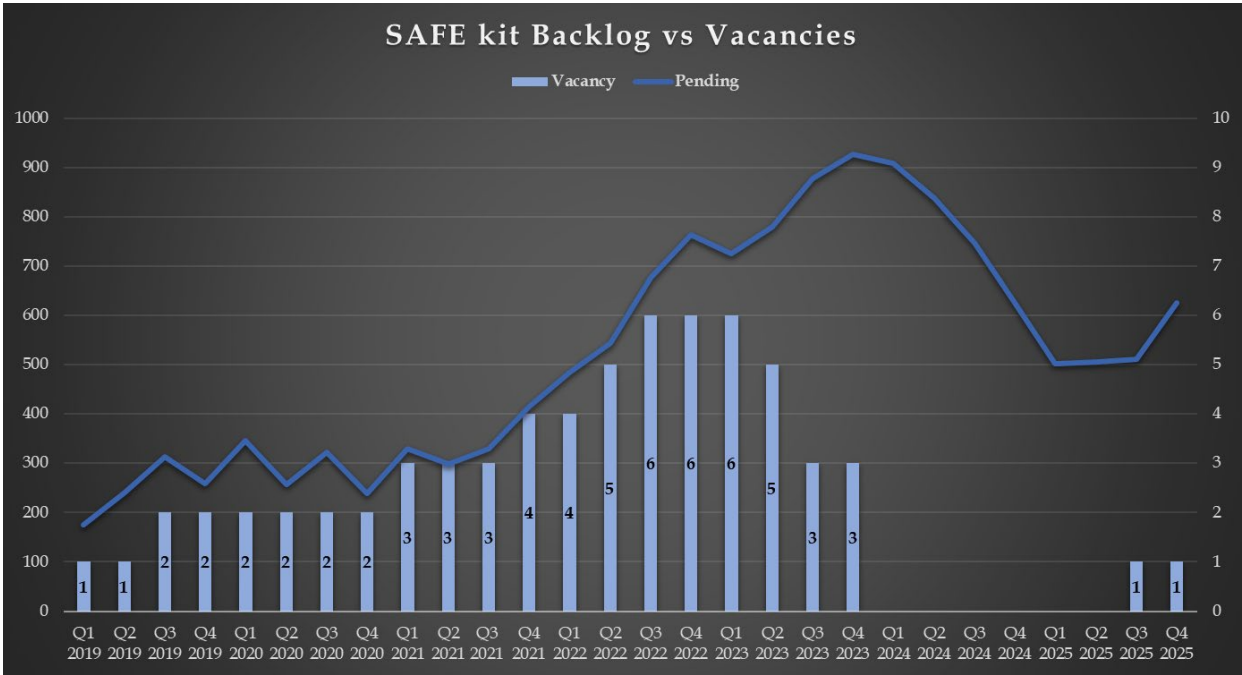
Management continues to monitor and reallocate FTE within the three DNA casework teams¹ to balance competing demands with limited resources, all while prioritizing public safety. Due to size and age of the SAFE kit backlog in late 2024, resources were shifted into the SAFE kit team at the expense of the other teams. In mid-2025, management reallocated some SAFE kit team resources back into the Major Crime Team (MCT). This reduced the MCT backlog by almost half by the end of 2025, but negatively impacted the SAFE kit backlog.

Although these resource adjustments were necessary to address immediate priorities, the DNA unit's long-term stability relies on successful integration of six current trainees. These scientists are on track

¹ The DNA unit consists of three teams that each process different types of submissions. The Major Crime Team focuses on homicides, assaults, and other "person crimes." The SAFE kit team focuses on processing SAFE kits. The High Throughput Property Crime (HTPC) team processes property crime evidence.

to complete their final training modules in 2026, a milestone that will significantly increase the unit's capacity for independent casework and help with DNA backlog challenges.

The following two graphs illustrate some of the trends discussed in this letter:



The FSD is committed to transparency and provides Division, Discipline and SAFE kit data on the Oregon State Police website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/osp/programs/forensics/Pages/operationaldata.aspx>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Medlock".

Brian Medlock
Forensic Services Division Director
Oregon State Police