

# WisGOP: State crime lab efficiency plummets under Josh Kaul

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[Madison, WI] – In case you missed it, the productivity of the state crime lab has plummeted in key areas under Josh Kaul’s leadership. In a new [report](#), Wisconsin Right Now revealed that despite his department’s own [admission](#) that “the legislature made a significant investment in the crime labs in the last state budget,” Kaul’s crime lab has been less productive in finalizing crime scene reports, conducting DNA analysis, processing controlled substance cases, and maintaining efficiency in other areas critical to public safety, despite taking on fewer cases.

Kaul’s failures in office come after he consistently attacked his predecessor Brad Schimel for the efficiency of the state crime lab during the 2018 campaign. It’s clear that Josh Kaul has been more interested in adjusting the methodology of analyzing crime lab data to improve the appearances of his numbers than processing important information that helps keep Wisconsin communities safe. The media should hold Josh Kaul to his own standard.

Read more from Wisconsin Right Now [below](#):

## **AG Josh Kaul’s Abysmal Crime Lab Failures Exposed**

[Wisconsin Right Now](#)

Jim Piwowarczyk and Jessica McBride

August 12, 2021

Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul has failed on public safety, with crime lab delays worse in key areas – like guns and DNA – than those under former Republican AG Brad Schimel.

Even though Schimel’s crime lab was more productive and effective, he was

hammered relentlessly by Kaul and the news media. Yet Kaul's worse record isn't getting much scrutiny even as a Republican AG primary gears up.

At a time of soaring crime rates, Kaul's crime lab is taking in far fewer cases (a trend that started BEFORE COVID-19), but it's also taking longer to get police and prosecutors key evidence they need to get criminals off the streets, a review of his own data shows. Kaul has offered excuse after excuse for this fact, but the crime lab's role in public safety has unquestionably diminished under his leadership:

Kaul has gutted the Department of Justice's public safety mission, DOJ data shows. Under his leadership, the Division of Forensic Sciences, which houses the state crime labs, handled almost 30% fewer cases than during Schimel's last year, a trend that took root during his first year in office, 2019.

[...]

However, when we dug into Kaul's own numbers, we found a very different story from the media coverage. When you compare Kaul to Schimel, Kaul has made the crime lab worse in many key areas.

The negative trends exist even though Kaul admitted in his 2020 report that "the legislature made a significant investment in the crime labs in the last state budget."

An example: crime scene responses. It's taking longer to finalize reports even though Kaul's office is handling fewer cases, and that trend started before the pandemic.

Another example? DNA analysis is taking longer than it did under Schimel - also a trend that started before COVID-19 - even though Kaul's office is handling 50% fewer cases, in part because Schimel completed the untested rape kit backlog before he left office.

[...]

Kaul has tossed out a grab bag of excuses for the increased delays in testing things like DNA and controlled substances. He's blamed backlogs inherited from Schimel, not getting enough positions from Gov. Tony Evers and Republicans in the Legislature, the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in social distancing and staggered shifts in year two, an influx of fentanyl cases, staff turnover, the complexity of cases, and on and on.

But the bottom line is that, in each of his first two years in office, Kaul has failed to improve the Wisconsin crime lab turnaround times in key ways, despite plunging caseloads.

That's a failure. At some point, the excuses pile up, and the leader has got to say the buck stops with him. The truth is that Kaul has never gotten his hands around the Wisconsin crime lab albatross. But he staked his first campaign on doing so.