

# Dept. of Justice: AG Kaul hosts legislators at Wisconsin state crime laboratories, advocates for investment in crime fighting budget

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MADISON, Wis. – As Attorney General Josh Kaul advocates for a 2023-2025 Crime Fighting Budget for the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ), today he hosted the first of three tours for legislators at the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories (WSCL). The tours offer lawmakers a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the critical work done by WSCL professionals, as they help to solve complex crimes around the state.

“The Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories are an integral part of Wisconsin’s justice system,” said AG Kaul. “With increased complexity of analysis, we must ensure that the crime labs are equipped to respond efficiently as they assist in keeping our communities safe.”

The Wisconsin DOJ Crime Fighting Budget request is a substantial investment in public safety, especially in the critical work done at the state crime labs. Wisconsin DOJ is requesting funding for sixteen additional WSCL positions to meet growing demands in toxicology, DNA and crime scene response amid the national spike in homicide and overdose deaths. The Crime Fighting Budget request for the state crime labs includes 4 additional toxicology positions, 10 additional DNA positions, and 2 additional crime scene response positions.

## **Toxicology**

DOJ’s Forensic Toxicology program identifies and quantifies drugs and alcohol in biological samples submitted by law enforcement agencies related to felony

investigations. Dangerous synthetic drugs continue to evolve in chemical composition and are increasing in prevalence. Law enforcement must have the tools and resources necessary to keep pace with enterprising criminals to keep our communities safe. That is why DOJ is requesting additional toxicology positions to meet the demand for forensic toxicology testing performed by the WSCL.

## **DNA**

There is an increased demand for forensic DNA testing at WSCL due to advancements in scientific knowledge and technology, including probabilistic genotyping and forensic investigative genetic genealogy. Over the past ten years the number of sexual assault cases submitted for DNA analysis has dramatically increased. Sexual assault evidence takes much longer to analyze as it often contains mixtures of DNA, which require a greater amount of interpretation due to complexity. These advancements have led to the need for additional DNA positions at the WSCL.

## **Crime Scene Response**

The Crime Scene Response (CSR) Unit responds to major crime scenes, including homicides and officer involved critical incidents, at the request of local law enforcement agencies throughout the state. The CSR Unit also provides technical assistance at scenes involving human remains, autopsies, vehicle examinations and missing persons cases. Since 2019, the CSR Unit has seen a forty six percent increase in requests for their services. Additional positions in the CSR Unit will have a positive impact on resources throughout the WSCL and will benefit law enforcement agencies investigative efforts.

## **About WSCL**

In addition to toxicology, DNA and crime scene response, the WSCL provide the following services: drug identification, trace evidence analysis, firearms and tool marks analysis, fingerprint and footwear analysis, ten print comparison, photo work, and forensic imaging. The WSCL are staffed by approximately 190 managers, forensic scientists, and technicians at facilities in Madison, Milwaukee, and Wausau. The Madison lab serves 24 southern counties, the Milwaukee lab services eight counties in the metro area, and the Wausau lab serves 40 northern Wisconsin counties. More information about the WSCL can be found [here](#).



View the press release [here](#).