



# Bureau of Justice Assistance Forensics Unit Programs

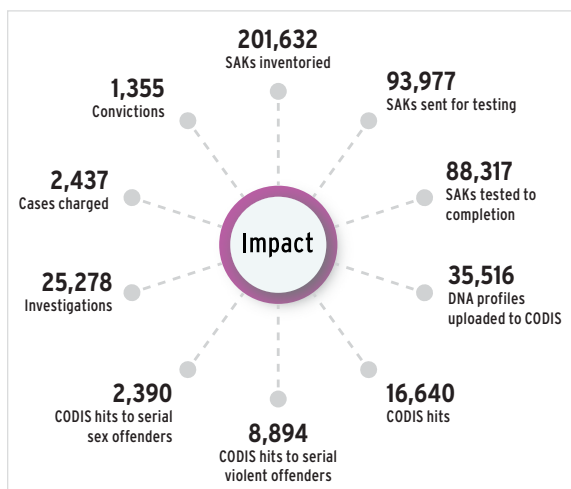
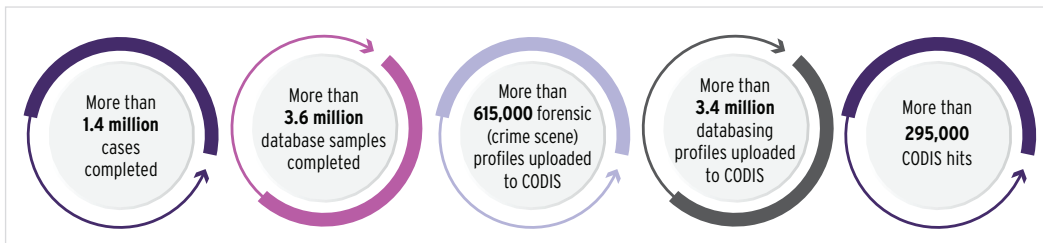


The **Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)** seeks to strengthen America's communities by supporting state, local, and tribal jurisdictions to overcome challenges faced by the criminal justice system. In alignment with this mission, BJA provides federal funding through the following forensic science programs to combat violent crime, resolve cases, lower recidivism, increase public safety, and enhance justice.

## DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program

The **CEBR Program** provides federal funding for publicly funded accredited forensic DNA laboratories to process, and increase capacity to process, eligible samples for entry into the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). The goal of this program is to increase the capacity of publicly funded forensic DNA and DNA database laboratories to process more DNA samples, thereby helping reduce the number of forensic DNA and DNA database samples awaiting analysis.

To learn more about the **CEBR Program** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction \(CEBR\) Program](#).



## National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) Program

The **SAKI Program** provides federal funding for multidisciplinary response teams to create a coordinated response to violent crime and enhances jurisdictional capacity to inventory, track, and expeditiously test previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits (SAKs)/violent crime evidence; identify, collect, track, and test lawfully owed DNA from offenders/arrestees; and produce necessary protocols and policies to improve collaboration and promote sustainable reform among laboratories, law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim service providers. This program supports violent crime cold case investigations, crime analysis, prosecutions, survivor healing, and just resolutions of sexually based and other violent crime cases.

To learn more about **SAKI** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative \(SAKI\) Program](#).

## Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants (Coverdell) Program

The **Coverdell Program** provides federal funding for states and local government units to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner/coroner (ME/C) services. This program helps reduce the backlog of forensic evidence analysis requests awaiting processing, build capacity of forensic laboratories and ME/C offices, and make training more accessible for forensic science and ME/C professionals.

To learn more about the **Coverdell Program** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants \(Coverdell\) Program](#).

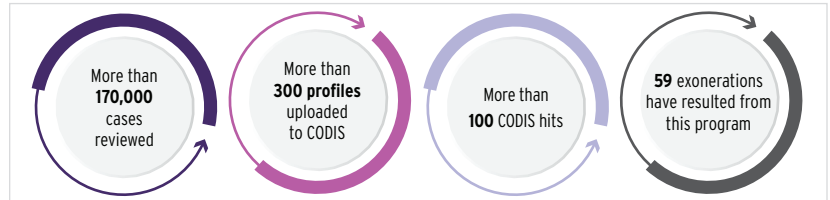
### From 2011-2020, Coverdell funds were used to:

- Analyze** more than **1.5 million** backlog cases resulting in more than **300** agencies decreasing their backlog cases
- Support** more than **15,000** forensic science personnel and more than **1,900** medical examiner personnel to attend training and improve their timeliness between sample submission to a forensic laboratory and delivery of test results to a requesting office/agency
- Enable** more than **10** agencies to receive initial accreditation and more than **170** agencies/organizations to maintain accreditation between 2017-2020

## Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Program

The **Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Program** provides federal funding for states and local government units to defray the costs associated with postconviction DNA testing in cases of violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) in which actual innocence might be demonstrated. This program helps grantees identify potential postconviction DNA testing cases, conduct case reviews, locate case-associated biological evidence, perform DNA analysis, and report DNA test results.

To learn more about the **Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Program** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Program](#).



### Since 2019, Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Program funds were used to:

- ✓ **Upload multiple** suspect profiles to CODIS, IAFIS/AFIS
- ✓ **Identify 35** suspects who were initially unknown
- ✓ **Prosecute 5** cases that have resulted in convictions
- ✓ **Identify 16** suspects via Forensic Genetic Genealogy work
- ✓ **Charge or indict 20** cases
- ✓ **Resolve 19** cold cases

## Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Program

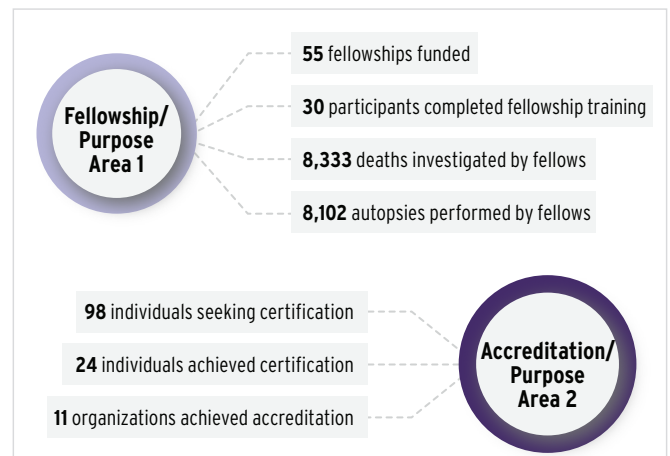
The **Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Program** provides federal funding for agencies to resolve violent crime cold cases by providing them with resources to investigate and prosecute cases where a suspect's DNA profile has been generated. This program aims to decrease the number of unresolved violent crime cold cases awaiting prosecution.

To learn more about the **Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Program** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Program](#).

## Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner (ME/C) System Program

The **Strengthening the ME/C System Program** provides federal funding to help address medicolegal death investigation (MDI) workforce needs to increase the number of practicing board-certified forensic pathologists and to support ME/C offices' needs to implement and follow quality standards and performance criteria in an effort to provide a consistent and equitable application of MDI services.

To learn more about the **Strengthening the ME/C System Program** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner \(ME/C\) System Program](#).



### Why This Matters

- ✓ **Over 600,000** Individuals go missing in the US every year<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ **More than 40,000** bodies recovered in the US remain unidentified at any given time<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **An estimated 4,400 unidentified bodies** are recovered each year by ME/C offices<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ **Approximately 1,000 of those recovered bodies** remain unidentified after one year<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Between 2007 and 2020, an average of 664,776 missing persons records were entered annually into the National Crime Information Center. See <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ncic>.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/ir000256.pdf>

<sup>3</sup><https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/meco04.pdf>

## Missing and Unidentified Human Remains (MUHR) Program

The newly formed **MUHR Program** provides federal funding to eligible entities so they can improve reporting, transportation, forensic testing, and identification of missing persons and unidentified human remains in the United States, including migrants. This program provides funding directly to state and local jurisdictions to help them become more self-reliant and self-sufficient in reducing their backlog of missing persons and unidentified human remains cases.

To learn more about the **MUHR Program** and potential funding opportunities, please visit [Missing and Unidentified Human Remains \(MUHR\) Program](#).