



Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection

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CONNECTICUT CRIME LAB EARNS PERFECT SCORE

MERIDEN -- For the third straight year, the state forensic lab has received a perfect accreditation score, capping a dramatic turnaround that has made the facility a "gold standard" for the nation.

In recent years the lab, within DESPP's Division of Scientific Services, has eliminated a 12,000 case backlog, created a statewide system of rapid forensic analysis kiosks that has led to more investigative leads for law enforcement, and steadily reduced the turnaround time for evidence analysis, particularly for DNA and ballistics.

In 2011, the lab's accreditation was suspended after an audit revealed numerous deficiencies. Since then, the lab has successfully worked to restore its reputation, from processing sexual assault kits to technological advancements. More recently, advanced DNA analysis, combined with genealogical research, led to the successful prosecution of two cold cases dating to the 1980s.

"In recent years, the state has made a number of improvements to our forensic science laboratory aimed at making it easier for law enforcement to solve crimes and share data among agencies with the goals of identifying those involved in criminal activity and preventing future crimes from happening," **Governor Ned Lamont said**. "The work being done at this lab is having a significant impact on the ability of law enforcement to solve and prevent crimes, and I thank everyone involved who has made Connecticut's lab a national leader."

"The forensic lab is a shining example for the nation illustrating our priority of producing sound scientific analysis of criminal justice evidence. The professional staff at the lab provides unbiased work that is regularly evaluated by independent scientific experts," **said DESPP Commissioner Ronnell A. Higgins**. "At the lab – and across all of our six divisions – we stand for integrity and honesty."

Providing accurate and unbiased information and scientific analysis quickly is a top priority for the forensic lab, which has about 100 employees, most of them scientists. For example, the time it takes to get data back to the courts in toxicology drug analysis from driving under the influence cases dropped by 40% in 2024 compared to 2023.

"We follow the science. We are transparent. We train prosecutors as well as public defenders in what we do here. There's a trust in what we do here," **said Dr. Guy Vallaro, Director of the**

Division of Scientific Services. "We are all about getting information back to law enforcement as quickly as possible."

The lab provides extensive, independent, analysis of evidence for local, state and federal agencies, from sexual assaults to DNA evidence to analysis of seized drugs. Lab scientists also provide assistance with computer crimes and critical work analyzing ballistics evidence from violent crimes.

Jane Ridley, Quality Assurance Manager, said the lab must meet more than 1,000 standards to earn accreditation, covering 9 forensic disciplines.

"We have to have a timely product or we don't have quality. Somebody who has been a victim of a crime -- they want an answer," Ridley said.

The DESPP lab's reputation for reducing case backlogs, innovation, and rapid turnaround of evidence often attracts interest from other states looking to improve. The Attorney General of Rhode Island recently cited Connecticut as having "a gold standard crime laboratory."

For more information about the lab, contact Rick Green, Director of Communications, at richard.green@ct.gov, 860-539-0159.

In picture below, Commissioner Higgins appears with Dr. Vallaro.

