

Chapter 446-95 WAC

STATEWIDE SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT TRACKING SYSTEM

WAC

446-95-010	Authority and purpose.
446-95-020	Definitions.
446-95-030	Washington sexual assault kits.
446-95-040	Survivor tracking of their Washington sexual assault kit.
446-95-050	Receipt and processing of sexual assault kits.
446-95-060	Updates and tracking of sexual assault kits.

WAC 446-95-010 Authority and purpose. (1) RCW 43.43.545 requires the Washington state patrol to create and operate a statewide sexual assault kit tracking system. The authority the legislature gave to the Washington state patrol to implement a tracking system requires adoption of rules establishing a uniform sexual assault kit to allow successful implementation of the sexual assault kit tracking initiative.

(2) The purposes of these rules are to:

(a) Implement the intent and purpose of RCW 43.43.545 and 43.43.546 to track the location and status of sexual assault kits throughout the criminal justice process, including the initial collection and possible storage at medical facilities, receipt and storage at law enforcement agencies, receipt and analysis at forensic laboratories, and possible destruction.

(b) Establish standards and procedures to track the location and status of sexual assault kits throughout the criminal justice process.

(3) These rules are necessary to:

(a) Ensure all sexual assault kits used within the state of Washington are standardized for tracking in the sexual assault kit tracking system;

(b) Allow medical facilities performing sexual assault forensic examinations, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, the Washington state patrol forensic laboratory services bureau, and other entities having custody of sexual assault kits to update the status and location of sexual assault kits; and

(c) Allow survivors of sexual assault to anonymously track or receive updates regarding the status and location of their sexual assault kits.

(4) These rules apply to all entities participating in the sexual assault kit tracking system established by the Washington state patrol. Pursuant to RCW 35.21.195, 36.27.020, 36.28.200, 43.43.546, and 70.41.365, those entities include, but are not limited to:

(a) Hospitals licensed under chapter 70.41 RCW performing sexual assault forensic examinations in the state of Washington;

(b) Washington state patrol forensic laboratory services bureau;

(c) All commissioned city, county, and state law enforcement officers; and

(d) Prosecuting attorneys.

(5) The sexual assault kit tracking system is not intended to replace or alter existing chain of custody systems, processes, procedures, rules, regulations, or legal requirements of any participating entity.

(6) This rule is not intended to provide grounds to challenge the admissibility of DNA evidence in court proceedings. Nothing in this section is intended to create a private right of action or claim on the part of any individual, entity, or agency against commissioned city, county, and state law enforcement agencies.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060. WSR 18-10-089, § 446-95-010, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18.]

WAC 446-95-020 Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise, the term:

(1) "Hospital" means any institution, place, building, or agency licensed under chapter 70.41 RCW;

(2) "Sexual assault kit" or "SAK" means a standardized box containing items for collecting and storing forensic evidence;

(3) "Washington sexual assault kit" or "WSAK" means a standardized SAK distributed by the approved vendor including a unique identifier, containing items for collecting and storing forensic evidence; with unique login information to be provided to the survivor allowing tracking of the WSAK;

(4) "Sexual assault kit tracking system" or "tracking system" means a secure system accessible via the internet intended for the purposes of tracking all Washington sexual assault kits, regardless of when they were collected;

(5) "Survivor" or "victim" means any person who suffers physical, emotional, financial, and/or psychological impact as a proximate result of a sexual assault;

(6) "Sexual assault" has the same meaning as in RCW 70.125.030;

(7) "Unique identifier" means a numeric or alphanumeric string that is associated with a single entity within a given system (i.e., barcode).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060. WSR 18-10-089, § 446-95-020, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18.]

WAC 446-95-030 Washington sexual assault kits. (1) The Washington state patrol shall ensure that the standards for the WSAK are consistent with the standards or guidelines established by a committee which may include representatives from medical specialists, sexual assault nurse examiners, attorneys, forensic scientists, and law enforcement personnel in Washington state. The Washington state department of enterprise services may establish a master contract for the supply of WSAKs that meet these standards or guidelines.

(2) WSAKs procured by hospitals or other entities shall be ordered from and payment provided to the approved contracted vendor.

(3) Each WSAK shall bear a Washington sexual assault kit tracking system unique identifier.

(4) Each WSAK shall contain the information needed for a survivor to track the location of their WSAK using the tracking system.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060. WSR 18-10-089, § 446-95-030, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18.]

(5) Subsequent transfers/changes in location will be documented by the tracking system.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060. WSR 18-10-089, § 446-95-060, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18.]

WAC 446-95-040 Survivor tracking of their Washington sexual assault kit. (1) The tracking system shall allow survivors of sexual assault to anonymously track or receive updates regarding the status and location of their sexual assault kits.

(2) Survivors shall be given unique login information to access the status and location of their WSAK at the discretion of the appropriate hospital, medical facility, or law enforcement agency personnel.

(3) Destruction of a WSAK shall be documented in the system.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060. WSR 18-10-089, § 446-95-040, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18.]

WAC 446-95-050 Receipt and processing of sexual assault kits. (1) The approved vendor will distribute WSAKs with a unique identifier. The WSAK is entered by the vendor using the tracking system prior to shipment. Upon delivery, the WSAKs are entered using the tracking system as acknowledgment of receipt.

(2) The WSAK becomes trackable by the survivor when the unique identifier is entered to document that a forensic medical examination has taken place.

(3) The tracking system is not intended to replace existing processes and procedures established regarding the collection of evidence, or delay in any way the care of the survivor or law enforcement notification.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060. WSR 18-10-089, § 446-95-050, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18.]

WAC 446-95-060 Updates and tracking of sexual assault kits. (1) The use of the tracking system or a WSAK should not alter the existing procedures, rules, regulations, or legal requirements for hospitals and law enforcement agencies.

(2) The tracking system is not intended to provide "real-time" location data. There are circumstances (such as shipping times) that might create delays in location status being reported. Kits are entered into the tracking system upon arrival at their intended destination. WSAKs are not recorded as they leave a destination.

(3) To ensure proper tracking of the WSAK, the affixed unique identifier must be readable. The WSAK should be packaged separately from other evidence, and without secondary packaging.

(4) Tracking begins when a WSAK or SAK is initially entered in the tracking system.

(a) Sexual assault kits not bearing a tracking system unique identifier, located at hospitals and law enforcement agencies, shall be provided a unique identifier. This shall be affixed to the SAK and entered for use by the tracking system.

(b) The tracking system will not provide historical data for existing SAKs prior to the initial entry.