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PUBLIC SAFETY

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MOTION

The City Controller has released a follow-up audit to evaluate LAPD's progress on reducing the backlog of untested DNA evidence kits in sexual assault cases. The audit notes LAPD's progress to reduce the backlog from over 7,000 untested kits to 2,527. This was achieved by conducting a full physical inventory of all outstanding rape kits, hiring additional criminalists, and increasing the number of outsourced kits. Despite this progress, however, several areas must still be addressed to permanently reduce the backlog.

The audit found that there may be discrepancies in the backlog data as reported previously by LAPD. As the Controller indicated, although LAPD is currently reconciling these differences, it is difficult to determine how much progress has been made if there is no accurate accounting of the backlog.

A secondary backlog also exists based on the FBI's policy that all out-sourced kits be tested again by an in-house DNA analyst. LAPD's records indicate that 1,102 cases have been tested by outside contractors and are awaiting this review, which takes approximately 72 additional days to complete. These figures have not been reported as part of the total backlog data.

The audit also noted that required notifications may not be occurring to victims when DNA evidence is not analyzed within specified timeframes, as required by state law. Further, there doesn't appear to be a consistent notification policy that applies to all sexual assault victims.

Eliminating the DNA backlog is a critical public safety goal. As available funding has been prioritized to meet this goal, the Council should be apprised of any information that could make the Department's current efforts even more effective and efficient.

ORIGINAL

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Police Department be instructed to report on:

- (1) the process used to reconcile the DNA database inventory and how to ensure that no untested kit is omitted from the physical inventory;
- (2) the FBI's policy that requires out-sourced kits to be tested again in-house, and how to reduce the secondary backlog and/or seek modifications to the policy; and
- (3) how to create a standard notification procedure for alerting all rape victims of changes in their cases, which would not only be limited to fulfilling current state law applying to cases after 2004.

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