



# ILLINOIS STATE POLICE

## NEWS RELEASE

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*Brendan F. Kelly - Director*

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**CONTACT: ISP Public Information Office**  
[ISP.PIO.Personnel@illinois.gov](mailto:ISP.PIO.Personnel@illinois.gov)

### **ILLINOIS STATE POLICE'S LEADERSHIP IN SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC WORK RECOGNIZED**

*Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault presents awards to ISP Director and  
Deputy Director*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Illinois State Police (ISP) Director Brendan F. Kelly and ISP Division of Forensic Services Deputy Director Robin Woolery today accepted Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) Moxie Awards for their exemplary work on behalf of sexual assault survivors. Under the Governor JB Pritzker administration, and Director Kelly's and Deputy Director Woolery's leadership, ISP has been able to comply with the Illinois [Sexual Assault Evidence Submission Act](#) for the first time since it went into effect in 2010.

"I wish to congratulate Director Kelly and Deputy Director Woolery for each receiving this award and for their work on behalf of survivors," said Governor JB Pritzker. "Under their leadership, our state forensic laboratories cleared a massive backlog of DNA evidence—helping sexual assault survivors pursue justice. They also enabled our laboratories to process current cases within 180 days by hiring additional personnel, acquiring state-of-the-art robotics to speed up turnaround time, and implementing new software to make our laboratories as efficient as possible."

ICASA gives Moxie Awards to individuals who have worked to improve services to sexual assault survivors in Illinois, whether that be through advocacy, counseling, public policy, volunteering, or other avenues. Director Kelly and Deputy Director Woolery were honored for their work with the [Illinois Forensic Science Commission](#) and its impact on sexual assault investigations/cases across the state.

"ICASA is proud to recognize Illinois State Police Director Brendan Kelly with a Moxie Award," said ICASA Chief Executive Officer Carrie Ward. "Director Kelly's leadership on the Illinois Forensic Science Commission reflects his steadfast commitment to eliminating barriers that hinder access to justice for sexual assault survivors and other victims of violent crimes. Combined with his previous role on the prior statewide Sexual Assault Working Group while serving as St. Clair County State's Attorney, Director Kelly continues to prove himself as both a partner and a leader in the antiviolence movement."

Director Kelly was also recognized for his work with the Joint Sexual Assault Task Force, and in general, for his efforts supporting rape crisis centers and improving sexual assault survivors' interactions with law enforcement.

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“ICASA is pleased to recognize Robin Woolery, Deputy Director of Division of Forensic Services with a Moxie Award,” said Ward. “Woolery’s contributions to the establishment and progress of the Illinois Forensic Science Commission have informed the Commission’s efforts to accomplish its mission of ensuring the efficient delivery of forensic services and sound forensic science practice throughout the state of Illinois. Woolery’s insightful, informed approach benefits the entire Commission and those we are appointed to serve, including survivors of sexual violence.”

The Illinois General Assembly established the Illinois Forensic Science Commission in August 2021 to provide guidance to reduce or eliminate factors and inefficiencies that contribute to backlogs and errors, while focusing on education, training, funding, hiring, procurement, and other aspects identified by the Commission. The Commission looks at all disciplines of forensic testing, including forensic evidence in sexual assault cases.

In June 2022, Governor Pritzker and ISP announced that after decades of extensive sexual assault forensic backlogs, the number of pending sexual assault forensic cases older than 180 days reached zero. That number remains at zero. The total backlog for sexual assault cases has decreased 47% since 2019. ISP utilized a variety of strategies to reduce turnaround time, including ramping up the use of forensic technologies and robotics, and hiring additional forensic scientists who work collaboratively instead of analyzing data independently. In May 2023, ISP also announced the opening of its high-through put DNA laboratory in Decatur. The laboratory is equipped with the latest state-of-the-art technology and will further reduce backlogs and allow us to solve crimes faster and bring justice to all involved.

Sexual assault survivors can monitor their evidence, from collection at the hospital, through law enforcement pick-up and submission to the forensic lab, to the State’s Attorney’s office where final results are received, using the [Sexual Assault Tracking](#) application online.

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