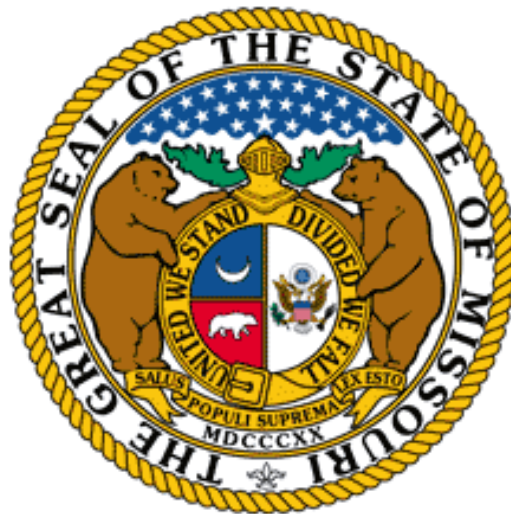


State of Missouri
Department of Public Safety

Crime Laboratory Review Commission



2025 Annual Report

April 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.....3

Summary of Activities4

Recommendations.....6

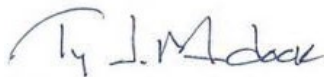
FOREWORD

The Missouri Crime Laboratory Review Commission (hereafter “Commission”) was established within the Department of Public Safety to provide independent review of any state or local Missouri crime laboratory receiving state-administered funding. In addition, the Commission is tasked with assessing the capabilities and needs of Missouri’s crime laboratories, as well as their ability to deliver quality forensic services in a timely manner to the law enforcement agencies in the state of Missouri.

A recurring recommendation of the Crime Laboratory Review Commission has been the need for more funding for Missouri’s crime laboratories to reduce the backlog and assist with case triage. Funding for new or expanded facilities can improve crime lab efficiencies and increase capacity to reduce backlogs. A new Missouri State Highway Patrol Crime Laboratory is currently under construction in Jefferson City, with completion scheduled for December 2026. Additionally, St. Louis County continues to explore options for a new Crime Laboratory facility, and the St. Charles County Police Department Criminalistics Laboratory has plans to expand their current facility in 2027. The Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office’s new crime laboratory in Pevely was completed in 2025.

The 2025 Annual Report is a comprehensive report summarizing the activities of the Commission during the calendar year 2025.

Submitted by:



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SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Missouri Crime Lab Review Commission (hereafter “Commission”) was established in 2009, pursuant to House Bill 62, within the Department of Public Safety to provide independent review of any state or local Missouri crime laboratory receiving state-administered funding.

Pursuant to RSMo 690.059, the Commission shall have the power to:

- (1) Assess the capabilities and needs of Missouri crime laboratories, as well as their ability to deliver quality forensic services in a timely manner to law enforcement agencies in the state of Missouri;
- (2) Authorize independent external investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct committed by employees or contractors of a crime laboratory substantially affecting the integrity of forensic results. The commission shall solicit input and guidance from any appropriate expert as it deems necessary in the investigation process;
- (3) Appoint members to inspection or investigative teams to assist in carrying out the duties described in subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection;
- (4) Issue reprimands to crime laboratories and to employees or contractors of crime laboratories found to be negligent or engaging in misconduct in the execution of their responsibilities;
- (5) Make recommendations for changes in procedure of crime laboratories found to be negligent in the execution of their responsibilities; and
- (6) Issue reports to the director of the department of public safety summarizing any findings of negligence or misconduct of a crime laboratory or an employee or contractor of a crime laboratory and making recommendations regarding revocation or suspension of grant funding that the commission deems warranted.

The Commission received and resolved two complaints in 2025. The Commission convened a total of four times in 2025.

In January 2025, Troy J. Murdock was appointed DPS Deputy Director and became the DPS Director’s designee on the Commission.

The Commission met virtually on February 24, 2025, and approved its 2024 Annual Report.

On May 5, 2025, a complaint was submitted via the DPS website (Complaint Forms #3 & #4). The complaint alleged “the St. Louis crime lab falsified DNA evidence.” The complainant provided assorted records related to the complaint.

The Commission received a complaint (Complaint Form #5) via the Missouri DPS website on June 6, 2025. The complaint did not involve a crime laboratory, and the Commission determined the complaint did not fall under its statutory authority. The complainant was notified of the Commission’s decision in July 2025. No further action was taken by the Commission.

In July 2025 the Commission requested and received records from the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Laboratory related to the complaint against them.

The Commission met virtually on August 28, 2025, to discuss the complaint against the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Laboratory.

The Commission met in person with the Missouri Association of Crime Laboratory Directors (MACLD) at the MSHP General HQ laboratory in Jefferson City on September 5, 2025. Topics of discussion with the directors included:

- (1) The Commission’s Prosecuting Attorney vacancy (since 2017) and possible new members. The position remains vacant as of the publication of this report.
- (2) The progress made on the current complaint with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Laboratory.

The Commission met virtually on November 5, 2025, to discuss the complaint against the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Laboratory. The Commission found that based on the allegations and review of the evidence, insufficient evidence exists to substantiate that the Crime Laboratory or its employees committed negligence or misconduct that substantially affected the integrity of the forensic results.

In November 2025 the Commission's Summary of Findings was provided to the Director of DPS, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Laboratory, and the complainant.

In November 2025 the Commission was contacted via email by a member of a working group with the California Association of Crime Laboratory Directors (CACLD) who was collecting information from various state forensic science commissions and advisory boards regarding funding, administrative support, and publicity. Commission Chair, Bryan Hampton provided the requested information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the Commission has no new recommendations, the following recommendations remain relevant and require attention:

1) Crime Laboratories Fully Support Missouri's SAFE Kit Initiative

The Commission recommends the testing of all reported Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence (SAFE) Kits submitted to crime laboratories in accordance with testing guidelines established by the Missouri Office of the Attorney General. The Commission recommends the timely entry of relevant SAFETrack reporting requirements by laboratories to ensure pertinent information is available to victims and survivors of sexual assault.

2) Coordination Between New Crime Laboratories and Missouri's Existing Crime Laboratories

As a new crime laboratory in Jefferson County comes on-line, the Commission underlines the need for communication and coordination throughout the process between an agency wanting to establish a crime laboratory and the Missouri Association of Crime Laboratory Directors (MACLD) and the Missouri Crime Laboratory Review Commission (MCLRC). Collaboration also aligns the new laboratory with MACLD's mission statement to ensure excellence in the delivery of forensic science services throughout the State.

3) Continued Improvement in Communication and Coordination Between Missouri Crime Laboratories, Law Enforcement, and Prosecuting Attorneys

The Commission identified the need to improve communication and coordination between Missouri's crime laboratories, law enforcement, and prosecuting attorneys to help the state's labs make the most efficient and effective use of their limited resources while making real progress toward the long-term reduction of testing backlogs.

Continuing progress on this issue will require A) law enforcement agencies that submit evidence analysis requests to more precisely identify the investigative questions that forensic analysis of submitted items may help answer in the factual context of each case; B) better communication between law enforcement, prosecutors, and laboratories at the inception of major cases to more effectively “triage” submitted evidence and make reasoned and targeted requests for analysis of the most probative items of evidence in light of case context; C) ongoing communication between prosecutors and laboratories after criminal charges have been filed to facilitate timely supplemental analysis requests as contested issues and case theories evolve; D) timely notification by prosecuting attorneys to laboratories that cases in which evidence was submitted for analysis have been disposed of by declination of charges, dismissal, or other judicial disposition; and E) regular meetings between top management of crime laboratories and their regional customers to discuss ways in which to enhance the overall ability of Missouri’s crime laboratories to most efficiently and effectively deliver high quality outputs to the criminal justice system.

4) The Need for More Funding to Reduce the Backlog and Assist With Case Triage

The Commission identified the need for additional funding for Missouri’s crime laboratories to reduce case backlogs and assist with case triage. Additional funding will enable crime laboratories to more effectively process backlogged cases. While limited federal funding is available to reduce DNA backlogs, sustainable funding is needed to address the backlogs in other forensic disciplines such as firearms, drugs and toxicology. Funding to improve communication and coordination between submitting agencies, prosecutors, and laboratories when evidence is submitted from major cases will enable laboratories to better evaluate requests for forensic analysis.

The Commission believes that additional funding for backlog reduction and case triage will improve the effectiveness and timeliness of the forensic services provided by Missouri’s crime laboratories.

The Commission believes the statewide and consistent implementation of these four recommendations will help maximize available resources while improving the timeliness and quality of laboratory services.