

Below is a list of referrals for agencies that provide counseling or assistance to victims of crime.

Dallas County District Attorney's Office
214 653-3600

Victim Assistance Coordinator
214 653-3838

Crime Victims' Compensation Attorney
General's Office
800 983-9933

Governor's Citizens Assistance
800 843-5789

National Center for Victims of Crime
800 FYI-CALL

Texas Department of Criminal Justice,
Victim Services
800 848-4284

Texans for Equal Justice
877 592-1007

Trauma Support Services of N. Texas, Inc.
972 709-4904

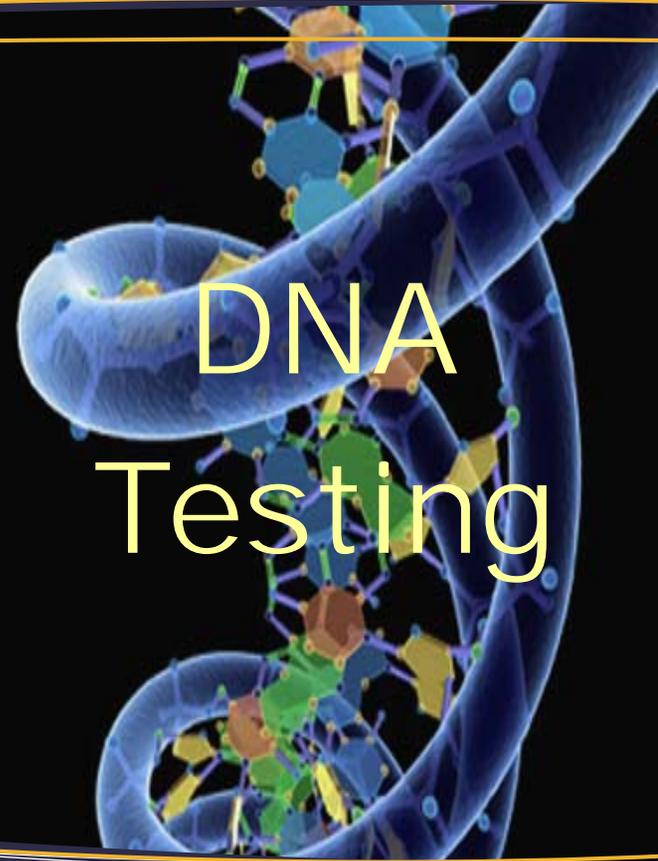
Turning Point (Collin County)
972 985-0951

VINE
(Victim Information & Notification Everyday)
877-894-8463

VIP Services (Dallas County)
(Rape Crisis/ DV counseling)
214 590-0430

Women's Shelter of Tarrant County, Inc.
817 927-2737

It is possible to access offender information 24/7 at the TDCJ website, tdej.state.tx.us. Please call if you need assistance navigating this system.



What You
Should Know



From the
Dallas County District
Attorney's Office

You are receiving this brochure because you have previously been informed that DNA testing is being conducted in your case. We realize that this information could possibly leave you confused and unsure of where to go for answers. We prepared this brochure to answer the most frequently asked questions. If after reading through this brochure you still have questions, please feel free to contact the prosecutor assigned to your case or the Victim Witness Coordinator. We want you to have the answers you deserve as well as the referrals you may need in order to help guide you through this process. Please feel free to contact us if you need further assistance.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is DNA testing being conducted in my case?

Testing is being conducted in your case because either (1) the defendant filed a motion requesting that testing be conducted and the trial court granted that motion or (2) prosecutors and defense attorneys have agreed to have testing conducted.

2. What happens next?

The evidence, along with reference samples from the defendant, you, and any of your consensual sex partners from the 72 hour period prior to the offense (if applicable) will be sent to a lab for testing. Testing will normally take 2-6 months. When test results have been issued, the trial court will hold a hearing regarding the results, if your case was sent for testing by the trial court.

3. Do I have to provide a buccal swab?

The statutes allowing for post-conviction DNA testing do not require you to provide a buccal swab. It is your choice to give a buccal swab and to provide information regarding any consensual sex partners that you may have had in the 72 hour period prior to the offense; you have no legal obligation to do either. However, this information may be critical in interpreting the test results.

4. Do I need to testify?

No, you will not.

5. Will the State release my personal information?

No. In its pleadings filed in court by the State, only your initials – or if you used a pseudonym at trial, your pseudonym – has been used. All of your personal information, including your address, telephone, and social security number has been redacted from everything the State has filed.

6. Will I be notified of the test results?

Yes. As soon as the test results are received by the prosecutor handling the case, you will be notified of the test results. If, however, you do not want to be notified of the results, please let the prosecutor know.

7. Why does the defendant in my case get DNA testing when he pled guilty or confessed?

Under Chapter 64 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, the Texas Legislature wrote the DNA statute to allow defendants who previously confessed or pled guilty to seek testing of biological evidence seized in connection with the original criminal investigation.

8. What happens if the test shows that someone else committed the crime?

If the DNA results show the defendant convicted in your case did not commit the crime, his conviction will be set aside in court and/or he will receive a pardon. Every effort is made to ensure the integrity of the results of the testing so that we are certain of a defendant's innocence.

If another suspect is identified by DNA testing, he may be prosecuted if the case is not barred by the statute of limitations. Even if another suspect cannot be prosecuted, it may be possible to make parole officials aware of the case if he is on parole or an inmate. Our office is presently working on possible legislative remedies to this situation.

9. What are my rights regarding this crime?

Under Article 56.02 (a)(7) of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, you have the right to be informed, upon request, of parole procedures, to participate in the parole process, to be notified, if requested, of parole proceedings concerning the defendant in the victim's case, to provide to the Board of Pardons and Paroles for inclusion in the defendant's file information to be considered by the board prior to the parole of any defendant convicted of any crime subject to this subchapter, and to be notified, if requested, of the defendant's release.