

Support for Timely Processing of Evidence in Cases of Sexual Assault

WHEREAS, the mission of the San Diego Police Department's Sex Crimes Unit is to conduct fair, impartial, and professional investigations of all felony sexual assaults, and their stated goal is to resolve investigations working with service area investigators, prosecutors, medical professionals, rape crisis advocates, community organizations, and other law enforcement agencies in a problem solving partnership focusing on the criminal prosecution of offender and the reduction of sexual assault¹, and;

WHEREAS, only **15.8 to 35 percent** of all sexual assaults are even reported to the police due in part to the victim's knowledge that evidence is not processed in a timely fashion, that many victims feel they will not be believed, there is still stigma and a lack of understanding associated with being the victim of a sex crime and victims believe that the criminal justice system will re-victimize them during their process. Due partially to low reporting rates, only 9 percent of all rapists get prosecuted. Only 5 percent of cases lead to a felony conviction and only 3 percent of rapists will spend a day in prison while the other 97 percent walk free², and;

WHEREAS, nearly 4 out of every 10 (38.6 percent) sex offenders are returned to prison within 3 years of their release due to commission of a new crime³, heightening the importance of investigating and convicting offenders as quickly as possible so that they will not be left to continue to offend.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Women's Club of San Diego ask the elected leaders of San Diego to show their commitment to the safety of the residents of San Diego by requiring the San Diego Police Department to:

- 1) Create a public facing document with data on the current number of "Rape Kits" and evidence from sexual assault investigations that are waiting in their backlog;
- 2) Provide a plan for processing that backlog and investigating the incidents that led to the gathering of evidence;
- 3) Provide a plan for addressing sexual assault crimes in a timelier fashion in the future to treat these crimes with the gravity they require as a health and safety menace that impacts the lives of San Diego residents.

Adopted the XX Day of XXXX, XXXX

1. <https://www.sandiego.gov/police/services/units/sexcrimes>
2. <https://ocrsm.umd.edu/files/Why-Is-Sexual-Assault-Under-Reported.pdf>
3. <http://www.smart.gov/pdfs/RecidivismofAdultSexualOffenders.pdf>