



Tennessee **Bureau of Investigation**

Forensic Services Division 7th Quarterly Report

January 1, 2025

Pursuant to PC 249 of the 113th General Assembly

The following is the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's sixth quarterly progress report on the bureau's efforts to hire and train 50 Forensic Services Division employees and the average amount of time taken to perform forensic analysis on evidence in cases involving offenses under title 39, chapter 13, part 5.

Hiring Status:

50 positions were granted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) Forensic Services Division and are distributed as follows:

Jul-22

Commissioned

	Nashville	Knoxville	Jackson	
Forensic Chemistry	2	2	2	
Toxicology	2	-	-	
Forensic Biology/DNA	3	2	3	
CODIS	-	-	3	
Firearms Identification	-	-	-	
Latent Print	-	-	-	
Microanalysis	-	-	-	
Forensic IT Manager	1	-	-	
Total	8	4	8	20

Jul-22

Noncommissioned

	Nashville	Knoxville	Jackson	
Forensic Chemistry	-	-	-	
Toxicology	-	-	-	
Forensic Biology/DNA	1	1	1	
CODIS	-	-	1	
Firearms Identification	-	-	-	
Latent Print	-	-	-	
Microanalysis	-	-	-	
Evidence Receiving	-	-	-	
Administrative Assistant	-	1	-	
Total	1	2	2	5

Sep-22

Commissioned

	Nashville	Knoxville	Jackson	
Forensic Chemistry	2	2	-	
Toxicology	1	1	1	
Forensic Biology/DNA	2	3	2	
CODIS	-	-	1	
Firearms Identification	2	-	2	
Latent Print	-	-	-	
Microanalysis	1	-	-	
Forensic IT Manager	-	-	-	
Total	8	6	6	20

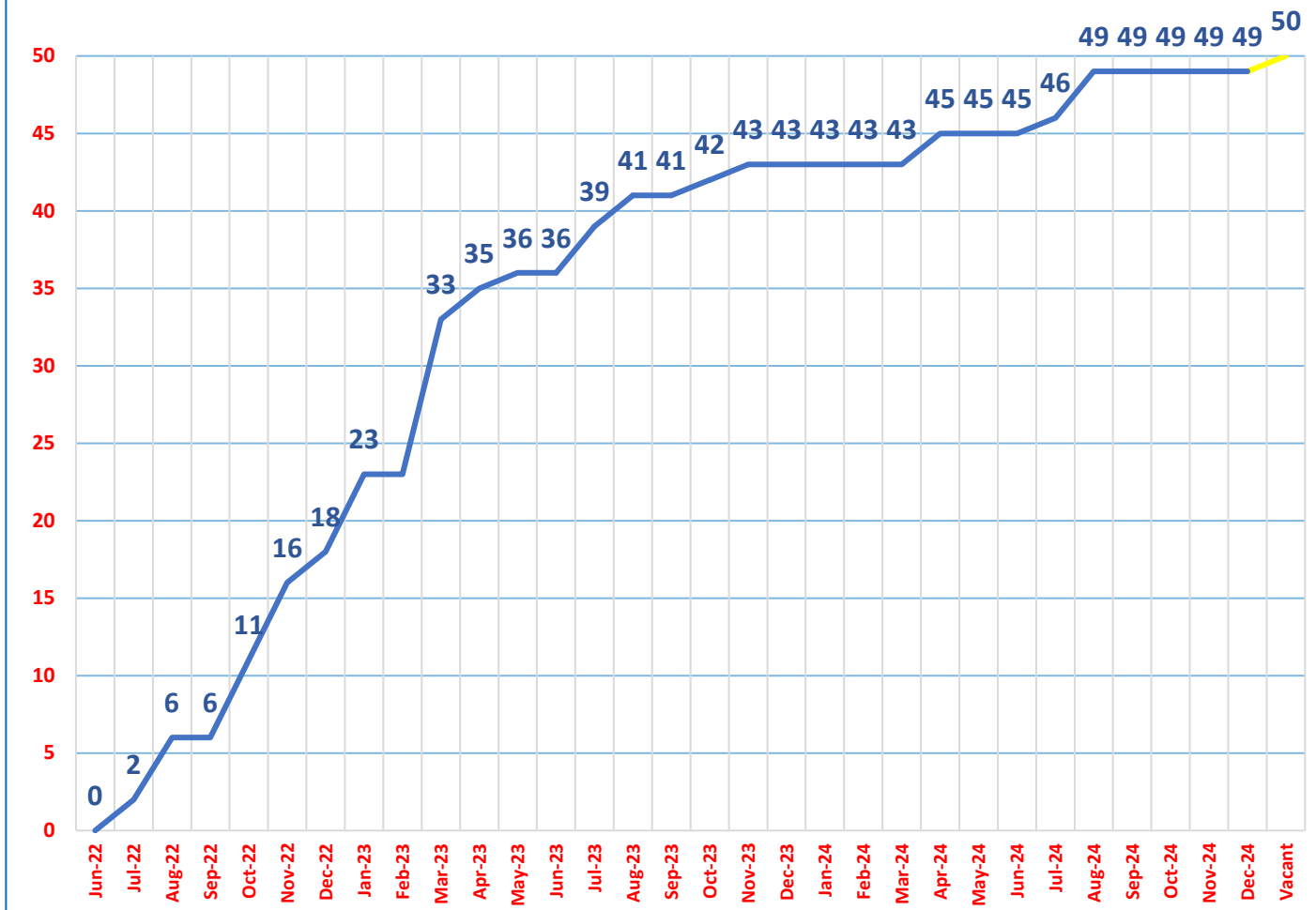
Sep-22

Noncommissioned

	Nashville	Knoxville	Jackson	
Forensic Chemistry	-	-	-	
Toxicology	1	-	-	
Forensic Biology/DNA	-	-	-	
CODIS	-	-	1	
Firearms Identification	1	-	-	
Latent Print	1	-	-	
Microanalysis	-	-	-	
Evidence Receiving	-	-	-	
Administrative Assistant*	-	-	1	
Total	3	0	2	5

* Reclassified to be Forensic Technician Supervisor for Jackson Lab

TBI Crime Laboratory - Hiring Status- 50 Newly Created Positions



Hiring Status through January 1, 2025:

- 49 positions have been filled.
- 1 position is vacant.
- Vacancy due to previously hired Forensic Technician promoting to Special Agent / Forensic Scientist.

	Lab	Unit	Position	Status	Estimated Training Completion
1	Jackson	CODIS	SA/FS Supervisor	Hired July 2022	Training Completed
2	Division	Administration	Forensic IT Manager	Hired July 2022	Training Completed
3	Nashville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired August 2022	Training Completed
4	Nashville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired August 2022	Training Completed
5	Nashville	Toxicology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired August 2022	Training Completed
6	Jackson	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired August 2022	Training Completed
7	Nashville	Toxicology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired October 2022	Training Completed
8	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired October 2022	Training Completed
9	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired October 2022	Training Completed
10	Knoxville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired October 2022	Training Completed
11	Jackson	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired October 2022	Training Completed
12	Jackson	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired November 2022	Training Completed
13	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired November 2022	Training Completed
14	Knoxville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired November 2022	Training Completed
15	Jackson	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired November 2022	Training Completed
16	Jackson	CODIS	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired November 2022	Training Completed
17	Knoxville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired December 2022	Training Completed
18	Nashville	Microanalysis	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired December 2022	January 2025
19	Nashville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired January 2023	Training Completed
20	Nashville	Toxicology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired January 2023	April 2025
21	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired January 2023	Training Completed
22	Knoxville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired January 2023	Training Completed
23	Nashville	Firearms	Forensic Technician	Hired January 2023	Training Completed
24	Knoxville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
25	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Forensic Technician	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
26	Jackson	CODIS	Forensic Technician	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
27	Nashville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
28	Knoxville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
29	Jackson	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
30	Knoxville	Toxicology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
31	Jackson	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	Training Completed
32	Nashville	Firearms	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	April 2025
33	Jackson	Firearms	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired March 2023	July 2025
34	Knoxville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired April 2023	Training Completed
35	Jackson	Toxicology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired April 2023	Training Completed
36	Knoxville	Forensic Biology	Forensic Technician	Hired May 2023	Training Completed
37	Jackson	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired July 2023	May 2025
38	Jackson	CODIS	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired July 2023	May 2025
39	Nashville	Firearms	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired July 2023	July 2025
40	Nashville	Latent Print	Forensic Technician	Hired August 2023	Training Completed
41	Jackson	Evidence	Forensic Technician Supervisor	Hired August 2023	Training Completed
42	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired October 2023	January 2025
43	Knoxville	Administration	Administrative Assistant	Hired November 2023	Training Completed
44	Jackson	CODIS	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired April 2024	October 2025
45	Jackson	CODIS	Forensic Technician	Hired April 2024	Training Completed
46	Knoxville	Forensic Biology	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired July 2024	January 2026
47	Knoxville	Forensic Chemistry	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired August 2024	August 2025
48	Jackson	Firearms	Special Agent / Forensic Scientist	Hired August 2024	August 2026
49	Nashville	Toxicology	Forensic Technician	Hired August 2024	February 2025
50	Nashville	Forensic Biology	Forensic Technician	Vacant	Approx. 6 months after hire

Note: Vacancy due to previously hired Forensic Technician promoting to Special Agent / Forensic Scientist

Testing Status:

The TBI performs Forensic Biology (Serology and DNA) testing for evidence related to title 39, chapter 13, part 5 (sexual offenses) at all three crime laboratory locations – Nashville, Knoxville, and Jackson. The TBI receives evidence from all law enforcement agencies statewide and provides testing free of charge. Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPD) operates its own laboratory to perform testing in cases investigated by MNPD. Any information regarding turnaround times for cases at the MNPD Crime Laboratory is not included in this report and must be supplied by the MNPD.

- Statewide (weighted average) in-house turnaround time for all combined sex offense requests peaked in August 2022 at 45.4 weeks.
- Statewide (weighted average) in-house turnaround time for cases containing only a sexual assault kit (SAK) from December 1-31, 2024, was 10.3 weeks.
- Statewide pending in-house request inventory for cases containing only a sexual assault kit (SAK) on January 1, 2025, was 143.
- Starting in October 2023, the TBI Crime Laboratory separated statistics for cases containing only a sexual assault kit (SAK) from cases containing a sexual assault kit (SAK) and additional items (such as clothing or bedding). Statewide (weighted average) in-house turnaround time for cases containing these additional items from December 1-31, 2024, was 19.8 weeks.
- Starting in October 2023, the TBI Crime Laboratory separated statistics for cases containing only a sexual assault kit (SAK) from cases containing a sexual assault kit (SAK) and additional items (such as clothing or bedding). Statewide request inventory for cases containing these additional items on January 1, 2025, was 122.
- Statewide combined turnaround time for all sex offense evidence (SAKs plus additional items) from December 1-31, 2024, was 13.8 weeks.
- Statewide combined request inventory for all sex offense evidence (SAKs plus additional items) on January 1, 2025, was 265.
- Forensic Biology testing of sex offense cases is labor intensive, and turnaround time for these cases is expected to improve as more employees are hired and trained.
- The TBI Crime Laboratories have 39 statewide positions dedicated to performing Forensic Biology casework. 33 employees (84.6%) have completed training. 6 employees (15.4%) are either in training or in the hiring process.

Outsource testing:

Project 1

- The TBI initially secured \$1,850,000 in federal grant funding for outsourced sexual assault kit (SAK) testing.
- The TBI entered into a contract with DNA Labs International (DLI) located in Deerfield Beach, Florida, to perform SAK testing at a rate of \$2,155 per SAK.
- Given the funding available and the contracted testing rate, a total of 858 SAKs may be outsource tested.
- 550 SAKs were delivered to DLI via TBI airplane on March 6, 2023.
- 308 SAKs were delivered to DLI via TBI airplane on July 6, 2023.
- Per terms of grant funding and DLI contract, the testing on the initial 858 kits must be (and was) completed by DLI by December 31, 2023.

- Additional federal grant funding was secured for outsourced testing. This additional federal grant funding was required to be spent by January 31, 2024. Given this time constraint, DNA Labs International (DLI) agreed to accept 50 additional kits at a rate of \$2,155 per kit. The total expenditure for these 50 additional kits will be \$107,750.
- 50 SAKs were shipped to DLI in December 2023, bringing the outsource total to 908 SAKs.
- The outsource lab only accepts sexual assault kits (SAKs). TBI is responsible for all testing on additional items such as clothing and bedding. Testing on these additional items is more labor intensive and time consuming than testing sexual assault kits (SAKs).
- The outsource lab performs SAK testing per TBI specifications. However, TBI remains responsible for case review and CODIS upload and match management.

Project 2

- The TBI secured an additional \$413,719 in federal grant funding for outsourced sexual assault kit (SAK) testing.
- The TBI entered into a contract with DNA Labs International (DLI) located in Deerfield Beach, Florida, to perform SAK testing at a rate of \$2,155 per SAK.
- Given the funding available and the contracted testing rate, up to a total of 192 additional SAKs may be outsourced.
- 192 SAKs have been shipped to DLI.
- Per terms of the pending contract, the testing of up to 192 additional SAKs were completed by DLI prior to September 30, 2024. All initial testing has been completed by the outsource laboratory; however, 34 cases await TBI review and are unreported.

Outsourced Testing Progress

- From December 1-31, 2024, the statewide weighted-average turnaround time for outsourced cases was 43.8 weeks. This includes both outsourced testing and TBI review and reporting.
- 34 cases remain unreported in the outsourcing projects.

Future testing/turnaround:

- The TBI is required to perform case review and CODIS upload and match management for all outsourced cases.
- As more cases are completed by the outsourced lab, added case review and CODIS responsibilities may negatively impact turnaround time and inventory of current in-house cases.
- The TBI is committed to improving service to all cases – including sex offense cases. Long term success in improving service will be a function of successes in hiring, training, and retaining TBI Forensic Division employees.

TBI Crime Lab In-House Combined Sex Offense Requests

Nashville

Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Requests Received	31	24	46	25	33	36	34	39	36	73	31	34	26
Requests Completed	44	50	64	48	50	26	33	34	17	33	17	15	31
Requests Pending	255	221	203	183	104	124	125	124	119	143	153	171	169
Average Turnaround - Weeks	31.1	26.0	22.2	24.1	21.2	22.5	16.9	10.8	17.6	18.1	13.6	27.1	23.2

Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24
Requests Received	33	34	31	21	22	34	39	28	24	31	34	35	23
Requests Completed	17	58	23	45	28	49	31	28	26	29	38	31	48
Requests Pending	188	165	176	154	103	83	80	84	84	87	84	90	69
Average Turnaround - Weeks	26.3	22.2	33.6	16.6	19.9	16.3	19.1	13.2	12.7	8.4	7.4	19.1	17.4

Knoxville

Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Requests Received	53	35	46	23	39	42	68	32	38	55	43	31	38
Requests Completed	49	33	37	48	31	31	9	30	25	26	42	20	31
Requests Pending	375	368	384	250	118	123	195	198	152	181	181	190	203
Average Turnaround - Weeks	37.8	39.7	42.9	34.5	36.5	24.9	29.1	18.9	15.7	22.9	18.5	16.1	20.8

Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24
Requests Received	32	21	48	56	44	65	33	39	47	35	53	47	26
Requests Completed	21	39	20	152	23	29	26	46	49	55	58	49	53
Requests Pending	169	165	184	92	101	141	141	148	138	124	124	116	88
Average Turnaround - Weeks	22.0	25.3	23.4	16.9	11.2	10.3	14.1	13.0	12.0	14.4	13.5	11.5	10.5

Jackson

Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Requests Received	30	20	58	37	31	43	42	162	42	47	48	54	53
Requests Completed	25	19	35	24	35	38	32	22	31	19	34	43	53
Requests Pending	345	347	386	391	144	145	156	301	102	153	177	198	195
Average Turnaround - Weeks	44.3	43.8	38.7	42.2	40.1	39.1	26.9	20.1	21.8	17.8	12.6	31.4	22.1

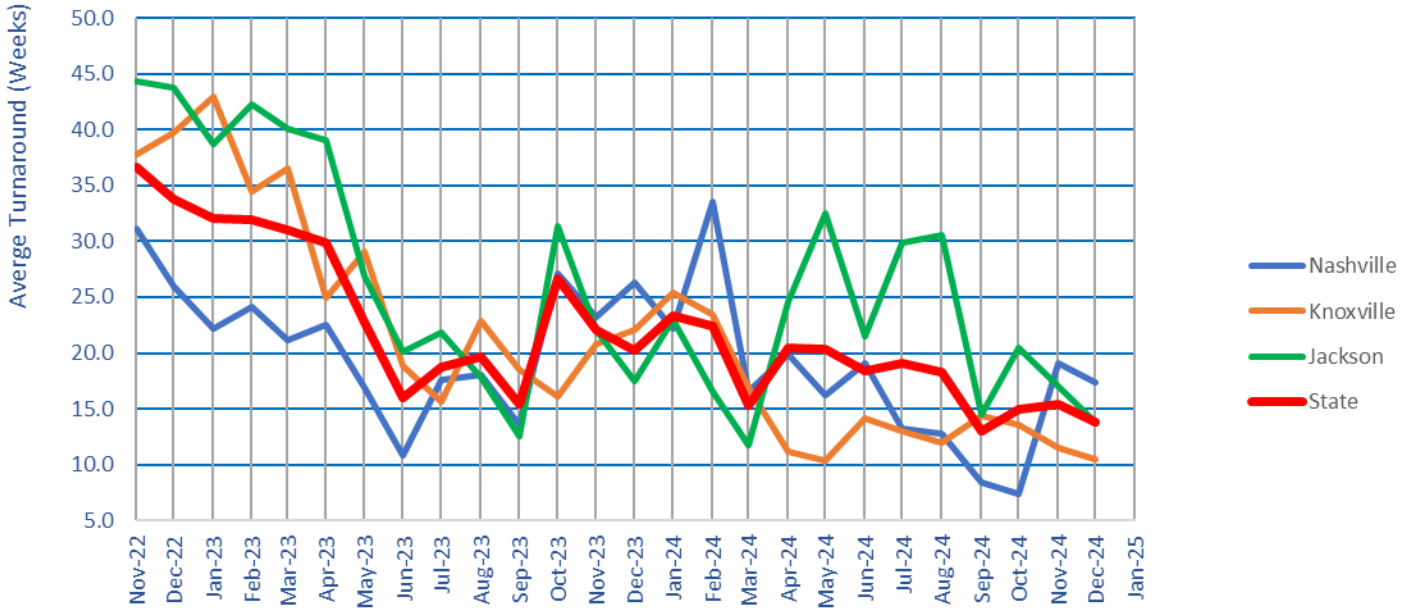
Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24
Requests Received	35	40	37	39	81	32	30	39	40	47	27	27	37
Requests Completed	50	32	48	76	56	40	29	41	37	36	68	48	45
Requests Pending	189	210	177	148	190	155	145	172	152	184	148	114	108
Average Turnaround - Weeks	17.5	23.0	16.6	11.7	24.6	32.5	21.5	29.9	30.6	14.5	20.4	17.0	13.8

State

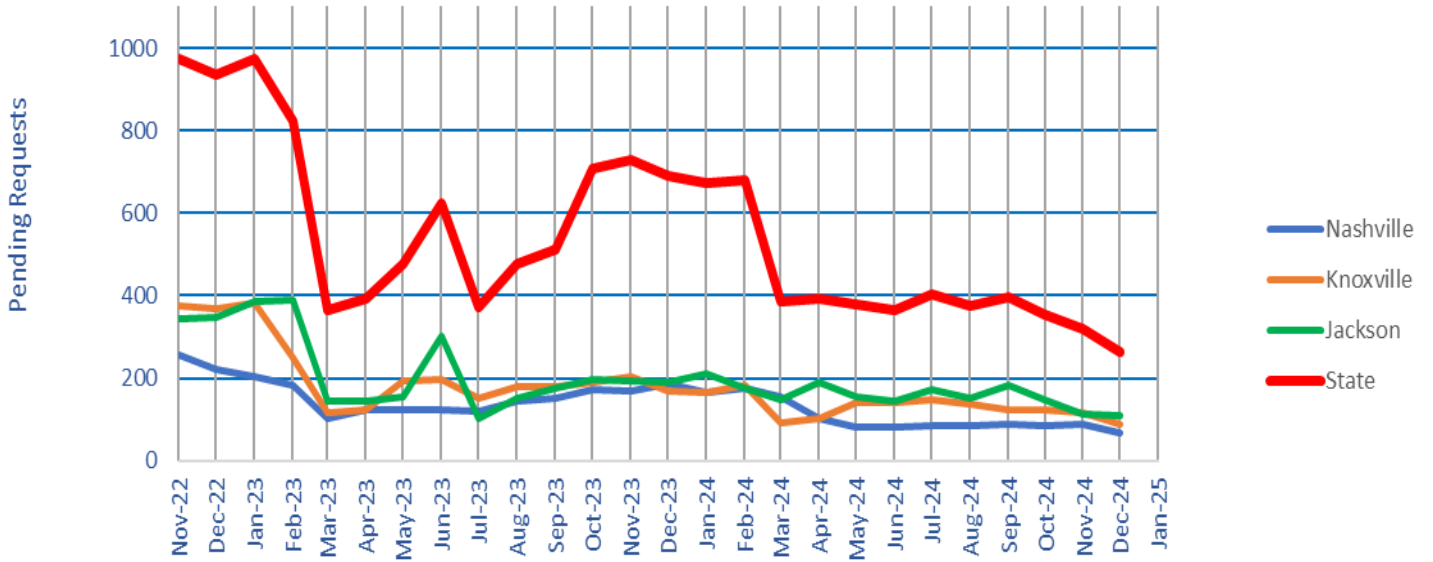
Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Requests Received	114	79	150	85	103	121	144	233	116	175	122	119	117
Requests Completed	118	102	136	120	116	95	74	86	73	78	93	78	115
Requests Pending	975	936	973	824	366	392	476	623	373	477	511	709	730
Average Turnaround - Weeks	36.7	33.7	32.1	31.9	31.0	29.9	22.7	16.0	18.7	19.6	15.4	26.6	22.0

Forensic Biology - Sex Offense	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24
Requests Received	100	95	116	116	147	131	102	106	111	113	114	109	86
Requests Completed	88	129	91	275	107	118	86	115	112	120	164	128	146
Requests Pending	689	672	681	387	394	379	366	404	374	395	356	320	265
Average Turnaround - Weeks	20.3	23.4	22.4	15.3	20.5	20.3	18.4	19.1	18.3	13.0	15.0	15.4	13.8

TBI Crime Lab In-House Combined Sex Offense Requests Average Turnaround (Weeks)



TBI Crime Lab In-House Combined Sex Offense Requests Inventory



Per Public Chapter 249:

(2) By January 1, 2025, the bureau must submit a report to the judiciary and finance, ways and means committees of the senate and the criminal justice and finance, ways, and means committees of the house of representatives detailing any additional resources and personnel that would be required in order to perform forensic analysis on evidence in cases involving offenses under title 39, chapter 13, part 5, within sixty (60) days of the bureau's receipt of the evidence from a law enforcement agency.

Turnaround times (statewide weighted average) from December 1-31 2024, for cases involving offenses under title 39, chapter 13, part 5 are as follows:

- Cases involving only a submitted Sexual Assault Kit (SAK): 10.3 weeks (72.1 days)
- Cases involving a submitted SAK and/or additional items (clothing, bedding, etc.): 19.8 weeks (138.6 days)

Analysis of evidence in cases involving offenses under title 39, chapter 13, part 5 is a labor-intensive process. The TBI Crime Laboratories are currently staffed with a goal of achieving turnaround times of 8 to 12 weeks (56 to 84 days).

Current status of Special Agent/Forensic Scientists hired and trained to perform analysis in Forensic Biology (DNA) as of December 2024 was as follows:

- Nashville: Total case working staff = 14, training status = 12/14 (85.7%)
- Knoxville: Total case working staff = 13, training status = 12/13 (92.3%)
- Jackson: Total case working staff = 12, training status = 9/12 (75.0%)
- Statewide: Total case working staff = 39, training status = 33/39 (84.6%)

The training period for Special Agent/Forensic Scientists working in Forensic Biology is approximately 18 months. Many Special Agent/Forensic Scientists listed above as "case working" have only recently completed training.

Status of Special Agent/Forensic Scientists available to perform analysis in Forensic Biology approximately two years ago was as follows:

- Nashville: Total case working staff = 14, training status = 4/14 (28.6%)
- Knoxville: Total case working staff = 13, training status = 8/13 (61.5%)
- Jackson: Total case working staff = 12, training status = 5/12 (41.7%)
- Statewide: Total case working staff = 39, training status = 17/39 (43.6%)

With staffing near 100% trained, it is expected that turnaround times will be within the 8 to 12 week goal stated by TBI when additional staff was originally requested. Achieving a turnaround time of 60 days or less will require existing Special Agent/Forensic Scientists to complete training as well as hiring of additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists. It is currently estimated that the additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists required would be: 2 additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists in Nashville, 2 additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists in Knoxville, and 3 additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists in Jackson – statewide total of 7 additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists.

Facility space becomes a limiting factor when discussing staff increases. Forensic Biology (DNA) testing is very sensitive, and the potential for DNA contamination must be addressed when evaluating laboratory space requirements. The Nashville lab can possibly house 1 additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientist for Forensic Biology. Unfortunately, the Knoxville lab's unit is at full facility capacity and no additional staff can be added. The Jackson lab's unit is also currently at maximum capacity. The Jackson lab has begun facility expansion though, and after completion of expansion will be able to accommodate 3 additional Special Agent/Forensic Scientists. The Tennessee Department of General Services has been working with the TBI to evaluate future facility needs.