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Auditor General DePasquale Discusses Resolving Backlog of Untested Rape Kits, Opioid Crisis with Blair County DA

ALTOONA, Blair County – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today met with Blair County District Attorney Richard Consiglio to discuss resolving the county’s backlog of untested rape kits and combat the opioid crisis.

“I applaud the Blair County DA’s office for having no untested rape kits,” DePasquale said after the meeting. “Behind every one of those untested kits could be a victim anxiously awaiting justice for a sexual assault.”

Blair County had 71 backlogged rape kits in 2016, meaning they were awaiting testing for 12 months or more. Sixty-eight of those backlogged kits resided with Altoona Police Department — the same number the department had in 2015.

“I am pleased to hear that the Altoona Police Department, which in 2016 had the third-highest number of backlogged rape kits in the state, expects to have all of its untested rape kits sent to the lab for testing by the middle of this month,” DePasquale said.

DePasquale released a [special report](#) in 2016 that focused on the reasons that roughly 3,000 rape kits in Pennsylvania remained untested, including nearly 1,900 at that time which were considered backlogged. The number of backlogged kits has since dropped to about 1,200, and DePasquale continues to push for legislative reforms and funding to eliminate the backlog.

The pair also discussed the opioid crisis’ effect in Blair County.

“We know opioid addiction is causing increases in the number of deaths in nearly every county, and Blair is no different,” DePasquale said. “Providing avenues for substance users to receive effective treatment is crucial to helping them on the road to recovery.”

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