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ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL HIGHLIGHTS NEARLY \$750,000 IN FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today highlighted a nearly \$750,000 federal grant the Attorney General's office received to provide improved services and resources for sexual assault victims. The funding will be used to support Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) and sexual assault response teams (SART) in two rural regions within Central Illinois. The grant will also support education to help law enforcement, advocates, prosecutors and health care providers better support sexual assault victims.

"The Illinois SANE Program has helped us provide quality, trauma-informed, patient-centered care to individuals during what is often the worst moment of their lives," Raoul said. "I am committed to ensuring that communities have tools to support victims of sexual assault. This federal grant will allow us to expand the critical services provided by sexual assault nurse examiners and sexual assault response teams to additional regions throughout Central Illinois."

The Attorney General's office received a \$749,890 Rural Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program (Rural Program) grant, which is awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women. The grants support programs that:

- Identify, assess and appropriately respond to child, youth and adult victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking in rural communities.
- Establish and expand victim services in rural communities for child, youth and adult victims.
- Increase the safety and well-being of women and children in rural communities by dealing directly and immediately with domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and creating and implementing strategies to increase awareness and prevent these crimes.

The grant funding is allowing the Attorney General's office to support and expand services in two rural regions in Central Illinois. The regions were selected due to the presence of a four-year public university, the current availability of SANEs and victim service centers, and the close proximity of multiple hospitals currently servicing victims. The western collaborative service area includes Adams, Brown, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, Pike, Schuyler and Warren counties. The eastern collaborative service area includes Clark, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Edgar, Edwards, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland and Wabash counties.

In the western collaborative service area, the grant funding will support the existing SART, allow four counties to be added to the SART and allow the implementation of a 24/7 on-call SANE program for pediatric, adolescent and adult patients. The funding will also allow the Attorney General's office to ensure the same services are provided in the eastern collaborative service area, including the hiring of a SANE leader, establishing a SART and making sure SANEs are performing medical forensic examinations. The goal of the SARTs is to strengthen relationships and collaboration between health care providers, law enforcement, prosecutors and sexual assault crisis center advocates, and to ensure victims of sexual assault receive compassionate services. The improved cooperation between agencies will also better support investigations and prosecutions.

The Attorney General's office developed Illinois' SANE program with assistance from the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault using a grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. SANEs are crucial in ensuring that individuals who have been sexually assaulted receive trauma-informed, patient-

centered medical forensic services. These specially-trained nurses reduce the re-traumatization of patients, address patients' medical concerns and improve the quality of evidence collection, which in turn increases prosecution and conviction rates.

Each year, the Illinois SANE Program offers 40-hour Adult/Adolescent SANE training, 40-hour Pediatric/Adolescent SANE training, Advanced SANE training, and one-day Foundation to Provide Sexual Assault Patient Care in the Emergency Room training throughout Illinois. All trainings are free of charge. For additional information about the SANE Program or to sign up for SANE Trainings, please visit [Raoul's website](#).

UAttorney General Raoul's Crime Victim Services Division manages programs that provide assistance to crime victims and service providers. For information about the rights afforded to survivors of a crime in Illinois, please visit [Raoul's website](#) or call his office's toll-free Crime Victims' Assistance Line: 1-800-228-3368 or 1-877-398-1130 (TTY).