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**AG Rosenblum Commemorates 2016 National Crime Victims' Rights
Week**

*AG Rosenblum Announces Free Counseling Sessions for Victims of Sexual Assault and
Rape*

SALEM—As part of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (April 10-16, 2016), Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum today announced two new Crime Victims' Compensation benefits that will provide free counseling sessions for victims of sexual assault. The Oregon Department of Justice's [Crime Victims' Compensation Program](#) will provide 15 counseling sessions to sexual assault survivors who will have their unprocessed "rape kit" tested for the first time. Rape kits contain potential evidence from a sexual assault victim. Oregon DOJ will also offer five counseling sessions for survivors who have had a sexual assault victim emergency (SAVE) exam.

Survivors will be eligible for the counseling sessions regardless of how old their case is, or whether they have previously received benefits through the Compensation Program.

"When a victim of sexual assault finally has their rape kit or other evidence processed, it can bring back memories of a very traumatic experience," said Attorney General Rosenblum. "I am pleased we are able to offer these benefits to survivors of sexual assault who may once again experience trauma when they receive a call about their case potentially years after the fact."

In March 2016, Oregon Governor Brown mandated the Oregon State Crime Lab to process a backlog of untested rape kits sitting in police departments across Oregon. Senate Bill 1571, known as Melissa's law, unanimously passed through the Oregon Legislature during the 2016 special legislative session. It is estimated that there may be as many as 2,000 untested rape kits on Oregon police department shelves. Funding for untested kits in Multnomah, Marion and Lane counties came from a \$1.9 million grant by the Manhattan County District Attorney's Office.

The five counseling sessions for individuals who have had a SAVE exam will be available to survivors regardless of whether they reported the assault to law

enforcement, or have previously applied to DOJ's Oregon Crime Victim Compensation Program. The Oregon Crime Victim's Compensation Program is administered by Oregon DOJ, and works to ease the financial burden suffered by victims and their family members. Oregon DOJ currently provides free SAVE exams for all survivors.

For victims of sexual assault looking for more information on the counseling sessions, please contact Shannon Sivell or Rebecca Shaw at the Crime Victims' Services Division at 503.378.5348.

[Oregon Department of Justice](#)

