

DNA Breakthrough Solves 2005 Sexual Assault Case

by CBS2 Staff

Sun, February 22, 2026 at 12:29 PM



In 2005, a woman reported to the Valley County Sheriff's Office that she had been sexually assaulted by an unknown man. At the time, deputies conducted an extensive investigation. However, the victim was unable to identify her attacker or pinpoint the exact location of the assault, limiting leads in the case.

Biological evidence collected during the investigation produced a DNA profile from an unidentified male suspect. Despite exhaustive efforts, the case eventually went inactive.

In 2022, the Idaho State Police (ISP) received funding through the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI), a grant program administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The initiative supports the use of advanced DNA technology to analyze sexual assault evidence and help identify suspects in unresolved cases.

The ISP SAKI Cold Case Unit reviewed the DNA profile connected to the 2005 case and used forensic investigative genetic genealogy to generate new leads. A Valley County Sheriff's detective spent about a year following up on those leads, including traveling out of state to collect DNA samples and conduct interviews.

The investigation ultimately identified a person of interest. Although the individual had died years earlier, DNA testing of family members confirmed beyond a reasonable doubt that he was the likely perpetrator.

Detectives notified the victim of the development. Authorities say she expressed deep gratitude for finally receiving answers after more than 20 years.

Valley County Sheriff Kevin Copperi thanked the Idaho State Police and the ISP SAKI Cold Case Unit for their collaboration and expertise, calling their work instrumental in resolving a case that otherwise may have remained unsolved.
