



CHAIRMAN'S MEMORANDUM

NO. 6-2003 FEBRUARY 24, 2003

TO: SHERIFFS, JAIL ADMINISTRATORS, COMMISSIONERS OF CORRECTION

RE: NEW YORK STATE DNA DATABANK

This is to provide a brief update on the New York State DNA Databank, to acknowledge your contributions to the success of the program, and to request your continued efforts in the prompt collection and submission of DNA specimens from qualifying offenders. There have been 806 "hits" in the DNA Databank linking criminal offenders with previously unsolved crimes. In 45 of these cases, the offender specimen was collected at a county correctional facility.

These hits help identify repeat offenders, especially those associated with violent crimes, and get them off the street before they can commit more crimes. For example, with the help of a DNA Databank "hit," an offender was recently convicted of a murder that occurred in Allegany County in November 2000. While law enforcement had identified the offender as a suspect, the DNA "hit" confirmed their investigative findings and provided the final proof needed in the case. The DNA specimen had been collected by staff at the Cattaraugus County Jail when the offender was incarcerated in April of 2000 for a parole violation. These kinds of success stories not only bring closure for victims and their families but illustrate how this technology tool can bring significant savings in investigative time spent in pursuing open cases.

In the interest of public safety, it is essential that DNA specimens from offenders designated in the law are collected as soon as possible after sentencing (or upon re-arrest of those who may not yet have provided a specimen but who still owe a sample from a previous conviction). It is requested that you review your intake screening and DNA collection procedures to ensure designated offenders are identified and their DNA specimens are taken promptly upon admission to your jail facility.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the DNA Databank, please call the Division of Criminal Justice Services at (518) 457-1901.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in this important public safety initiative.

Alan J. Croce, Chairman/Commissioner