

Wisconsin police department to expand felon DNA collection program

The state Department of Justice has hired nearly 20 more workers and begun a pricey renovation of its Madison crime lab so that it will be able to handle tens of thousands of additional DNA samples when new collection requirements take effect next year.

Wisconsin currently takes DNA samples from anyone convicted of a felony and certain sex-related misdemeanors. A Republican-backed law set to take effect on April 1 dramatically expands the grounds for collection.

The measure requires local police to take DNA from anyone arrested for a violent felony and to ship the samples to the DOJ, although the agency won't be allowed to process them until a judge finds probable cause that a crime was committed in each case. The law also requires anyone convicted of any misdemeanor to submit a DNA sample.

The law's supporters say collecting DNA samples will help solve more crimes. Civil rights advocates, though, contend the expanded collection is an invasion of privacy.

The law means the DOJ will have to handle tens of thousands of additional samples. The agency already collects about 12,000 DNA samples from convicted felons annually and expects to receive 25,000 samples from felony arrests and 40,000 samples from misdemeanor convictions next year.

Read full, original article: [Wisconsin agency preps for big jump in DNA testing](#)