

# OSP Forensic Services SAFE Kit and DNA Challenges

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# DNA Team

25 total positions

- ▶ 2 Managers
- ▶ 1 DNA Technical Leader
- ▶ 1 State CODIS Administrator
- ▶ 1 Lab Technician
- ▶ 2 Administrative support staff (grant funded)
- ▶ 1 Databasing analyst (convicted offenders)
- ▶ 10 fully trained scientists
- ▶ 7 trainees (1 grant funded)



# DNA Production Challenges

- ▶ Additional MQs that limit applicant pools and require an additional step in hiring process
- ▶ Lengthy training programs
- ▶ Increasing demands outside of casework
  - ▶ Legacy review of older cases with current knowledge
  - ▶ Increasing discovery and public records requests
  - ▶ Validation of new technology
- ▶ Multiple, unexpected vacancies intensify challenges



# DNA Minimum Qualifications

- ▶ In addition to DAS MQs, DNA applicants must also have taken specific college-level classes
  - ▶ Statistics
  - ▶ Molecular Biology
  - ▶ Biochemistry
  - ▶ Genetics
- ▶ Additional step in hiring process that takes time to ensure compliance and shrinks applicant pool



# Lengthy Training Programs

- ▶ DNA has one of longest training programs
- ▶ At least six months of experience before new employees can participate in casework (FBI requirement)
- ▶ 18-24 months to authorize new DNA scientist
  
- ▶ We have modified DNA training programs to allow partially trained scientists to complete laboratory work while fully trained scientists focus on interpretation of results and issuing reports
  - ▶ Section 1: SAFE kit laboratory work
  - ▶ Section 2: SAFE kit limited interpretation and report writing
  - ▶ Section 3: Full interpretation and report writing

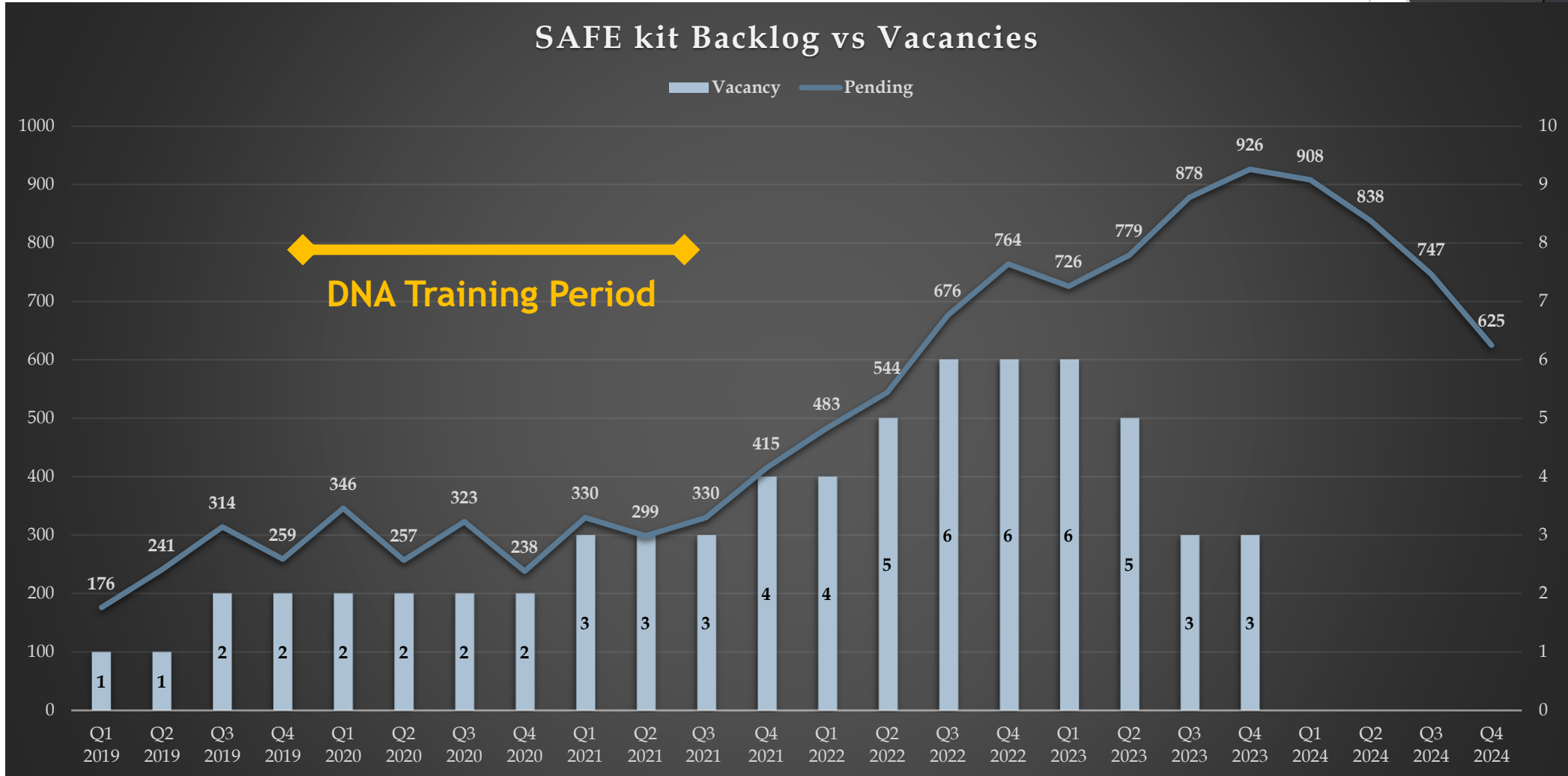


# Discovery and Public Records

- ▶ In 2022, received 0.8 requests per workday
- ▶ In 2024, receiving 2.2 requests per workday
  - ▶ Also increasing in complexity and size
- ▶ DNA privacy laws are complicated, so a separate DNA review is needed
  - ▶ 280 DNA hours in 2023 (equivalent to 113 cases)
- ▶ Created new discovery workflows
  - ▶ More automated
  - ▶ Involve fewer scientists
- ▶ Forensic Document Portal
  - ▶ 2,100+ policy and procedure documents available online for free

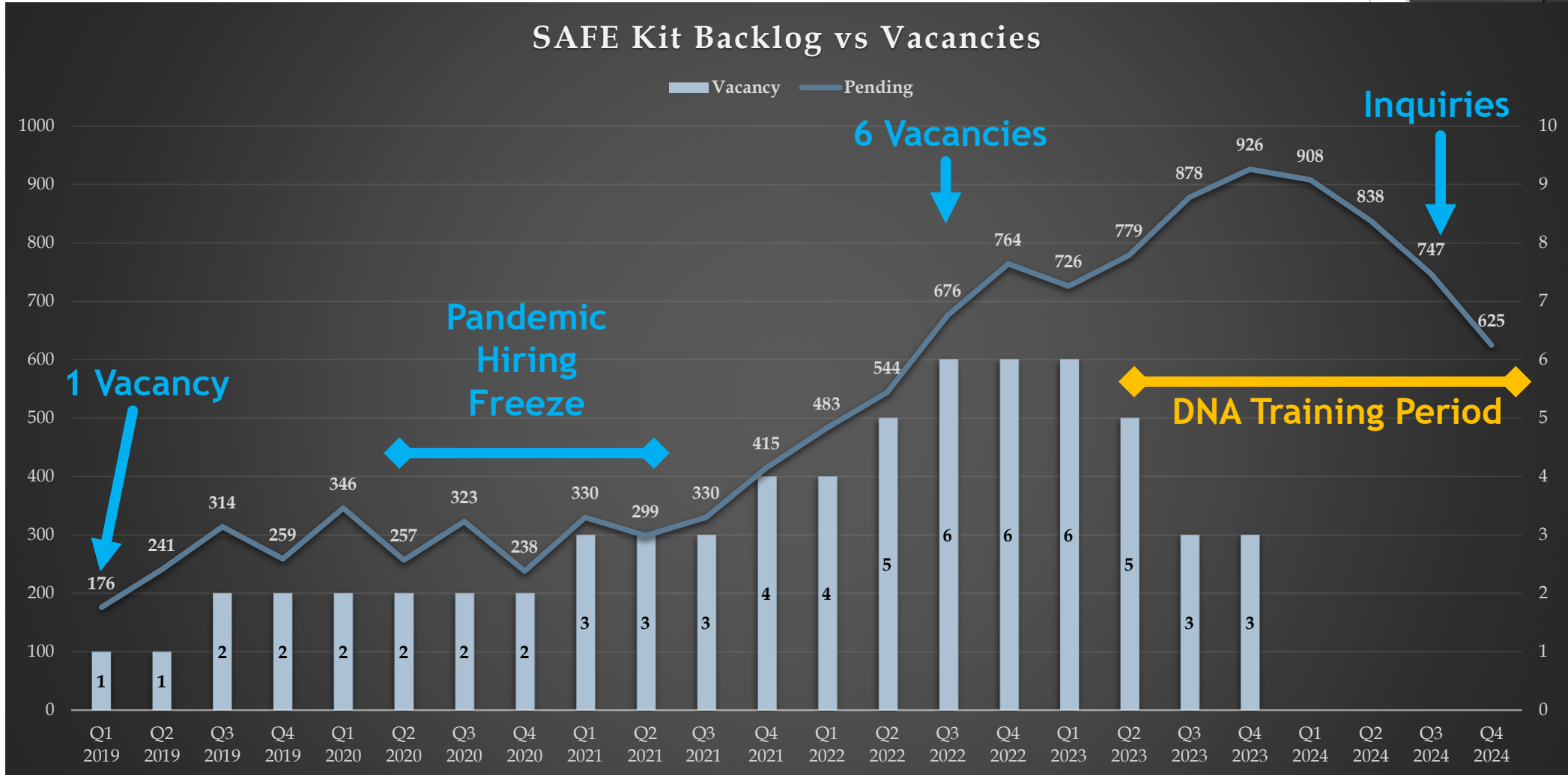


# DNA SAFE Kit Backlog Timeline





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# DNA Training Timelines

- ▶ 4 scientists scheduled to complete section 2 training in January 2025
- ▶ 3 scientists scheduled to complete section 2 training in April 2025
- ▶ All 7 scientists should be fully trained by end of 2025



# Triaging Limited Resources

- ▶ Review of older cases using current knowledge
  - ▶ Team no longer proactively reviewing older cases
- ▶ Six validations and multiple other efficiency projects paused and resources have been shifted to casework
- ▶ Effectively paused property crime DNA casework
  - ▶ 1,893 DNA requests pending as of 12/2/24



# Balancing Other Challenges

## ▶ Toxicology

- ▶ New “drugs in blood” service
- ▶ Replacing all intoxilyzers in Oregon

## ▶ Drug Chemistry

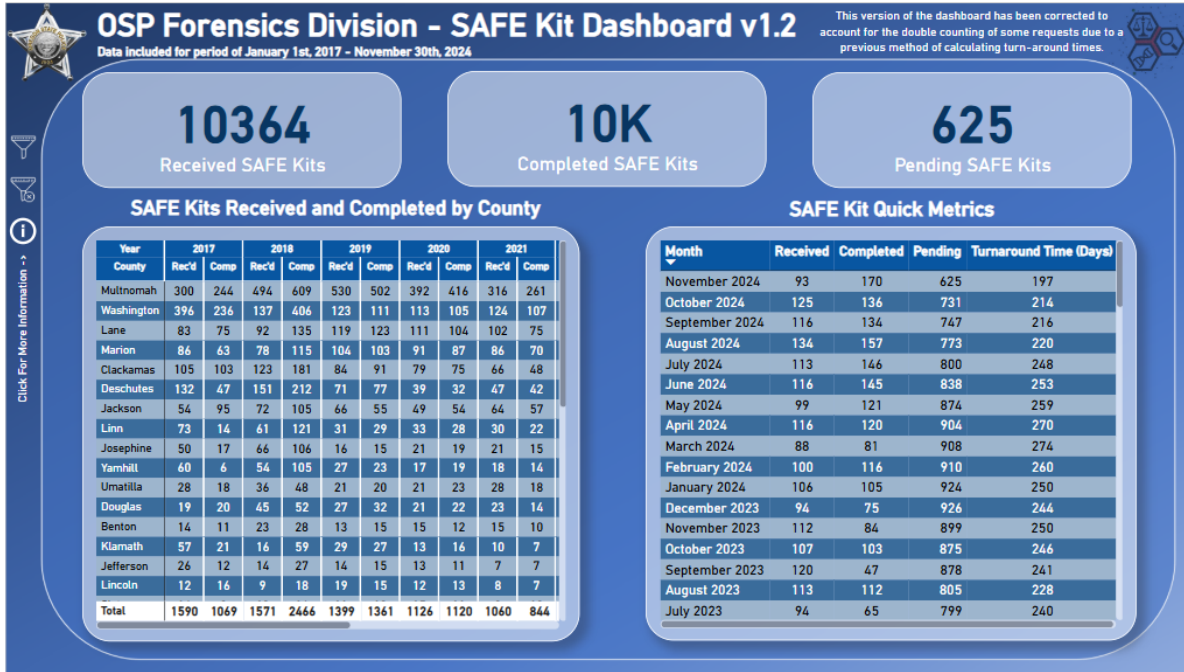
- ▶ Fentanyl surge (more time-consuming analysis)
- ▶ BM110
- ▶ HB4002

## ▶ Firearms

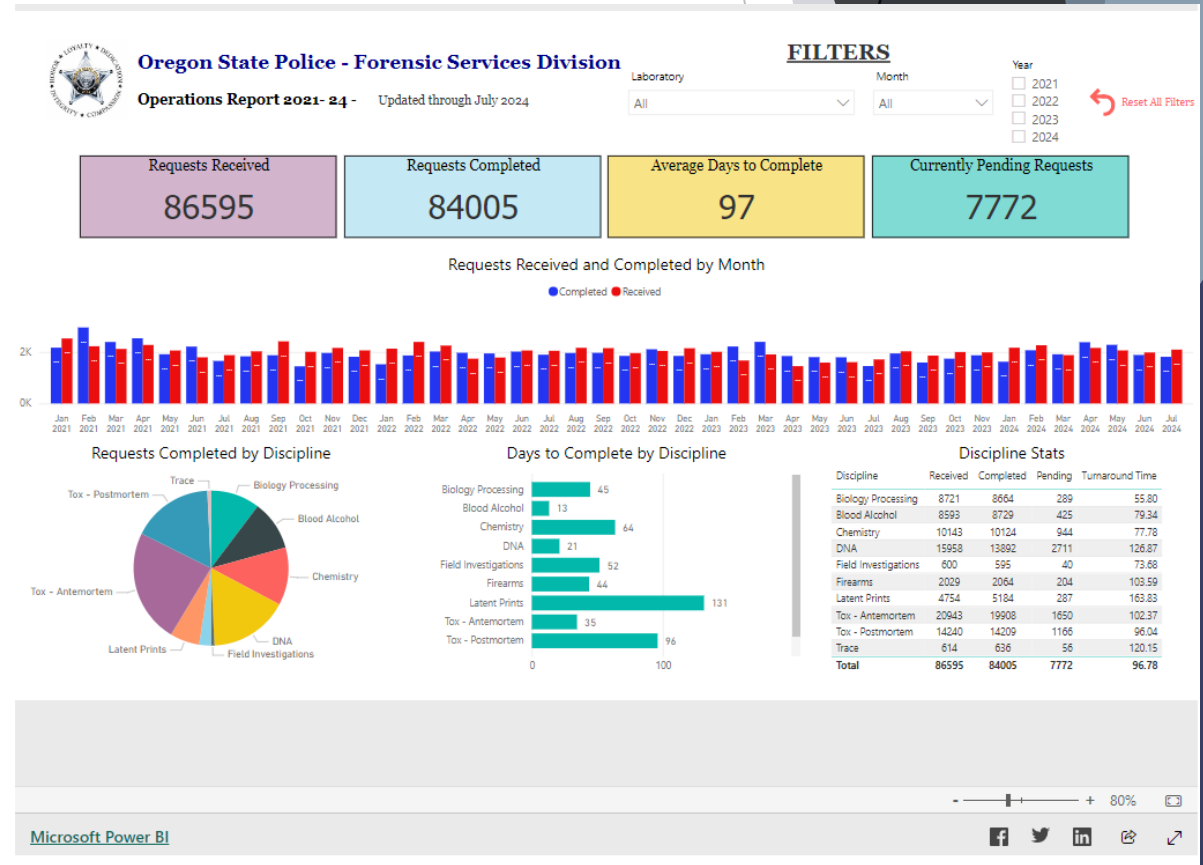
- ▶ Significant increase in scientific admissibility hearings (days of preparation for each one)



# Public Resources



<https://www.oregon.gov/osp/programs/forensics/Pages/operationaldata.aspx>





Questions?