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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AG Schimel Holds Intensive Sexual Assault Investigation Training**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel kicked off an intensive, trauma-informed sexual assault investigation training in Madison today for more than 50 law enforcement, advocates, sexual assault nurse examiners, prosecutors, victim/witness specialists, and other community partners.

“As a former sensitive crimes prosecutor, I knew when I was elected attorney general that there was more our state could do to create better outcomes for survivors,” said Attorney General Schimel. “This training, and others like it that DOJ has held, will strengthen trauma-informed support for survivors and sexual assault investigations around the state, therefore putting more perpetrators behind bars.”

The training, held at Madison College-Downtown, will last three days. Day one will examine the biological backdrop from which trauma reactions emerge, providing investigators, prosecutors, advocates, and other responders with a more complete understanding of how to respond to victims and how to investigate these cases more fully. Days two and three, for a law enforcement audience, will explore the research supporting the trauma-informed interview as the best means for obtaining the most accurate information from victims.

Since at least 1991, the basic officer training academy in Wisconsin included training on the investigation of sexual assault. In 2002, the state mandated the training academy include 12 hours on sexual assault. During the last fiscal year, 442 students successfully completed this basic training and received the 12 hours of training on sexual assault. However, many criminal justice professionals seek additional sexual assault trainings offered by DOJ and other public safety organizations, such as the Wisconsin Coalition of Sexual Assault (WCASA).

Since 2015, DOJ has provided free training on sexual assault throughout the state. These trainings - a two-day training on best practices for initial responders and a three-day training on advanced interviewing - are multidisciplinary, offered to law enforcement, victim advocates, prosecutors, SANE nurses, and other service providers. Attendees are trained on the neurobiology of trauma reactions, offender dynamics, evidence identification and preservation, and techniques for conducting trauma-informed interviews.

In 2017, training was made available to prosecutors in the state on how to present a victim of sexual assault in court, and a curriculum was developed to train instructors on child sex trafficking.

Attorney General Schimel has made supporting victims of sexual assault one of his top priorities. Under Attorney General Schimel's administration, DOJ has reformed sexual assault response protocols, advocated for legislation that protects survivors, trained communities to respond to sexual assault with a trauma-informed, victim-centered approach, and championed the testing of previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits in Wisconsin.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, nationwide.