Stop withdrawing rape cases, Lagos warns victims’ families

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The Lagos State Government has warned relatives of rape victims to stop withdrawing such cases from courts.  
  
The state Director of Public Prosecutions, Yinka Adeyemi, gave the warning on Tuesday at a webinar organised by the Directorate for Citizens’ Rights themed: ‘The crime of defilement: The role of parents, teachers and caregivers in ending the scourge’.  
  
Adeyemi, who spoke on the topic: ‘The crime of defilement from the prosecutor’s angle: Perseverance of evidence to secure a conviction’, urged parents of rape victims to always keep all evidence related to rape as they were crucial in the prosecution of suspects.  
  
According to her, courts in the state delivered 122 judgments on sexual offences from January to July 2020, adding that as part of strategies to combat the scourge of defilement and sexual offences in the state, a specialised prosecutor unit had been established to handle such matters.  
  
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She warned parents and guardians of victims of rape and defilement to stop withdrawing complaints from courts or law enforcement agencies as that would amount to the perversion of justice, which was an offence in the state.  
  
She said, “When issues of rape occur, timing is critical; sexual evidence should be collected within the first 72 hours; photographs of injury sustained or the scene of a crime should be taken; sexual victims should not take a bath or use the bathroom before undergoing medical examination; clothes worn should be preserved and put in a box bag and also the victim’s statement must be recorded.”  
  
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