

Sex Offender Registry Requirements Across the United States

What is the Sex Offender Registry?

Every state and U.S. territory requires those convicted of sex offenses to be added to a registry to be monitored and tracked after their release back into the community. Information about the offender is collected and shared with local and federal authorities, as well as the general public. Requirements and restrictions are often placed on registered sex offenders. That registration process is unique in each state and U.S. territory.

What is SORNA?

The Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) was passed in 2006 as part of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act to provide federal standards for jurisdictions to follow. SORNA calls for states and U.S. territories to meet minimum requirements for sex offender registration and notification.

Why Are the Requirements for Sex Offender Registration Different Everywhere?

While SORNA's guidelines streamlined registration and notification requirements across the country, these requirements are far from uniform. Each jurisdiction determines the details of their own registration process. This leaves a patchwork of rules for sex offenders that vary widely depending on where a registrant lives or works.

Where PIN Comes In

Probation Information Network developed a list of questions regarding the sex offender registration requirements across the country. These are questions that might concern the public, victims and their advocates, or those who are facing registration or are currently registered and their loved ones. We then searched the statutes or code of each jurisdiction for the laws surrounding sex offender registration and notification. Where necessary, we consulted with the law enforcement agency in charge of the jurisdiction's registry to provide clear and concise answers to the following questions:

- **What is the duration of registration?**

How long must a sex offender remain on the registry? The length of time a sex offender must comply with registration requirements varies widely depending on the jurisdiction where the registrant lives, and the level of the offense committed. All but 2 jurisdictions offer a path for eventual removal from the registry for at least some of their registrants.

- **Must the immediate community be notified directly, either by the offender or law enforcement?**

Every jurisdiction has passive community notification in the form of a public sex offender registry website. Concerned citizens are free to search the website and can sign up for email notifications if a sex offender moves into their neighborhood. Some jurisdictions go even further and require active notification, where either law enforcement or the offender themselves is required to directly

notify the immediate community that a sex offender is in the area. This can take many forms, including electronic, mail, or in-person notification, publication in local newspapers, and community meetings.

- **What are the residence distance restrictions?**

Are there any restrictions on where a registered sex offender can live? Some jurisdictions restrict registrants from living within a measured distance of certain places. This restriction could be for all registrants, or only for higher-level offenders or those under supervision. Some jurisdictions do not have a state-wide restriction but do allow local jurisdictions to enact their own.

- **What are the employment distance restrictions?**

Registered sex offenders are usually restricted from certain types of employment, and from working at establishments that specifically cater to minors. Some jurisdictions go even further and restrict registrants from working within a measured distance of certain places.

- **Is an employer's information included on the public registry?**

Returning citizens of every type need to find employment upon reentry, and sex offenders are no exception. Some jurisdictions include registrants' employment information on the public registry website. This could be the employer's address or in some cases the name of the employer.

- **Are online identifiers included on the public registry?**

Some jurisdictions require registered sex offenders to report any identifiers they use online, such as email addresses and social media user names. In some jurisdictions that information is included on the public registry website, separate from the registrant's profile, in a feature that allows the public to search by specific identifiers.

- **Is a state-issued ID required to be labeled?**

Some jurisdictions require a state-issued ID, such as a driver's license, to be labeled to identify the holder as a registered sex offender. This label could be the words "Sex Offender" printed on the ID in a prominent place or a more subtle designation known to law enforcement.

- **What is the cost of registration?**

Is there a fee to register as a sex offender? Some jurisdictions pass on some of their administrative costs to the registrants. This could be a one-time fee paid only upon initial registration, or an ongoing fee paid annually or quarterly. Some jurisdictions charge a fee every time a registrant updates their information.

- **How long can a registrant be in the state for work or education before registration is required?**

Does a sex offender have to register if they work or go to school in a different state? It depends on the state, and how long the registrant will be there. Some jurisdictions require registrants to notify authorities immediately, while others allow limited stays without requiring registration. Registrants currently under supervision usually need permission from their Parole or Probation Officer before traveling and should always consult their supervising officer.

- **How long can a registrant visit the state before registration is required?**

Can a registered sex offender go on vacation? Does a sex offender have to register if they visit a different state? It depends on the state, and how long the registrant will be there. Some jurisdictions require registrants to notify authorities immediately, while others allow limited stays without requiring registration. Registrants currently under supervision usually need permission from their Parole or Probation Officer before traveling and should always consult their supervising officer.

The answers provided are taken directly from the laws found on the state or territory's legislative website or, where necessary, from the website of the law enforcement agency in charge of the jurisdiction's registry. In some cases, we contacted state or territory officials for clarification and have directly quoted those conversations.

Disclaimer

While we stand by our research, it is for informational purposes only. It should not be considered legal advice and, while we strive to provide accurate and up to date information, it is not guaranteed to be complete or correct. We provide links to each jurisdiction's legislative and law enforcement websites and maintain a directory of lawyers who specialize in sex offender registration laws. For those currently under supervision, consult with your Parole or Probation Officer for guidance.

Arkansas Sex Offender Registry Requirements

What is the duration of registration?

AR Code § 12-12-919

(a) Lifetime registration is required for a sex offender who:

- (1) Was found to have committed an aggravated sex offense;
- (2) Was determined by the court to be or assessed as a Level 4 sexually dangerous person;
- (3) Has pleaded guilty or nolo contendere to or been found guilty of a second or subsequent sex offense under a separate case number, not multiple counts on the same charge;
- (4) Was convicted of rape by forcible compulsion, § 5-14-103(a)(1), or other substantially similar offense in another jurisdiction; or
- (5) Has pleaded guilty or nolo contendere to or been found guilty of failing to comply with registration and reporting requirements under § 12-12-904 three (3) or more times.

(b)(1)(A)(i)(a) Any other sex offender required to register under this subchapter may apply for an order terminating the obligation to register to the sentencing court fifteen (15) years after the date the sex offender first registered in Arkansas.

(b)(1)(A)(i)(b) If the sex offender was incarcerated in a correctional facility, the date the sex offender first registered in Arkansas is the date the sex offender registered upon his or her release from the correctional facility.

(ii) After fifteen (15) years of having been registered as a sex offender in Arkansas, a sex offender sentenced in another state but permanently residing in Arkansas may apply for an order terminating the obligation to register in the circuit court of the county in which the sex offender resides or has last resided within this state.

(c) If a court denies a petition to terminate the obligation to register under this section, the sex offender may not file a new petition to terminate the obligation to register under this section before three (3) years from the date the order denying the previous petition was filed.

Must the immediate community be notified directly, either by the offender or law enforcement?

No.

What are the residence distance restrictions?

AR Code § 5-14-128

(a) A sex offender who is required to register under the Sex Offender Registration Act of 1997, § 12-12-901 et seq., and who has been assessed as a:

(1) Level 3 or Level 4 offender may not knowingly reside within two thousand feet (2,000') of the property on which a public or private elementary or secondary school, public park, youth center, or daycare facility is located; or

(2) Level 4 offender may not knowingly reside within two thousand feet (2,000') of a church or other place of worship.

(b)

(1) It is not a violation of this section if the property on which the sex offender resides is owned and occupied by the sex offender and was purchased prior to the date on which the public or private elementary or secondary school, public park, youth center, daycare facility, or church or other place of worship was established.

(2) The exclusion in subdivision (b)(1) of this section does not apply to a sex offender who pleads guilty or nolo contendere to or is found guilty of another sex offense after the public or private elementary or secondary school, public park, youth center, daycare facility, or church or other place of worship is established.

(c)

(1)

(A) With respect to a public or private elementary or secondary school or a daycare facility, it is not a violation of this section if the sex offender resides on property he or she owns prior to July 16, 2003.

(B) With respect to a public park or youth center, it is not a violation of this section if the sex offender resides on property he or she owns prior to July 31, 2007.

(2)

(A) The exclusion in subdivision (c)(1)(A) of this section does not apply to a sex offender who pleads guilty or nolo contendere to or is found guilty of another sex offense after July 16, 2003.

(B) The exclusion in subdivision (c)(1)(B) of this section does not apply to a sex offender who pleads guilty or nolo contendere to or is found guilty of another sex offense on or after July 31, 2007.

(3) With respect to a church or other place of worship, it is not a violation of this section if the sex offender resides on property he or she owns prior to July 22, 2015.

(f) As used in this section:

(3) "Youth center" means any building, structure, or facility owned or operated by a not-for-profit organization or by this state or a county, city, or town in this state for use by minors to promote the health, safety, or general welfare of the minors.

What are the employment distance restrictions?

None.

Is an employer's information included on the public registry?

Yes, for Levels 2, 3, & 4

AR Code § 12-12-913

(j)(1)(A) The following information concerning a sex offender registered under this subchapter who is classified as a Level 3 or Level 4 offender by the Community Notification Assessment shall be made public:

(ix) The street name and block number, county, city, and zip code where the sex offender is employed;

(x) Any institution of higher education in which the sex offender is enrolled;

(j)(1)(B) If a sex offender registered under this subchapter was eighteen (18) years of age or older at the time of the commission of the sex offense that required registration under this subchapter and the victim of the sex offense was fourteen (14) years of age or younger and the sex offender is classified as a Level 2 offender by the Community Notification Assessment, the following information concerning the registered sex offender shall be made public:

- (ix) The street name and block number, county, city, and zip code where the sex offender is employed;
- (x) Any institution of higher education in which the sex offender is enrolled;

Are online identifiers included on the public registry?

While offenders must register email addresses and social media account information [AR Code § 12-12-906(g)(3)], this information is not included on the public registry.

Is a state-issued ID required to be labeled?

No.

What is the cost of registration?

State-mandated fees are assessed by the court at the time of conviction. Any registered offender relocating to Arkansas is subject to two fees totaling \$500 at the time of registration.

– Arkansas Crime Information Center

AR Code § 12-12-906

(c)(1)(B)(ii) Any offender required to register as a sex offender who is entering the State of Arkansas must provide a deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) sample, that is, a blood sample or saliva sample, upon registration and must pay the mandatory fee of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) to be deposited into the DNA Detection Fund established by § 12-12-1119.

AR Code § 12-12-910

(b)(1) A person who relocates to this state and was convicted of an offense in another state that requires registration in this state shall pay a fee of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) within ninety (90) days from the date of registration.

How long can a registrant be in the state for work or education before registration is required?

AR Code § 12-12-903

(10)(A) “Residency” means the place where a person lives notwithstanding that there may be an intent to move or return at some future date to another place.

(10)(B) “Residency” also includes:

- (i) A place of employment;
- (ii) A place of training;
- (iii) A place of education; or
- (iv) A temporary residence or domicile in which a person resides for an aggregate of five (5) or more consecutive days during a calendar year;

AR Code § 12-12-906

(a)(2)(B)(ii) A nonresident worker or student who enters the state shall register in compliance with the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-248, as it existed on January 1, 2007.

How long can a registrant visit the state before registration is required?

AR Code § 12-12-903

(10)(A) “Residency” means the place where a person lives notwithstanding that there may be an intent to move or return at some future date to another place.

(10)(B) "Residency" also includes:

(i) A place of employment;

(ii) A place of training;

(iii) A place of education; or

(iv) A temporary residence or domicile in which a person resides for an aggregate of five (5) or more consecutive days during a calendar year;