

# 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.

# **Connecticut Sex Offender Registry Requirements**

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

By law, the required registration period is based on the offense as follows:

1. generally, 10 years for the first conviction, and lifetime for a subsequent conviction of a criminal offense against a victim who is a minor (CGS § 54-251);
2. generally, 10 years for the first conviction, and lifetime for a subsequent conviction of a nonviolent sexual offense (CGS § 54-251); and
3. lifetime for sexually violent offenses (CGS § 54-252).

Under the law, the court may also impose registration for 10 years for a felony the court finds was committed for a sexual purpose (CGS § 54-254)

– Summarized by Connecticut Office of Legislative Research. The full statutes can be found at [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_969.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_969.htm).

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

No.

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

Connecticut does not impose a blanket residency restriction on sex offenders. However, while under community supervision (i.e. probation or parole), registered sex offenders must reside in locations pre-approved by probation and parole officers. Courts can also set conditions when sentencing an offender.

– Connecticut Office of Legislative Research

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

None.

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

No.

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

No.

CT Gen Stat § 54-258

(a)(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection, a registrant's electronic mail address, instant message address or other similar Internet communication identifier shall not be a public record, except that the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection may release such identifier for law enforcement or security purposes in accordance with regulations adopted by the department. The department shall adopt regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to specify the

circumstances under which and the persons to whom such identifiers may be released including, but not limited to, providers of electronic communication service or remote computing service, as those terms are defined in section 54-260b, and operators of Internet web sites, and the procedure therefor.

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

No.

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

There is no state-mandated fee, though fees may be assessed by local law enforcement.

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

CT Gen Stat § 54-253

(c) Any person not a resident of this state who is registered as a sexual offender under the laws of any other state and who is employed in this state, carries on a vocation in this state or is a student in this state, shall, without undue delay after the commencement of such employment, vocation or education in this state, register such person's name, identifying factors and criminal history record, locations visited on a recurring basis, and such person's residence address, if any, in this state, residence address in such person's home state and electronic mail address, instant message address or other similar Internet communication identifier, if any, with the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection on such forms and in such locations as said commissioner shall direct and shall maintain such registration until such employment, vocation or education terminates or until such person is released from registration as a sexual offender in such other state. If such person terminates such person's employment, vocation or education in this state, changes such person's address in this state or establishes or changes an electronic mail address, instant message address or other similar Internet communication identifier such person shall, without undue delay, notify the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection in writing of such termination, new address or identifier.

CT Gen Stat § 54-250

(13) "Employed" or "carries on a vocation" means employment that is full-time or part-time for more than fourteen days, or for a total period of time of more than thirty days during any calendar year, whether financially compensated, volunteered or for the purpose of government or educational benefit.

(14) "Student" means a person who is enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis, in any public or private educational institution, including any secondary school, trade or professional institution or institution of higher learning.

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

CT Gen Stat § 54-253

(d) Any person not a resident of this state who is registered as a sexual offender under the laws of any other state and who travels in this state on a recurring basis for periods of less than five days shall notify the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection of such person's temporary residence in this state and of a telephone number at which such person may be contacted.

For visits less than 5 days: Information will be registered for internal law enforcement use only and will not be included on the online registry. For visits 5 days or longer: Full, in-person registration is required. Information will be temporarily added to the online registry and removed when the visiting registrant leaves the state.

– Connecticut State Police Sex Offender Registry