

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.

Minnesota Sex Offender Registry Requirements

What is the duration of registration?

MN Stat § 243.166

1. 6. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 609.165, subdivision 1, and except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d), a person required to register under this section shall continue to comply with this section until ten years have elapsed since the person initially registered in connection with the offense, or until the probation, supervised release, or conditional release period expires, whichever occurs later. For a person required to register under this section who is committed under section 253B.18, Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 253B.185, or chapter 253D, the ten-year registration period does not include the period of commitment.

(b) If a person required to register under this section fails to provide the person's primary address as required by subdivision 3, paragraph (b), fails to comply with the requirements of subdivision 3a, fails to provide information as required by subdivision 4a, or fails to return the verification form referenced in subdivision 4 within ten days, the commissioner of public safety shall require the person to continue to register for an additional period of five years. This five-year period is added to the end of the offender's registration period.

(c) If a person required to register under this section is incarcerated due to a conviction for a new offense or following a revocation of probation, supervised release, or conditional release for any offense, the person shall continue to register until ten years have elapsed since the person was last released from incarceration or until the person's probation, supervised release, or conditional release period expires, whichever occurs later.

(d) A person shall continue to comply with this section for the life of that person:

(1) if the person is convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for any offense for which registration is required under subdivision 1b, or any offense from another state or any federal offense similar to the offenses described in subdivision 1b, and the person has a prior conviction or adjudication for an offense for which registration was or would have been required under subdivision 1b, or an offense from another state or a federal offense similar to an offense described in subdivision 1b;

(2) if the person is required to register based upon a conviction or delinquency adjudication for an offense under section 609.185, paragraph (a), clause (2), or a similar statute from another state or the United States;

(3) if the person is required to register based upon a conviction for an offense under section 609.342, subdivision 1, clause (a) to (c) or (e), or subdivision 1a, clause (a) to (e) or (h); 609.343, subdivision 1, clause (a) to (c) or (e), or subdivision 1a, clause (a) to (e) or (h); 609.344, subdivision 1, clause (a) or (c), or subdivision 1a, clause (a), (c), (g), or (h); or 609.345,

subdivision 1, clause (a) or (c), or subdivision 1a, clause (a), (c), (g), or (h); or a statute from another state or the United States similar to the offenses described in this clause; or

(4) if the person is required to register under subdivision 1b, paragraph (c), following commitment pursuant to a court commitment under Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 253B.185, chapter 253D, Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 526.10, or a similar law of another state or the United States.

(e) A person described in subdivision 1b, paragraph (b), who is required to register under the laws of a state in which the person has been previously convicted or adjudicated delinquent, shall register under this section for the time period required by the state of conviction or adjudication unless a longer time period is required elsewhere in this section.

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

MN Stat § 244.052

4. (a) The law enforcement agency in the area where the predatory offender resides, expects to reside, is employed, or is regularly found, shall disclose to the public any information regarding the offender contained in the report forwarded to the agency under subdivision 3, paragraph (f), that is relevant and necessary to protect the public and to counteract the offender's dangerousness, consistent with the guidelines in paragraph (b). The extent of the information disclosed and the community to whom disclosure is made must relate to the level of danger posed by the offender, to the offender's pattern of offending behavior, and to the need of community members for information to enhance their individual and collective safety.

(b) The law enforcement agency shall employ the following guidelines in determining the scope of disclosure made under this subdivision:

(1) if the offender is assigned to risk level I, the agency may maintain information regarding the offender within the agency and may disclose it to other law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the agency may disclose the information to any victims of or witnesses to the offense committed by the offender. The agency shall disclose the information to victims of the offense committed by the offender who have requested disclosure and to adult members of the offender's immediate household;

(2) if the offender is assigned to risk level II, the agency also may disclose the information to agencies and groups that the offender is likely to encounter for the purpose of securing those institutions and protecting individuals in their care while they are on or near the premises of the institution. These agencies and groups include the staff members of public and private educational institutions, day care establishments, and establishments and organizations that primarily serve individuals likely to be victimized by the offender. The agency also may disclose the information to individuals the agency believes are likely to be victimized by the offender. The agency's belief shall be based on the offender's pattern of offending or victim preference as documented in the information provided by the department of corrections or human services;

(3) if the offender is assigned to risk level III, the agency shall disclose the information to the persons and entities described in clauses (1) and (2) and to other members of the community whom the offender is likely to encounter, unless the law enforcement agency determines that public safety would be compromised by the disclosure or that a more limited disclosure is necessary to protect the identity of the victim.

(j) When a school, day care facility, or other entity or program that primarily educates or serves children receives notice under paragraph (b), clause (3), that a level III predatory offender resides or works in the surrounding community, notice to parents must be made as provided in this paragraph. If the predatory offender identified in the notice is participating in programs offered by the facility that require or allow the

person to interact with children other than the person's children, the principal or head of the entity must notify parents with children at the facility of the contents of the notice received pursuant to this section. The immunity provisions of subdivision 7 apply to persons disclosing information under this paragraph.

What are the residence distance restrictions?

There are no provisions in M.S. § 243.166, Minnesota's registration law, which prohibit registered offenders from living in the vicinity of a school or daycare.

Restricting a registrant's residency can be a condition of the registrant's probation or parole; however, if the person is no longer on probation or parole, those restrictions are no longer effective. Inquiries regarding a registrant's residency restrictions should be directed to the registrant's probation or parole officer.

While there is not a State law regarding residency restrictions for registered offenders, some cities have passed local ordinances. Citizens with questions regarding their local ordinances should contact their local City Hall or Police Department.

– Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

MN Stat § 244.052

3. (k) If the committee assigns a predatory offender to risk level III, the committee shall determine whether residency restrictions shall be included in the conditions of the offender's release based on the offender's pattern of offending behavior.

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.

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?

MN Stat § 243.166

1. 1b. (b) A person also shall register under this section if:

- (1) the person was charged with or petitioned for an offense in another state similar to an offense or involving similar circumstances to an offense described in paragraph (a), clause (1), (2), or (3), and convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for that offense or another offense arising out of the same set of circumstances;
- (2) the person enters this state to reside, work, or attend school, or enters this state and remains for 14 days or longer or for an aggregate period of time exceeding 30 days during any calendar year; and
- (3) ten years have not elapsed since the person was released from confinement or, if the person was not confined, since the person was convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for the offense that triggers registration, unless the person is subject to a longer registration period under the laws of

another state in which the person has been convicted or adjudicated, or is subject to lifetime registration.

If a person described in this paragraph is subject to a longer registration period in another state or is subject to lifetime registration, the person shall register for that time period regardless of when the person was released from confinement, convicted, or adjudicated delinquent.

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

MN Stat § 243.166

1. 1b. (b) A person also shall register under this section if:

(1) the person was charged with or petitioned for an offense in another state similar to an offense or involving similar circumstances to an offense described in paragraph (a), clause (1), (2), or (3), and convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for that offense or another offense arising out of the same set of circumstances;

(2) the person enters this state to reside, work, or attend school, or enters this state and remains for 14 days or longer or for an aggregate period of time exceeding 30 days during any calendar year; and

(3) ten years have not elapsed since the person was released from confinement or, if the person was not confined, since the person was convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for the offense that triggers registration, unless the person is subject to a longer registration period under the laws of another state in which the person has been convicted or adjudicated, or is subject to lifetime registration.

If a person described in this paragraph is subject to a longer registration period in another state or is subject to lifetime registration, the person shall register for that time period regardless of when the person was released from confinement, convicted, or adjudicated delinquent.