

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.

New Hampshire Sex Offender Registry Requirements

What is the duration of registration?

RSA 651-B:6

I. All tier II or tier III offenders shall be registered for life.

II. All tier I offenders shall be registered for a 10-year period from the date of release, provided that any such registration period shall not run concurrently with any registration period resulting from a subsequent violation or attempted violation of an offense for which the person is required to register.

III. (a) (1) Except as provided in paragraph V, all tier III offenders shall remain on the public list contained in RSA 651-B:7 for life.

(2) A tier II offender may petition the superior court to have his or her name and information removed from the public list. The petition shall not be filed prior to the completion of all the terms and conditions of the sentence and in no case earlier than 15 years after the date of release. The petition shall be accompanied by a risk assessment prepared by a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist at the offender's expense. The court may grant the petition if the offender has not been convicted of any felony, class A misdemeanor, sex offense, or offense against a child, has successfully completed any periods of supervised release, probation, or parole, and has successfully completed an appropriate sex offender treatment program as determined by the court. If the court denies the petition, the offender shall not file another petition for 5 years from the date of denial.

(3) A tier I offender may petition the superior court to have his or her name and other information removed from the public list. The petition shall not be filed prior to the completion of all the terms and conditions of the sentence and in no case earlier than 5 years after the date of release. The petition shall be accompanied by a risk assessment prepared by a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist at the offender's expense. The court may grant the petition if the offender has not been convicted of any felony, class A misdemeanor, sexual offense, or offense against a child, has successfully completed any periods of supervised release, probation, or parole, and has successfully completed an appropriate sex offender treatment program as determined by the court.

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

No.

What are the residence distance restrictions?

None.

What are the employment distance restrictions?

None.

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

No.

RSA 651-B:7 III

(c) The public list shall not include:

- (4) The name of the employer or school which the offender attends.

Are online identifiers included on the public registry?

While offenders must register online identifiers [RSA 651-B:4-a], 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?

RSA 651-B:11

I. An offender shall pay a fee of \$50 to the department within 10 days of the registration that occurs within the month of the anniversary of his or her birth. Such payment shall be made in person or shall be mailed to the department.

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

RSA 651-B:4

I. Any sexual offender or offender against children residing in this state shall report in person to the local law enforcement agency. The offender shall report in person as set forth in this section within 5 business days after the person's release, or within 5 business days after the person's date of establishment of residence, employment, or schooling in New Hampshire.

II. Any nonresident offender shall report in person to the local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the place of employment or school. In the event a nonresident offender required to register under this paragraph does not have a principal place of employment in this state, the offender shall register in person with the department in Concord.

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

RSA 651-B:4

I. Any sexual offender or offender against children residing in this state shall report in person to the local law enforcement agency. The offender shall report in person as set forth in this section within 5 business days after the person's release, or within 5 business days after the person's date of establishment of residence, employment, or schooling in New Hampshire.

II. Any nonresident offender shall report in person to the local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the place of employment or school. In the event a nonresident offender required to register under this paragraph does not have a principal place of employment in this state, the offender shall register in person with the department in Concord.

RSA 651-B:1

XIII. Notwithstanding RSA 21:6-a, "residence" means a place where a person is living or temporarily staying for more than a total of 5 days during a one-month period, such as a shelter or structure that can be located by a street address, including, but not limited to, houses, apartment buildings, motels, hotels, homeless shelters, and recreational and other vehicles.