

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.

Oklahoma Sex Offender Registry Requirements

What is the duration of registration?

57 OK Stat § 57-583

D. When a person has been convicted or received probation within the State of Oklahoma, the person shall be required to register with the local law enforcement authority as follows:

1. For a total period of fifteen (15) years, if the level of the person is one;
2. For a total period of twenty-five (25) years, if the level of the person is two; and
3. For life, if the level of the person is three or the person has been classified as a habitual or aggravated sex offender.

The registration period shall begin from the date of completion of the sentence and shall not conclude until the offender has been in compliance for the total amount of time required by this act. The information received pursuant to the registration with the local law enforcement authority required by this section shall be maintained by such authority for at least ten (10) years from the date that the offender completed the obligations under this act.

E. Any person assigned a level of one who has been registered for a period of ten (10) years and who has not been arrested or convicted for any felony or misdemeanor offense since being released from confinement, may petition the district court in the jurisdiction where the person resides for the purpose of removing the level designation and allowing the person to no longer be subject to the registration requirements of the Sex Offenders Registration Act.

G. For the purpose of this section, the "date of the completion of the sentence" means the day an offender completes all incarceration, probation and parole pertaining to the sentence.

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

57 OK Stat § 57-584

O. 3. Upon registration of any person designated as a habitual or aggravated sex offender, pursuant to this subsection, a local law enforcement authority shall notify, by any method of communication it deems appropriate, anyone that the local law enforcement authority determines appropriate, including, but not limited to:

- a. the family of the habitual or aggravated sex offender,
- b. any prior victim of the habitual or aggravated sex offender,
- c. residential neighbors and churches, community parks, schools, convenience stores, businesses and other places that children or other potential victims may frequent, and
- d. a nursing facility, a specialized facility, a residential care home, a continuum-of-care facility, an assisted living center, and an adult day care facility.

What are the residence distance restrictions?

57 OK Stat § 57-590

A. It is unlawful for any person registered pursuant to the Sex Offenders Registration Act to reside, either temporarily or permanently, within a two-thousand-foot radius of any public or private school site, educational institution, property or campsite used by an organization whose primary purpose is working with children, a playground or park that is established, operated or supported in whole or in part by a homeowners' association or a city, town, county, state, federal or tribal government, a licensed child care center or family child care home as defined in the Oklahoma Child Care Facilities Licensing Act or the residence of his or her victim. Establishment of a licensed child care center, family child care home or park in the vicinity of the residence of a registered sex offender will not require the relocation of the sex offender or the sale of the property. On June 7, 2006, the distance indicated in this section shall be measured from the nearest property line of the residence of the person to the nearest property line of the public or private school site, educational institution, property or campsite used by an organization whose primary purpose is working with children, playground, park, licensed child care center, family child care home or residence of his or her victim; provided, any nonprofit organization established and housing sex offenders prior to the effective date of this provision shall be allowed to continue its operation.

Nothing in this provision shall require any person to sell or otherwise dispose of any real estate or home acquired or owned prior to the conviction of the person as a sex offender.

What are the employment distance restrictions?

None.

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

Yes. In some cases, the name and phone number of the employer is included.

Are online identifiers included on the public registry?

While offenders must register online identifiers [57 OK Stat § 57-584 A. 9. and D. 5], this information is not included on the public registry.

Is a state-issued ID required to be labeled?

Yes.

47 OK Stat § 47-6-111

E. 1. The Department shall develop a procedure whereby a person applying for an original, renewal or replacement Class A, B, C or D driver license or identification card who is required to register as a convicted sex offender with the Department of Corrections pursuant to the provisions of the Sex Offenders Registration Act and who the Department of Corrections designates as an aggravated or habitual offender pursuant to subsection J of Section 584 of Title 57 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall be issued a license or card bearing the words "Sex Offender".

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?

57 OK Stat § 57-583

A. Any person who becomes subject to the provisions of the Sex Offenders Registration Act on or after November 1, 1989, shall register, in person, as follows:

2. With the local law enforcement authority having jurisdiction in the area where the person resides or intends to reside for seven (7) consecutive days or fourteen (14) days in a sixty-day period, or longer, calculated beginning with the first day. The registration is required within three (3) days after entering the jurisdiction of the law enforcement authority; and

3. With the Department of Corrections and the local law enforcement authority no less than three (3) business days prior to abandoning or moving from the address of the previous registration, or within three (3) business days of changing or terminating employment, or changing enrollment status as a student.

H. Any person who resides in another state and who has been convicted of an offense or received a deferred judgment for an offense in this state, or in another jurisdiction, which offense if committed or attempted in this state would have been punishable as one or more of the offenses listed in Section 582 of this title, and who is the spouse of a person living in this state shall be registered as follows:

1. With the Department of Corrections when the person enters and intends to be in the state for any purpose for five (5) consecutive days or longer, calculated beginning with the first day or an aggregate period of five (5) days or longer in a calendar year. Such registration is required within two (2) days after entering the state; and

2. With the local law enforcement authority having jurisdiction in the area where the person intends to reside or to stay within this state for two (2) consecutive days or longer, calculated beginning with the first day. The registration is required with local law enforcement within two (2) days after entering the jurisdiction of the law enforcement authority.

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

57 OK Stat § 57-583

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2. With the local law enforcement authority having jurisdiction in the area where the person intends to reside or to stay within this state for two (2) consecutive days or longer, calculated beginning with the first day. The registration is required with local law enforcement within two (2) days after entering the jurisdiction of the law enforcement authority.