PIN | PROBATION INFORMATION NETWORK

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

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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.

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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.

Kentucky Sex Offender Registry Requirements

What is the duration of registration?

KRS 17.520

(1) A registrant, upon his or her release by the court, the Parole Board, the cabinet, or any detention facility, shall be required to register for a period of time required under this section.

(2) (a) Lifetime registration is required for:

1. Any person who has been convicted of kidnapping, as set forth in KRS 509.040, when the victim is under the age of eighteen (18) at the time of the commission of the offense, except when the offense is committed by a parent;
2. Any person who has been convicted of unlawful imprisonment, as set forth in KRS 509.020, when the victim is under the age of eighteen (18) at the time of the commission of the offense, except when the offense is committed by a parent;
3. Any person convicted of a sex crime:
    a. Who has one (1) or more prior convictions of a felony criminal offense against a victim who is a minor; or
    b. Who has one (1) or more prior sex crime convictions;
4. Any person who has been convicted of two (2) or more felony criminal offenses against a victim who is a minor;
5. Any person who has been convicted of:
    a. Rape in the first degree under KRS 510.040; or
    b. Sodomy in the first degree under KRS 510.070; and
6. Any sexually violent predator.

(3) All other registrants are required to register for twenty (20) years following discharge from confinement or twenty (20) years following the maximum discharge date on probation, shock probation, conditional discharge, parole, or other form of early release, whichever period is greater.

(4) If a person required to register under this section is reincarcerated for another offense or as the result of having violated the terms of probation, parole, postincarceration supervision, or conditional discharge, the registration requirements and the remaining period of time for which the registrant shall register are tolled during the reincarceration.

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

No.

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What are the residence distance restrictions?

KRS 17.545

(1) No registrant, as defined in KRS 17.500, shall reside within one thousand (1,000) feet of a high school, middle school, elementary school, preschool, publicly owned or leased playground, or licensed day care facility. The measurement shall be taken in a straight line from the nearest property line to the nearest property line of the registrant's place of residence.

(3) For purposes of this section:

(a) The registrant shall have the duty to ascertain whether any property listed in subsection (1) of this section is within one thousand (1,000) feet of the registrant's residence; and

(b) If a new facility opens, the registrant shall be presumed to know and, within ninety (90) days, shall comply with this section.

(7) The prohibition against a registrant:

(a) Residing within one thousand (1,000) feet of a publicly leased playground as outlined in subsection (1) of this section;

shall not operate retroactively.

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 fee at all associated with sex offender registration in KY at this time.

– Kentucky State Police SOR

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

KRS 17.510

(7) (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, if a person is required to register under federal law or the laws of another state or territory, or if the person has been convicted of an offense in a court of the United States, in a court martial of the United States Armed Forces, or under the laws of another state or territory that would require registration if committed in this Commonwealth, that person upon changing residence from the other state or territory of the United States to the Commonwealth or upon entering the Commonwealth for employment, to carry on a vocation, or as a student shall comply with the registration requirement of this section, including the requirements of subsection (4) of this section, and shall register within five (5) working days with the appropriate local probation and parole office in the county of residence, employment, vocation, or schooling. A person required to register under federal law or the laws of another state or territory shall be presumed to know of the duty to register in the Commonwealth. As used in this subsection, "employment" or "carry on a vocation" includes employment that is full-time or part-time for a period exceeding fourteen (14) days or for an aggregate period of time exceeding thirty (30) days during any calendar year, whether financially compensated, volunteered, or for the purpose of government or educational benefit. As used in this subsection, "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 education.

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

KRS 17.510

(7) (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, if a person is required to register under federal law or the laws of another state or territory, or if the person has been convicted of an offense in a court of the United States, in a court martial of the United States Armed Forces, or under the laws of another state or territory that would require registration if committed in this Commonwealth, that person upon changing residence from the other state or territory of the United States to the Commonwealth or upon entering the Commonwealth for employment, to carry on a vocation, or as a student shall comply with the registration requirement of this section, including the requirements of subsection (4) of this section, and shall register within five (5) working days with the appropriate local probation and parole office in the county of residence, employment, vocation, or schooling. A person required to register under federal law or the laws of another state or territory shall be presumed to know of the duty to register in the Commonwealth. As used in this subsection, "employment" or "carry on a vocation" includes employment that is full-time or part-time for a period exceeding fourteen (14) days or for an aggregate period of time exceeding thirty (30) days during any calendar year, whether financially compensated, volunteered, or for the purpose of government or educational benefit. As used in this subsection, "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 education.

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