

Wisconsin Sex Offender Registry

This information sheet provides a general overview of sex offender registration. For more information, please contact the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault or the Wisconsin Department of Corrections.

WHAT IS THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY?

The Sex Offender Registry is an accessible database maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. It is designed to protect the public by providing a means for monitoring and tracking the whereabouts of sex offenders in the community.

NOTE: While the bulk of the Registry requirements became effective December 25, 1993, some were added in later years. Thus, not all offenders are required to comply with the same provisions.

WHO IS PLACED ON THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY? (The following list is not exhaustive.)

- Individuals convicted or adjudicated for a sex crime in Wisconsin
- Individuals who are found not guilty of a sex crime by reason of mental disease or defect
- Individuals who are found to be sex predators by law in Wisconsin
- Individuals who, although they aren't found guilty of a sex crime, were convicted in Wisconsin of certain crimes that were found by a court to be sexually motivated and for whom registration is necessary to protect the public
- Individuals who were convicted by another state, the federal government, the military, or a tribal court for crimes that are comparable to sex crimes in Wisconsin
- Individuals who are on the sex offender registry in other states but who now reside, work, or attend school in Wisconsin
- Juveniles who were adjudicated delinquent in another state based on a sex offense and who are under supervision in Wisconsin under the Interstate Compact for the placement of juveniles

In addition, Wisconsin's Act 137 added an optional registry requirement for "video voyeurism" crimes. If the court finds that an individual has violated chapter 942.08 (invasion of privacy) or 942.09 (representations depicting nudity) the court may require the individual to comply with sex offender reporting requirements if it determines that the underlying conduct was "sexually motivated" and that it is in the interest of public protection. For more information, see WCASA's "Video Voyeurism" Information Sheet.

WHAT IS A SEX CRIME?

Over 30 crimes are defined as "sex crimes" that require registration under the circumstances described above. They include but are not limited to: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degree sexual assault, 1st and 2nd degree sexual assault of a child, as well as other felonies.

ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS TO REGISTRATION?

Yes. In general, the Registry exempts offenders who are under 19 years old and commit certain crimes against victims close to the offender's age. The exemption only applies if the offense involved no force or violence. Also, juveniles adjudicated delinquent in some circumstances may be able to ask the court for an exception to registration.

HOW LONG DO OFFENDERS REMAIN ON THE REGISTRY?

In general, most individuals – including juveniles – are required to register for 15 years after discharge from parole or supervision, or from prison after completing the sentence for the sex offense. However, individuals placed under lifetime supervision, offenders with multiple convictions, sex predators under Wisconsin law, or offenders convicted of 1st or 2nd degree sexual assault, 1st or 2nd degree sexual assault of a child, or repeated acts of sexual assault of a child may be required to register for life. This list is not exhaustive and lifetime registration may be ordered in other situations.

WHO CAN ACCESS THE REGISTRY?

Victims of crimes, law enforcement officials, the general public, and interested organizations can access the Registry, but not all information on the registry is available to each of these groups. For example, no information about minors is accessible to the public, and no information about juvenile adjudications is accessible to the public.

WHERE DO I FIND THE REGISTRY?

The Registry is accessible by phone at 1-800-398-2403 or the internet at <http://offender.doc.state.wi.us/public>. Phone access requires the caller to provide detailed offender information and provides offender-specific information. Internet access can provide offender-specific information and can also provide information about sex offenders by location.

WCASA is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 56 sexual assault service provider (SASP) agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to victims of sexual assault and their families. For information sheets on other topics and for more information about sexual assault, please visit our website. This sheet may be reproduced in its original format only.

This information does not constitute legal advice.

Please note that this is an abridged information sheet; the statutes have not been printed in their entirety due to space restrictions.