

Sex Offender Registry

Backgrounder

I. Sex Offenders Registration Act Overview

The Michigan Sex Offender Registry (SOR) is a database containing the names, addresses and listed offense information of all persons in Michigan convicted of certain sexual offenses. The complete SOR is only available for law enforcement purposes through the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN).

The SOR was established in 1994 by the Michigan Sex Offenders Registration Act (Public Acts 286, 287, 294 and 355 of 1994). The Act created the database in response to the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act (42 USC 14071 et seq.) of 1994. This federal act required states to establish specific requirements for persons convicted of certain crimes against minors and convicted of sexually violent offenses.

The Michigan SOR Act also established the Michigan State Police (MSP) as the repository of SOR data and the keeper of the registry. As such, the department works closely with the legislature to ensure any changes made to the Sex Offender Registration Act comply with federal requirements.

In addition, MSP posts, like other local law enforcement agencies, serve as locations where sex offenders can verify and/or change their addresses. MSP posts also participate in sex offender sweeps and arrest absconders.

For a complete summary of SOR legislation, please [click here](#).

A. Registry Requirements

The SOR Act requires all sex offenders in Michigan to register their address with law enforcement after conviction, prior to sentencing. Offenders remain on the registry for 25 years or life, depending on the conviction. Offenders released from prison must remain on the registry for a minimum of 10 years or the duration of their sentence, whichever is longer.

After registering, offenders convicted of a felony-listed offense must report to a local law enforcement agency (city/township police department, county sheriff or MSP post) to verify their address during the first 15 days of January, April, July and October. Offenders convicted of a misdemeanor-listed offense must report to a local law enforcement agency to verify their address during the first 15 days of January (Jan. 1 – Jan. 15) each year. The penalty for failing to verify an address is a graduated penalty ranging from a 93-day misdemeanor to a four-year felony and the penalty for failing to change an address is also a felony.

B. Sex Offenders Registration Act Violations

Individuals not in compliance with the SOR Act are offenders who fail to register, fail to sign the registration form and/or fail to comply with reporting duties, including failing to verify and/or change their address. These individuals are also known as absconders.

The SOR Act allows an arrest warrant to be authorized by a prosecutor for an absconder. After a warrant is entered into LEIN, the absconder can be apprehended during a traffic stop or any other contact with law enforcement. In addition, law enforcement agencies conduct periodic sex offender sweeps, during which offenders' addresses are verified and absconders are actively sought.

Law enforcement agencies also rely on the public to help identify absconders. Citizens are encouraged to contact their local law enforcement agency if they think someone is in violation of the SOR Act.

II. Public Sex Offender Registry

Similar to the SOR, the Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR) is a database containing the names, addresses and listed offense information of persons in Michigan convicted of certain sexual offenses after October 1, 1995, or under the supervision of the Michigan Department of Corrections for a listed offense on October 1, 1995. When first established in 1996, the PSOR was accessible to the public by visiting a local law enforcement agency to view a paper copy of the list. In 1999, as a result of Public Act 85, the PSOR became available online at <http://www.mipsor.state.mi.us/>, allowing for searches by zip code or name and approximate age to identify registered sex offenders.

Under the SOR Act, certain offenders are exempt from the PSOR (even though they remain on the SOR). These offenders include all juveniles and offenders who have successfully completed the probation process outlined in Public Act 240 of 2004. Any juvenile convicted of criminal sexual conduct first or second degree is listed on the PSOR following his/her 18th birthday.

In addition, those individuals who are deceased are removed from the PSOR following the submission of a death certificate.

A. Offender Photographs

Public Act 238 of 2004 requires the PSOR to include the photograph of each individual registered under the SOR Act. To fulfill this requirement, PA 238 allows the MSP to obtain photographs from the Secretary of State.

Offenders who do not have a photograph either do not have a Michigan driver's license or state identification card, or the Secretary of State records did not match the information in the PSOR.

III. Sex Offender Registry Statistics*

As of November 1, 2007, there were 41,942 offenders in the SOR. Of those, 2,487 were juveniles and 13,025 were incarcerated. On average, 200 new offenders are added to the SOR per month. The Michigan SOR has a compliance rate of approximately 60 percent. Those offenders not in compliance either failed to change their address or failed to verify their address. (Note: Statistical comparisons among states are often inaccurate because each state has different requirements for who is registered and how statistics are reported.)

Of the 41,942 offenders in the SOR, 25,443 are required to verify their address either yearly or quarterly depending on their offense. Incarcerated offenders and offenders who have reported they left Michigan and moved to another state are not required to verify. At the end of the October 2007 verification period, 15,243 offenders were in compliance with SOR Act requirements and 10,200 offenders had failed to comply with requirements of the Act.

A. Public Sex Offender Registry Statistics

As of August 1, 2007, there were 21,807 offenders on the PSOR. The PSOR does not include offenders who have moved out of the state, are incarcerated, have a known false address or are juveniles.

*Statistics are updated quarterly following mandated verification periods.

IV. Additional Information and Resources

- National Sex Offender Registry: <http://www.nsopr.gov/>
- Other state Sex Offender Registries: <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/cac/states.htm>
- The Center for Sex Offender Management: <http://www.csom.org/>