

Understanding Sex Offender Treatment and Supervision in Colorado

A Resource Guide for Victims of Sexual Assault

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Introduction

This handout was created by the Victim Advocacy Committee of the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) to provide information to victims and their families regarding how adult sexual offenders and juveniles who have committed a sexual offense will be managed and supervised while in treatment in the criminal justice system. Victims deserve support, validation, and information, all of which may empower victims of sexual assault.

This document includes commonly used terminology and reactions associated with sexual assault. Everyone's experience and journey are unique. The term 'victim', is used in this document to recognize those who are involved in the criminal justice system as a result of the sexual violence committed against them have certain rights under the law. The use of the term 'victim' in this document is not intended to dismiss how individuals feel or what term they prefer.

The terms 'survivor', or 'victim-survivor' are also commonly used to describe someone who has experienced sexual violence. It is common for individuals to vary in which term they prefer or use to describe themselves. Depending on someone's culture, race, religion, gender, or other lived circumstances, all individuals have the right to choose which term they prefer. Although this document uses the term 'victim', it is recommended that professionals interacting with those who have experienced sexual violence ask, and use whichever term each individual person prefers.

What Is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is a term that describes a wide range of unwanted or inappropriate sexual behavior. Many people who have experienced unwanted sexual contact and behaviors may not think of themselves as victims of sexual assault. Sexual assault happens to people of all genders, ages, races, economic statuses, and sexual orientations.

Sexual assault is an emotional and physical violation, a betrayal of trust, and is often traumatic. Power and control are taken away. Sexual assault is frightening and results in a sense of loss of security and safety. Sexual assault is a very personal crime that can damage one's mind, body, and spirit. The majority of victims know the offender. In fact, offenders frequently use tactics to gain a person's trust, set up the sexual assault, and silence the victim. These grooming behaviors are commonly used with child victims and their parents. For many reasons, victims of sexual assault may have difficulty reporting the crime.

What You May Be Experiencing

There is no "right way" of dealing with being sexually assaulted. Common feelings include shock, confusion, fear, anger, depression, anxiety, helplessness, self-blame, guilt, embarrassment, shame, numbness, denial, and disbelief. Reactions can be unexpected and unpredictable. They may be different in comparison with how you think you should be feeling. Additional trauma responses can include loss of appetite, sleep disturbances, difficulty with intimate relationships, feeling detached, loss of concentration, and impact on self-esteem.

Children in particular may demonstrate their trauma responses through their behaviors. These can include developmental and behavioral regression, acting out, aggression, opposition, withdrawal, trouble sleeping, difficulty managing emotions, and problems with boundaries.

These crimes have far-reaching impacts. Loved ones of victims may experience these same symptoms and feelings.

Your care and safety matter. Help is available for you and your loved ones. There are advocates throughout the criminal justice system who can support you and assist with resources and referrals. Your local sexual assault crisis center can provide victims and loved ones with confidential services, including support, referrals, and counseling.

Recognize that healing from sexual assault takes time. Know that it's never too late to seek help. Even if the assault happened years ago, you might still be dealing with the aftermath of the trauma you endured. You may feel there are periods of time when you are moving forward in your healing and at other times you may feel you have lost progress in your healing. Many victims do not realize they need help and/or support until months or years later.

No one deserves to be victimized. Only the offender is responsible for their actions.

IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT.

Colorado Resources for Support Or Information:

Colorado's Crime Victim Rights Act (VRA). The Colorado Constitution and statute guarantees certain rights for victims of crime. For more information:

<https://dcj.colorado.gov/dcj-offices/victims-programs/crime-victim-rights-act-vra>

CCASA (Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault) for statewide hotlines and resources: 303-839-9999 (9 am-5 pm). www.CCASA.org/gethelp. To find additional resources specific to your area, please follow the link below:

<https://youhavetherightco.org/support-services-2-2>

The Blue Bench, the largest sexual assault crisis center in Colorado: 24-hour English-speaking hotline - 303-322-7273

24-hour Spanish-speaking hotline - 303-329-0031, www.TheBlueBench.org.

The Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA) for statewide resources and the victim advocacy coalition in Colorado. www.coloradocrimevictims.org. 303.861.1160.

The Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center provides a broad range of legal services to victims of crime in Colorado and to other service providers who work with victims of crime.
<https://www.rmvictimlaw.org/>

*Bilingual and multicultural services are available through these resources.

How Does Colorado Manage Sexual Offending Behavior?

In 1992, the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) was created by law to develop the *Standards and Guidelines for the Assessment, Evaluation, Treatment, and Behavioral Monitoring of Adult Sex Offenders*. In 1996 the adult Standards and Guidelines were first published and are continually revised based on advances in the field. The *Standards and Guidelines* for juveniles who have committed a sexual offense were first published in 2002. The standards and guidelines define the way in which sex offender treatment is provided in Colorado. Offenders can only receive evaluation and treatment services from qualified providers, who have specialized training and experience, as approved by the SOMB. The highest priority of the Standards and Guidelines is victim and community safety.

The Standards begin with a set of Guiding Principles that establish the core foundation which the Standards and Guidelines follow.

For more information regarding the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dcj/sex-offender-management-board>

The SOMB Standards and Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Sex Offense Specific Evaluations

A sex offense-specific evaluation is required for individuals convicted or adjudicated for a sexual offense, with some exceptions. These evaluations may be completed as a part of a Pre-Sentence Investigation Report (PSI) that is conducted by the Probation Department and provides information to the court regarding the adult offender or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense.

Evaluations are conducted to identify levels of risk and specific risk factors for treatment and supervision and to assist the court in determining the most appropriate sentence. Due to the importance of the information, each adult offender or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense shall receive a thorough assessment that examines the individual's mental health, social family, and environmental functioning, and offending behaviors.

Evaluators prioritize the physical and psychological safety of victims and potential victims in making recommendations that are appropriate to the assessed risk and needs of each adult offender or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense. While the evaluation provides valuable information and recommendations, the assessment of adult offenders or juveniles who have committed sexual offenses is ongoing based on updated information or changing circumstances. Sex offense-specific evaluations are not the same as more comprehensive psychological evaluations.

The purpose of the evaluation is:

- to determine the level of risk to the community and victims
- to assess the adult offender or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense's amenability to treatment

- to identify recommendations for the management and supervision of the adult offender or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense, as well as the type and intensity of treatment.

The following areas are required to be assessed within an evaluation:

- Cognitive functioning (intellectual, neurological, and academic)
- Mental health (personality, mental illness, self-concept)
- Medical (medication, medical conditions)
- Drug/Alcohol use (legal and illegal)
- Stability of functioning (support systems, finances/housing/employment, social skills, history/risk of violent behavior, community connections)
- Developmental history
- Sexual evaluation (sex history, arousal/interest patterns, specifics of sexual crime)
- Risk of re-offense or failure in treatment
- Readiness for treatment
- Victim impact
- Secondary victim impact

A Team Approach to Community Supervision

Why work together?

- + Research shows collaboration between professionals works**
- + Victims and communities are safer.**

Due to the nature and dynamics of sexual offending, the Sex Offender Management Board and the state of Colorado rely on a team approach to manage, treat and supervise offenders in our state. A team approach provides for a high level of offender accountability and comprehensive oversight of the offender while on supervision (see Section 5.00 in the Standards and Guidelines for more information). The professionals work collaboratively to share information and make decisions jointly. The foundations of the model are victim and community safety, the use of evidence-based and research-informed practices, informed public policies and collaboration, while supporting behavior change and reducing the likelihood of re-offense

The Community Supervision or Multidisciplinary Team includes:

- Probation Officer
- Parole Officer
- Community Corrections Case Manager
- Treatment Provider
- Polygraph Examiner
- Victim Representative (see section 5 of the [Colorado SOMB Standards](#))
- Other individuals may be included on the team who have a role in supervision and management of the offender. For example:
 - School Professionals
 - Human Services
 - Guardian Ad Litem
 - Approved/Informed Supervisor
 - Family members in juvenile cases primarily

Sex Offender Supervision

The goal of sex offender supervision is to minimize risk to the public to the greatest extent possible. The program reduces risk by (1) holding them accountable for their present and past sexually abusive behaviors; (2) encouraging them to build prosocial skills; and (3) building awareness and recognition of the harm caused by their actions. Sex offender supervision can include a combination of monitoring an offender's behavior, assisting in identifying distortions and thoughts that lead to offending behavior, and other efforts that research shows works while collaborating with the CST.

Supervising officers prioritize the impact of harm caused by sexual assault to victims and the community. Officers incorporate a victim-centered approach to their case management strategies

and apply careful considerations when making critical decisions. For specific information regarding your case, contact a victim representative.

Specialized Training:

Managing sex offenders in the community is different from managing people who commit other crimes because sex offenders have unique risks and needs specific to factors that lead them to their sex offending behavior. Professionals in the field must have specialized training related to:

- the various components to sex offending behaviors,
- victim needs and strategies to promote healing/reparation along with effective treatment, and
- legal requirements (e.g., registration and notification).

Supervising officers receive specialized training on risk assessment instruments for sex offenders, as well as other types of testing and monitoring tools.

What Is Supervision?

Community supervision is typically intensive and includes specialized terms and conditions (rules) of supervision. There is a high level of supervision which may include:

- home visits
- court ordered electronic home monitoring or ankle bracelet (in some cases)
- planning for events and movement in the community
- mandatory face to face check ins with the probation officer
- polygraph testing
- assessment of risk factors
- drug and alcohol testing
- sex offense specific treatment
- limited access to vulnerable populations (children, developmentally delayed)
- court ordered restrictions and monitoring of internet use (This may include court ordered restrictions on social media)
- maintain suitable employment or education
- regular verifications of employment
- monitoring where offenders live and with whom
- limited movement in the community

Community supervision rules are individual to that person. Information about restrictions and requirements can be shared with victims, although there are limitations on what information can be shared. Research indicates that focusing on an offender's individual risk factors and tailoring responses to their behavior helps support behavior change and reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

Frequently Asked Questions by Victims Regarding Probation

Q: What happens if they violate supervision?

A: Supervising officers are trained to respond to violations. The supervision team can decide to respond to the problematic behavior with a variety of consequences including homework assignments, increased supervision requirements, useful public service, or loss of privileges. The supervising officer also may choose to file a revocation of probation with the Court or a revocation of parole with the parole board.

Even though violations may happen multiple times, the team may not always respond to each violation in the same way. Supervising officers and teams are attempting to promote positive changes in behavior and it may take multiple attempts with various strategies to achieve success.

Q: Can they travel out of state?

A: It depends on their progress while on community supervision and only with written permission from the supervising officer or the Court. The offender must complete a safety plan and an outline of all travel plans and submit it to the supervision officer prior to approval. If the offender does not return, a warrant will be issued for their arrest.

Q: Can they use alcohol/drugs?

A: Offenders are typically not allowed to use alcohol while under supervision, especially if the current offense involved the use of alcohol. Offenders are allowed to use prescription medications and medical marijuana. Offenders will be asked to provide documentation to the supervising officer of any medications they are taking. If the supervising officer has concerns about substance use or if substance use played a role in the offense, substance use testing may be required as part of probation to monitor their sobriety.

Q: Why are they allowed privileges and freedom to do things in the community?

A: Supervision for the offender starts off restrictive and their privileges are limited. The Supervision team works together to make decisions about the offender's movement or activities in the community. Supervision officers along with other members of the team consider multiple factors to determine what specific privileges and activities the offender may be allowed to participate in. These factors include the following but are not limited to:

- Compliance with Supervision
- Progression in Treatment
- Risk level and ability to manage risk factors
- Need for increased protective and stability factors
- Acceptance of accountability and responsibility for offending behaviors.

- Understanding the impact of offending behaviors on the victim, victim's family, their own family and the community.

The victim can provide input to the supervising officer through their victim representative if they are concerned about the offender's risk in the community. As the offender progresses through supervision and treatment, the team may allow them more privileges. They must always have a plan approved in advance by their supervision team regarding movement or activities in the community. These are called 'safety plans'. They must continue to abide by all of the terms and conditions of their supervision. A safety plan may be modified or taken away at any time during supervision or treatment based on a number of factors that typically relate to negative behavior(s) or failing to follow the rules of their supervision set forth by the Court or the parole board.

Q: What is the purpose of polygraph testing and how often do they have to take polygraph tests?

A: The polygraph exam is one tool along with many others that is used to promote offender accountability. The polygraph exam can help hold the offender accountable for following the rules of treatment and supervision. Polygraph results are not used in court by judges to determine an offender's guilt or innocence. As part of the polygraph exam, there is a pre-and post-test interview where offenders may provide additional information which is useful to the treatment and supervision teams. These are called "disclosures". The team uses the disclosures to gather information that otherwise may not be known to the team. This information is used to make decisions related to how the offender is behaving in the community. The offender's disclosures may result in consequences by the team for negative behavior and may also result in incentives for positive behavior(s). Polygraphs are also used for gathering information about the offender's past sexual offending behaviors and helping the treatment team reduce an offender's denial to better hold them accountable.

Q: Are they allowed to have a phone/smartphone?

A: Sometimes they are allowed to have a phone/smartphone with approval from the Court or their supervision team. The supervising officer can also monitor or check their phone at any time.

Q: Are they allowed to use the internet and/or social media?

A: It depends. Internet and social media use may be restricted. Internet use may be monitored by the supervising officer. Offenders sign a "Computer Use Agreement" at the beginning of the supervision explaining their restrictions on internet devices. A Victim Advocate can answer additional questions regarding your specific case.

Q: Are they allowed to be around children?

A: It depends. Typically, adult offenders are not allowed to be around children. However, a court will make the determination if the offender can have contact with their own child(ren), as long as their own child is not a victim. If contact with children was restricted by the Court, the offender must meet specific requirements as designated by the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) in order to be approved to have contact with children. The supervision team will evaluate the offender's risk and whether the offender has met the requirements set forth by the SOMB. If the team identifies risk factors related to contact with children, the supervising officer can request contact be restricted. Offenders can progress through supervision and treatment and demonstrate they are not a risk to be around children.

Juveniles who have committed a sexual offense are typically not permitted to have contact with other juveniles three or more years younger than themselves unless approved in advance by the team. However, they may be allowed to have contact with siblings or peers depending on the situation. Juveniles are typically not permitted to be in a position of trust over children. In cases where individuals adjudicated as juveniles have their own minor children, contact may be allowed.

Q: Who do they have to tell or disclose to about their offense?

A: Making disclosures about their offense varies by situation. The team will assess who needs to know about the offense based on their safety concerns. The team will consider the totality of circumstances and may include safety of the offender as well as weigh additional factors when requiring an offender to disclose this information. Often the team will require a disclosure when the offender is dating someone new and they become an intimate partner of the offender.

Q: How long does the criminal protection order last?

A: The protection order is active until the offender completes their sentence or is vacated by the court at your request as the victim (survivor). If you have concerns about your safety after the protection order expires, you can file a request for a civil protection order which could be permanent. A Victim Advocate can assist you in getting more information regarding a civil protection order.

Q: Can I continue the criminal protection order when the case is over?

A: No, the criminal protection order is vacated when the offender completes their sentence and victims are unable to extend it or continue it beyond that. You can request a civil protection order from a Court which could be permanent. It is up to the Court to approve the protection order. A Victim Advocate can assist you in getting more information regarding a civil protection order.

Q: How do I get a civil protection order?

A: In order to request a civil protection order, a victim will first complete paperwork and provide it to a judge explaining why they want the protection order. A judge will then determine whether

there is enough evidence that an imminent threat of violence, meaning there has been harm, the threat of harm, or an act of violence. The judge will first issue a temporary protection order and set a hearing to order the protection order to remain permanent. During this time, the person the civil protection order is against must be served to notify them of the hearing. The victim is given the opportunity to be present at the hearing if they choose. At the time of the hearing, the victim along with all parties involved can present information to the court supporting why the protection order should remain in place permanently. If upon hearing all the evidence the court finds there is an imminent threat; the judge may order that the civil protection order remain in place permanently.

If you would like assistance or have further questions about this process, please contact your victim advocate.

Resources for Legal Advocacy Assistance:

<https://youhavetherightco.org/support-services-2-2/>

<https://www.violencefreecolorado.org/>

Courts FAQ:

https://www.courts.state.co.us/userfiles/file/Self_Help/FAQ's/Protection%20orders%20FAQs%20%20.pdf

Sex Offense-Specific Treatment

In general, research supports the value of sex offense-specific treatment for both adults and juveniles. Research on adults suggests that the sex offense recidivism rate is lower for treated sex offenders than for non-treated sex offenders.

For juveniles, the current research supports the belief that the majority of youth who commit sexual offenses can benefit significantly from treatment.

It is important to understand that a person's legal charges do not necessarily reflect the seriousness or extent of their abusive behavior. Regardless of the legal disposition, the emphasis in treatment will be on the offender taking responsibility for sexually abusive behavior and the impact to the victims.

The Adult and Juvenile *Standards and Guidelines* specify areas of treatment as well as expectations for the successful completion of treatment. These *Standards and Guidelines* require that treatment be victim-centered and incorporate information regarding victim impact. Victim information is an integral part of treatment and a victim representative is a required member of an offender's supervision team.

What Is Sex Offense-Specific Treatment?

Sex Offense-specific treatment involves an individualized and comprehensive treatment plan created by the treatment provider in consultation with the supervision team. The core treatment concepts may include:

- Taking accountability and responsibility for abusive and offending behaviors.
- Victim Impact and Clarification work
- Addressing thoughts, feelings, and beliefs that lead to offending behavior
- Building skills to lead to healthy behaviors and relationships
- Development of a "Health Living Plan"
- Addressing cognitive distortions (thinking errors)
- Combination of group and/or individual therapy
- Adjunct therapy as recommended such as:
 - Anger management
 - Domestic Violence
 - Drug and Alcohol
 - Mental Health/Trauma
 - Personal Victimization
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Evidence based practices
- Individualized approach

According to the Colorado Revised Statutes, treatment means therapy, monitoring and supervision of any sex offender which conforms to the Standards and Guidelines created by the SOMB (see

also sex offense-specific treatment). The purpose of treatment is to facilitate positive change in clients by replacing sexually abusive or sexually problematic behaviors with behaviors that support healthy, consensual relationships. (See Section 3.000 for additional information.)

Sex offense-specific treatment is significantly different from traditional therapy in many ways. General mental health therapy is generally client-led with an emphasis on the client creating their own goals for treatment. In contrast, Sex offense-specific treatment is ordered by the court or the parole board and the treatment team determines the overall treatment goals. Unlike traditional treatment, waivers of confidentiality are required and allow the treatment team to discuss treatment without client authorization. This information sharing ensures all members have necessary information with the goal of keeping victims and the community safe, and reduces an adult offender or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense's ability to keep secrets and manipulate members of the team.

When an offender is ordered into treatment, they can only receive treatment from a provider approved by and listed with the SOMB. These providers have specialized training and experience with this population. The treatment process is very in-depth and may take years for individuals to complete. Successful completion of treatment is determined by the treatment team based on the achievement of identified goals and objectives rather than simply the passage of time.

In general, mental health therapy, the client is seen as the best source of information. For sexual offenders, perceptions are often not reliable and the therapist must rely on other sources of information to verify the offender's self-report.

Treatment providers understand that sexual offenders may present with significant denial, avoidance and minimization of their abusive actions. Sex offense-specific therapy involves challenging the offender's distorted perceptions and beliefs, which may be uncomfortable, but is necessary for the offender to truly gain insight into and change their behavior.

Offenders may be required to address additional mental health issues, substance abuse issues or problematic behaviors.

The goal of treatment is to assist offenders in learning to change thought patterns and behaviors to make healthier choices and avoid harmful choices in the future.

Per statute, the Standards are required to address how to provide treatment for those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. They also provide guidance to assess those with cognitive issues.

Sexual Arousal and Interest Testing

As part of the evaluation process for sexual offenders, measures of sexual arousal and/or interest are utilized to identify potential risk factors and treatment needs. Viewing Time assessments are psychological assessments that measure sexual interests. A Plethysmograph (PPG) measures physiological changes associated with sexual arousal in a laboratory session and is used less frequently. Evaluations are required to include results of interest/arousal testing. Once in treatment, the sex offender may be required to take follow-up assessments to determine whether there has been a change in sexual arousal/interest based upon participation in treatment.

Use of Polygraph in Treatment

Polygraph testing has benefits which include improved decision making, deterrence of problem behavior, and access to information that might otherwise not be obtained. This has allowed for an improved level of care, treatment, supervision and public safety decisions. Successful use of the polygraph in treatment is largely dependent on understanding that it is a tool with strengths and limitations. Polygraphs are used to assist treatment providers in holding offenders accountable during treatment and promote honesty within treatment. They are helpful when trying to rule out any other unreported victims, more incidents, or other illegal behaviors.

There are limitations on what information supervision teams can share with victims regarding polygraphs. The Standards also state that teams shall not make decisions based on only the results of a polygraph.

There are several different types of polygraph tests used within treatment. Depending on what type of information is being sought determines what type of examination is used. The most common types of polygraph testing used throughout treatment are the Specific Issue, Sex History, and/or Maintenance/Monitoring.

Types of polygraphs:

Specific Issue/Offense Specific

- Used to ask specific questions and gain information from the offender.
- May be used to clarify and promote honesty about the details of the offense. These assist treatment providers in addressing denial and promoting accountability.

Sex History

- Determine if there are prior offenses or sexually abusive behaviors in a person's history
- Most often these questions are the same for all clients and outlined in the Standards. Supervision teams can add additional questions as needed.

Maintenance/Monitoring polygraph

- Used to assess compliance with conditions of supervision and treatment.
- They focus on behaviors and individualized risk factors to help reduce risk of re-offense.
- Adults will take regularly scheduled maintenance or monitoring polygraphs approximately every 6 months.

The Adult and Juvenile Standards outline different expectations for the use of the polygraph. The Adult Standards require the use of the polygraph for all clients unless the team has a compelling reason for waiving its use.

The Juvenile Standards do not mandate the use of the polygraph and direct the supervision teams to justify their use. Although polygraph testing is a tool available to juvenile supervision teams and may be helpful in specific cases, they are not used as frequently. In many cases, supervision teams opt not to use the polygraph unless they have a compelling reason.

Approved Supervisors, Community Support Persons and Informed Supervisors

Sex offenders may also have community members who assist with supervising the offender in the community, specifically regarding any contact with children. These people are called Approved Supervisors for adult offenders and Informed Supervisors for juvenile offenders.

For this reason, a very important objective in the treatment of both adults and juveniles is the training of Approved or Informed Supervisors. These individuals are responsible adults, such as, parents, grandparents, spouses, or other family, who with support of the supervision team, gain detailed understanding of the offense patterns and have the capacity to hold the offender accountable. Approved supervisors can become unapproved if the supervision team determines the supervisor is not holding the offender accountable to their requirements.

Adult Approved Supervisors are approved by the Supervision Team and responsible for supervising contact between the offender and a specific minor child. Juvenile Informed Supervisors are responsible for on-going daily supervision of the juvenile who has committed a sexual offense(s).

The Adult Standards also define additional support persons. Approved Community Support Persons are individuals approved to support the offender in community activities that do not involve minor children. Positive Support Persons are approved by the team to provide positive support for behavior change throughout supervision and treatment.

Treatment and Victim Notification Within DOC, Jails, Division of Youth Services and Community Corrections

Department of Corrections (DOC)/“Prison”

Only adults convicted of felony offenses can be sentenced to prison. For adults sentenced to the Department of Corrections for a sex offense, treatment may be available through the Sex Offender Treatment and Monitoring Program (SOTMP). This treatment follows SOMB Standards and all providers are approved by the SOMB. Although DOC has a treatment program, not all offenders will receive treatment prior to being released on parole. It could take a number of years before someone is placed in treatment depending upon the length of their sentence. Individuals who are given a determinate sentence (set number of years) are most often released to parole without receiving any treatment. Once they meet with their parole officer, they will be referred to an SOMB-approved provider in the community.

SOTMP has a Victim Liaison that is available to assist victims with multiple services:

- Updates on treatment status and progress
- Community resources
- Communicating victim input and information to treatment providers
- Assistance with parole hearings if the victim would like to attend or provide input

Please contact the SOTMP liaison with any questions or concerns:

[Email: doc_sotmp_vl@state.co.us](mailto:doc_sotmp_vl@state.co.us)

Call: 303-307-2451

The Department of Corrections also has a Victim Services Unit that can provide updates regarding inmate location, upcoming hearings, and release updates. This service is available to all victims, even if the offender does not enter treatment while incarcerated. Victims are automatically enrolled with their last known contact information. If you are not receiving notifications from DOC, please contact the Victim Services Unit with DOC.

[Email: DOC_VSUnrollments@state.co.us](mailto:DOC_VSUnrollments@state.co.us)

Call: 719-226-4709 or 800-886-7688

Mail: DOC Victim Notification Program
1250 Academy Park Loop
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

To check an inmate's status within the Colorado Department of Corrections, please visit:

<https://www.doc.state.co.us/oss/>

This website includes an offender's photo, parole eligibility and potential release dates.

Jail

Adult offenders may be sentenced to a local county jail on either a misdemeanor conviction or as part of a Probation sentence on a felony conviction. If an offender is sentenced to jail, they will not receive sex-offense specific treatment until they are released or able to leave through a work-release program.

Adult offenders may be sentenced to a work release program while in jail to allow them to maintain employment. They may be allowed to leave for treatment in addition to employment.

There is a system available for victims to receive automatic notifications of an offender's release from custody from a county jail. To receive automated notifications regarding adult offenders' custody status in jail, victims can register on VINELink.

<https://vinelink.com/classic/#/home/site/6000>

Community Corrections "Half-way house"

Adult Offenders may be sentenced to Community Corrections by the Court as an alternative to prison, or DOC may release an offender to a Community Corrections program from a DOC facility. Once placed in a Community Corrections facility, a referral for treatment is made to an SOMB-approved community provider. In some instances, treatment may be available within the facility by an SOMB-approved provider.

Division of Youth Services (DYS)

For juveniles committed to the Division of Youth Services (DYS) for a sexual offense, treatment services are provided that follow the SOMB standards. Juveniles are assigned a therapist at intake who is approved by the SOMB. DYS employs and contracts with various professionals to aid in the delivery of services:

- A victim services coordinator who can answer questions related to victim notification and victim involvement.
- A victim services coordinator for the Juvenile Parole Board.
- A Sex Offense Specific Services Coordinator who is available to answer questions related to treatment, supervision, and programming services.
- A contracted victim representative to consult with teams and serve as a bridge to connect victims or their representatives to the DYS supervision team working with the juvenile.

Please contact DYS for more information.

Victim Services Coordinator

4255 South Knox Ct. Denver, CO 80236
Call: 303.866.7852

Sex Offense Specific Services Coordinator

4131 S. Julian Way, Denver, CO 80236
Call: 303-866-7971

Division of Youth Services Contact Information

Call: 303-866-7345
Website: <https://cdhs.colorado.gov/dys>

Clarification, Contact and Reunification

The victim clarification process is designed to primarily benefit the victim. Through this process, the adult or juvenile who has committed a sexual offense accepts responsibility for the abusive behavior and clarifies that the victim has no responsibility for the offending behavior. Clarification is intended to aid the victim in reducing self-blame, assign responsibility to the offender and answer any questions the victim may have. The specific questions posed to the offender or topics to be addressed must be clearly defined. The goals and purpose of such communication must be clear to all involved. Issues addressed include the harm caused to the victim, family and/or secondary victim(s). This process typically requires collaboration with a victim representative and can be a lengthy process that occurs over time.

Clarification is victim-centered and based on victim needs. It is required as a part of treatment for each offender to demonstrate the ability to accurately self-disclose the offending behavior. Although this process is a requirement for the offender, as the victim of the offense, participating in clarification is optional. The clarification process will look different from one case to another. In some cases, this may include a clarification letter which may or may not be given directly to the victim or communicated through their chosen representative.

Victims may discuss other avenues for clarification with their victim representative. Options may include requesting answers to specific questions in writing, or direct contacts such as written, telephone, or even face-to-face interaction through virtual or in-person meetings.

Victim participation is never required and clarification sessions should only occur based on the direction of the victim(s), not the family or individual who has committed the sexual offense. While the intention of clarification is to contribute to the healing of victims and accountability of offenders, the supervision team will consider the requests of the victim in addition to the offender's ability (cognitive, developmental, etc.) To safely accommodate those requests. In order to complete clarification when there is a protection order in place, it may need to be modified with the consent of the victim. This modification does not mean the family can be contacted by the offender or their family outside of this process.

Secondary victims and significant persons in the victim's life may also be impacted by sexual offenses. Clarification with others (i.e., victim's parents, juvenile's parents, siblings, neighbors, and fellow students) who have been impacted by the offense may be warranted in some cases. Though always victim-centered, clarification may provide benefits to both the victim and the individual juvenile who has committed a sexual offense.

Sex Offender Registration and Notification

Requirements

Adults convicted of certain specified sex crimes in Colorado must register on a regular basis with the local law enforcement agency where they live, work, and go to school for a required period of time. Not all information collected by law enforcement is publicly available. Adults convicted of felony sexual offenses should be listed on the Colorado Bureau of Investigations (CBI) Website (<https://apps.colorado.gov/apps/dps/sor/>). Adults convicted of misdemeanor offenses are required to register, however, are not listed on the CBI Website. Local Law Enforcement Agencies may list these individuals on their websites. Juveniles are frequently not required to register. When a Juvenile is required to register, the information is not made public. Registration is a separate requirement by law within Colorado Statutes. Information about who is required to register can be found in the Colorado Revised Statutes (16-22-101 through 16-22-115).

The frequency and duration of the registration requirements are based on the offense for which the individual is convicted. Registrants may be required to register quarterly, twice a year, or annually. In addition, if a sex offender is experiencing homelessness and lacks a fixed residence, they are required to register more frequently and should be aware of this requirement. Failing to register may result in a new crime. There are some exceptions to the requirement to register for adults which include incapacitation or significant medical or mental health issues which would need to be determined by the Court. Victims will be notified if a Court hearing is scheduled to address these requests.

Offenders may be eligible to request the Court discontinue the registration requirement. Victims have the right under the VRA to be notified of these petitions. In order to ensure notification happens, victims must update their contact information with the District Attorney's Office. These petitions may be filed years later after offenders complete their sentence.

Some offenders are not eligible for their registration to be discontinued. Laws that require registration can be changed by the Colorado Legislature. If you have questions, please contact a Victim Advocate or Representative.

Local law enforcement is responsible for all registration information and verifications. Upon initial registration, law enforcement should verify their residence through a 'home visit' and may conduct continued checks over time.

Registration as a sex offender does not include any other restrictions. There are no limitations on where someone can go or who they have contact with, including minor children. Some states or local governments may have their own laws or ordinances that can limit where a registered sex offender can live or go (typically referred to as residence restrictions and child safety zones respectively). Residency restrictions in Colorado are rare, and only a small number of areas have them.

Post-Sentencing Victim Services

During the Court process, victims are automatically notified of critical stages by the prosecuting attorney's office. After sentencing, the victim witness specialist assigned to the court case will provide information on how a survivor may continue to receive updates while the offender is completing their sentence. If the offender is sentenced to probation, victims must "opt in" to continue to be notified about "critical stages". If the offender is sentenced to Community Corrections, the Department of Corrections, or the Division of Youth Services, victims will automatically be enrolled to receive updates. When offenders receive a jail sentence, which includes work release, in order to be notified of any change of status or release, victims should enroll through the VINE Link notification system. If victims do not want to receive notifications, they have the option to 'opt out' at any time. **Victims must keep their contact information updated with post-sentencing agencies in order to continue to receive notification.**

If an offender is sentenced to probation, victims may be contacted by the Victim Services Officer with probation in order to 'opt in' for notifications. Victims can also determine the extent to which they will be informed and/or participate in an offender's court-ordered sex offender treatment; however, victim participation is not required. Victim Services Officers within Probation Departments ensure victims' rights are upheld under the Colorado Victim's Rights act, which includes treating victims of crime with fairness, respect, and dignity and informing victims of critical stages. Following sentencing victims should receive a brochure about the Colorado Probation Victim Notification Program. In order to continue to receive notification about the offender's status on probation, victims must enroll or "opt in" for victim notification with the probation department.

For more information about the Colorado Probation Victim Notification Program; [click here](#) or visit: <http://cdpsdocs.state.co.us/dcj/DCJ%20External%20Website/OVP/VRA%20Post-Sentencing%20Notification%20Brochure%20English.April.2020.pdf>

Victim Representation

The Colorado SOMB Standards require the involvement of a designated *Victim Representative* on sex offender supervision teams. At a minimum, the supervision team must consist of a supervising probation officer, treatment provider, and a victim representative. The primary responsibility of the victim representative is to provide an avenue for victims and their families to be informed and heard. It is never a victim's responsibility to remain involved in a case if the victim determines it is not beneficial to their healing. If a victim and their family choose not to be involved in the case after sentencing, a victim representative will provide general victim input to the supervision team to ensure decisions continue to take victim impact and experience into consideration.

*It is **ESSENTIAL** that a victim continue to update their contact information with the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, the Department of Corrections, or the Division of Youth Services. There are events that may occur years after sentencing, such as revocations of probation, parole hearings, termination from supervision, or requests to discontinue sex offender registration. Victims have the **right to be informed and provide input during these stages.** Please keep your contact information updated with these agencies in order to receive these important notifications.*

Victim Representatives on Supervision Teams

The SOMB Standards and Guidelines require supervision teams to operate with a “Victim Centered Approach”. The goal of involving a victim representative within supervision teams is to improve supervision, increase accountability, build offender empathy, decrease offender secrecy, prevent an unbalanced alignment between members of the team and the offender, and contribute to a safer community. The exchange of information between the victim or the victim representative and team is crucial. The victim may choose not to provide or receive information. In that circumstance, teams are required to engage with a victim representative who will contribute general input regarding the perspective of victim(s).

The duties of Victim Representatives working with supervision teams include:

- Assure supervision teams are considering the physical and psychological safety of the victim throughout the treatment, supervision and management of the offender.
- Communicate with the supervision team regarding victim concerns and share information received from the victim as needed. Such information could include safety concerns, grooming behaviors, specifics of the offense and offending behaviors. Victim Representatives do this by attending team meetings or through phone or email.
- Share information with victims regarding the terms and conditions of probation, and treatment. This may also include information regarding progress in treatment and on supervision, victim clarification, family reunification planning and any other pertinent information as determined by the team.

Victim Representatives also contribute to supervision teams by providing the following types of information:

- The impact of sexual offending on victims, secondary victims, and the community including:
- Recognition of harm done to victims;
- Restitution and reparation to victims and others impacted by the offense including the community;
- Impact of offender denial on victims; and
- Input regarding victim contact, clarification and family reunification when appropriate.

Please note that there are limits to the information that can be shared by treatment providers. Treatment providers have ethical guidelines for treatment and confidentiality of their clients. To obtain specific information, victims may submit questions through their victim representative who can function as a liaison between the victim or victim therapist, and supervision teams as needed. Victim representatives can also:

- Advocate on behalf of the victim for the non-offending parent and family members to support the victim, prioritize the victim's safety, physical and emotional well-being and to address the needs of the victim. This parental and family support is critical for the healing of the victim;
- Assist with planning for the victim clarification sessions or family reunification, if appropriate to the case
- Assist with issues related to newly identified victims, when necessary.

Accessing a Victim Representative:

In addition to the previously mentioned critical stages outlined by the Victim Rights Act, there are ways victims can remain informed and provide input after sentencing. To be connected with a victim representative, victims may reach out to:

- The Victim Services Officer located within the designated probation department, if the offender was sentenced to probation.
- The Victim Services Unit or SOTMP Liaison, if the offender was sentenced to prison/Department of Corrections (DOC)
- The Victim Services Unit at the Division of Youth Services (DYS).
- The DA's office that handled the case through sentencing.

There is an expectation that each therapist providing offense-specific treatment utilizes a victim representative to help ensure there is an avenue for victims and their families to be informed and heard. The survivor may choose how much or how little information they would like to receive. The victim may change the frequency at which they receive information at any time based on their needs.

For questions regarding the SOMB Standards and Guidelines, or Policies and Procedures of the SOMB, please contact the SOMB Staff.

<https://dcj.colorado.gov/dcj-offices/domestic-violence-and-sex-offender-management/somb-general-information-inquiries>

All Treatment Providers, Evaluators and Polygraph Examiners are required to follow the Standards and Guidelines. If you have concerns about compliance with the Standards, please contact your victim representative, SOMB Staff or to file a complaint, [click here](#). You can find this information on the following website:

<https://sombprovidersearch.state.co.us/Complaint/GetComplaintForm>

[Supervising Officers from Probation, Parole, Community Corrections or the Division of Youth Services, and the Division of Child Welfare are also required to follow the Standards and Guidelines. Please contact your local office of Probation Services for information on their complaint process.](#)