

IMPORTANT NOTICE

CHANGES TO NORTH CAROLINA SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION LAWS

ALL REGISTERED OFFENDERS MUST COMPLY

Major changes to North Carolina's Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Programs were signed into law this summer, and will take effect soon. As a registered offender, you are receiving this notice because session laws 2008-117, 2008-218, and 2008-220 directly affect you. Failure to comply with these new regulations could result in criminal penalties. This notice gives a brief summary of the changes. It is your responsibility to make sure you understand all the laws affecting registered offenders and to comply with the law. Please pay special attention to the items listed below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- For complete details on all law changes, or if you have questions about this notice, please contact your county sheriff's office.
- You may access the full text of the statutes governing the North Carolina's Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Programs, including the recent session laws, via the General Assembly's website: www.ncleg.net

LAW CHANGES IMPACTING YOU

1. **IN PERSON REPORTING PERIOD SHORTENED TO THREE (3) BUSINESS DAYS:** Effective December 1, 2008, a person who is required to register will have three (3) business days to **report IN PERSON to the Sheriff's office** to;
 - a. Register after establishing residency or being released from a penal institution;
 - b. Verify information after receipt of a verification form;
 - c. Provide written notification of any change of address;
 - d. Provide written notification of any intent to move out-of-state (and, if such person does not leave the state, they must notify the sheriff in person within 3 days after date they originally indicated they would leave the state);
 - e. Provide written notification of any change in academic status;
 - f. Provide written notice of any change in employment status at an institution of higher education.
2. **PROHIBITED FROM COMMERCIAL SOCIAL NETWORKING WEB SITES:** Effective December 1, 2008, it will be unlawful for a registered offender to access a commercial social networking Web site that permits minor children to become members or create or maintain personal Web pages. "Commercial social networking Web sites" 1) facilitate social introduction between persons; 2) allow persons to communicate with others through such mechanisms as a message board, chat room, electronic mail, instant messenger, etc.; 3) allow users to create Web pages or personal profiles; and 4) derive revenue from fees, advertising, or other sources related to the operation of the Web site.
3. **PROHIBITED FROM CHANGING NAME:** Effective December 1, 2008, it will be unlawful for a registered offender to obtain a name change under Chapter 101 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

4. **PROHIBITED FROM CERTAIN LOCATIONS:** Effective December 1, 2008, persons required to register who have committed any offense in Article 7A of Chapter 14 of the North Carolina General Statutes or any offense in which the victim of the offense was under the age of 16 years at the time of offense are prohibited from the following locations:
- a. **On the premises of any place intended primarily for the use, care, or supervision of minors, including, but not limited to, schools, children's museums, child care centers, nurseries, and playgrounds.**
 - b. **Within 300 feet of any location intended primarily for the use, care, or supervision of minors when the place is located on premises that are not intended primarily for the use, care, or supervision of minors, including, but not limited to, places described in the previous paragraph (paragraph 4. a.) that are located in malls, shopping centers, or other property open to the general public.**
 - c. **At any place where minors gather for regularly scheduled educational, recreational, or social programs.**

Exceptions: A parent or guardian of a minor may take the minor to any location that can provide emergency medical care treatment if the minor is in need of emergency medical care.

A parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a school may wish to consult the statutes, the school board, and/or the Sheriff's Office to see if they qualify for a limited exception to go to their child's school. Provided they comply with all statutory requirements, parents or guardians may be able to go to their child's school to attend a conference with school personnel to discuss their child's academic or social progress or when requested by the principal. If a parent or guardian qualifies under this limited exception, they must comply with the statutory notification requirements including that they notify the principal of the school of their registration on the North Carolina Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry and of their arrival to and departure from the school. The parent or guardian must be under the direct supervision of school personnel at all times they are on school property.

There is an exception for persons eligible to vote at a prohibited location used as a voting place as defined by N.C.G.S. § 163-165. Such persons shall be on the premises only for the purposes of voting and shall not be outside the voting enclosure other than for the purpose of entering and exiting the voting place. If the voting place is a school, then they shall notify the principal of the school that they are a registered offender.

There is an exception for persons eligible under N.C.G.S. §115C-378 to attend public school to be present on school property if permitted by the local board of education.

There is an exception for juveniles to be present at a location to receive medical treatment or mental health services if they remain under the direct supervision of an employee of the treating institution at all times.

5. **ONLINE IDENTIFIERS:** Effective May 1, 2009, a person required to register must provide the Sheriff with any online identifier that the person uses or intends to use. An "online identifier" means electronic mail address, instant message screen name, user ID, chat or other Internet communication name, but does not mean social security number, date of birth, or pin number. If a person required to register changes an online identifier, or obtains a new online identifier, the person, shall within 10 days, report **in person** and provide the information to the Sheriff. Persons registered prior to May 1, 2009 may provide this information in person at the first verification of information that occurs on or after May 1, 2009.