

Sex Offender Management

Defining the Issue

Sex offender management programs use various strategies to prevent convicted sex offenders from committing future sex offenses. These strategies include multiple types of therapy, community notification and standardized assessments. Sex offender programs are administered both in prison and in the community.

Three common therapeutic approaches for treating sex offenders are:

- ✓ The cognitive-behavioral approach, which focuses on changing thinking patterns related to sexual offending and changing deviant patterns of sexual behavior.
- ✓ The psycho-educational approach, which focuses on increasing offenders' empathy for the victim while also teaching them to take responsibility for their sexual offenses.
- ✓ The pharmacological approach, which uses medication to reduce sexual response.

In addition to treatment, several types of sex offender laws (most passed at the federal level) are intended to deter sex offenders from re-offending. These include laws that increase the level of supervision or incapacitation imposed on sex offenders. The most common types of sex offender laws are: Community Notification; Sex Offender Registration; Sentencing Enhancements and Sexual Predator Laws.

State Examples

Pennsylvania – A range of programs provide treatment and methods for assimilating sex offenders back into the community. Funding also ensures that sex offenders are supervised and communities are safe.

Michigan – Using JAG funds, Michigan's programs are designed to address juvenile sex offenders and the process of reentry. If juvenile sex offenders finish this program, the juvenile will not be charged with the sex crime. These funds also go to rehabilitation programs, as well as to local law enforcement.

Texas – The state used JAG funds to create a Special Investigative Unit of the Office of the Attorney General and the Governor's Criminal Justice Division. This unit actively investigates criminal sexual offenses including cyber crimes, and arrests those offenders who fail to register.

Arizona - JAG helps fund compliance with the Sex Offender Community Notification statutes, which require the state to notify communities about a sex offender's release from incarceration or sentence to probation. In addition, the Arizona Department of Corrections is required to enter information about the offender into a statewide accessible database that includes a sex offender risk assessment.

New York – The state created a dedicated facility to house and treat sexually violent predators and intensify the supervision of sex offenders in the community by funding the Division of Parole and local probation offices. Consistent use of the Sex Offender Registry will also provide the public with fast and accurate information.

Tennessee - Counseling and Consultation Services received Byrne/JAG funding for its Adolescent Sex Offender Treatment project. The project's goal is to reduce victimization by juvenile sexual offenders. The project provides treatment and intensive therapeutic services to juvenile sex offenders and their families in their home and community. The Steppenstone Youth Treatment Center was also opened and provides services that include: risk assessment; outpatient treatment for minors; day treatment; intensive after school treatment; and residential treatment.

