

Article 27A.

Sex Offender and Public Protection Registration Programs.

Part 1. Registration Programs, Purpose and Definitions Generally.

§ 14-208.5. Purpose.

The General Assembly recognizes that sex offenders often pose a high risk of engaging in sex offenses even after being released from incarceration or commitment and that protection of the public from sex offenders is of paramount governmental interest.

The General Assembly also recognizes that persons who commit certain other types of offenses against minors, such as kidnapping, pose significant and unacceptable threats to the public safety and welfare of the children in this State and that the protection of those children is of great governmental interest. Further, the General Assembly recognizes that law enforcement officers' efforts to protect communities, conduct investigations, and quickly apprehend offenders who commit sex offenses or certain offenses against minors are impaired by the lack of information available to law enforcement agencies about convicted offenders who live within the agency's jurisdiction. Release of information about these offenders will further the governmental interests of public safety so long as the information released is rationally related to the furtherance of those goals.

Therefore, it is the purpose of this Article to assist law enforcement agencies' efforts to protect communities by requiring persons who are convicted of sex offenses or of certain other offenses committed against minors to register with law enforcement agencies, to require the exchange of relevant information about those offenders among law enforcement agencies, and to authorize the access to necessary and relevant information about those offenders to others as provided in this Article. (1995, c. 545, s. 1; 1997-516, s. 1.)