
HOUSE BILL 2503

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By Representatives O'Brien, Morrell, Liias, Hurst, VanDeWege, Barlow, Kelley, and Simpson

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1 AN ACT Relating to classification of an offender's risk level; and
2 reenacting and amending RCW 4.24.550.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 4.24.550 and 2005 c 380 s 2, 2005 c 228 s 1, and 2005
5 c 99 s 1 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

6 (1) In addition to the disclosure under subsection (5) of this
7 section, public agencies are authorized to release information to the
8 public regarding sex offenders and kidnapping offenders when the agency
9 determines that disclosure of the information is relevant and necessary
10 to protect the public and counteract the danger created by the
11 particular offender. This authorization applies to information
12 regarding: (a) Any person adjudicated or convicted of a sex offense as
13 defined in RCW 9A.44.130 or a kidnapping offense as defined by RCW
14 9A.44.130; (b) any person under the jurisdiction of the indeterminate
15 sentence review board as the result of a sex offense or kidnapping
16 offense; (c) any person committed as a sexually violent predator under
17 chapter 71.09 RCW or as a sexual psychopath under chapter 71.06 RCW;
18 (d) any person found not guilty of a sex offense or kidnapping offense

1 by reason of insanity under chapter 10.77 RCW; and (e) any person found
2 incompetent to stand trial for a sex offense or kidnapping offense and
3 subsequently committed under chapter 71.05 or 71.34 RCW.

4 (2) Except for the information specifically required under
5 subsection (5) of this section, the extent of the public disclosure of
6 relevant and necessary information shall be rationally related to: (a)
7 The level of risk posed by the offender to the community; (b) the
8 locations where the offender resides, expects to reside, or is
9 regularly found; and (c) the needs of the affected community members
10 for information to enhance their individual and collective safety.

11 (3) Except for the information specifically required under
12 subsection (5) of this section, local law enforcement agencies shall
13 consider the following guidelines in determining the extent of a public
14 disclosure made under this section: (a) For offenders classified as
15 risk level I, the agency shall share information with other appropriate
16 law enforcement agencies and, if the offender is a student, the public
17 or private school regulated under Title 28A RCW or chapter 72.40 RCW
18 which the offender is attending, or planning to attend. The agency may
19 disclose, upon request, relevant, necessary, and accurate information
20 to any victim or witness to the offense and to any individual community
21 member who lives near the residence where the offender resides, expects
22 to reside, or is regularly found; (b) for offenders classified as risk
23 level II, the agency may also disclose relevant, necessary, and
24 accurate information to public and private schools, child day care
25 centers, family day care providers, public libraries, businesses and
26 organizations that serve primarily children, women, or vulnerable
27 adults, and neighbors and community groups near the residence where the
28 offender resides, expects to reside, or is regularly found; (c) for
29 offenders classified as risk level III, the agency may also disclose
30 relevant, necessary, and accurate information to the public at large;
31 and (d) because more localized notification is not feasible and
32 homeless and transient offenders may present unique risks to the
33 community, the agency may also disclose relevant, necessary, and
34 accurate information to the public at large for offenders registered as
35 homeless or transient.

36 (4) The county sheriff with whom an offender classified as risk
37 level III is registered shall cause to be published by legal notice,
38 advertising, or news release a sex offender community notification that

1 conforms to the guidelines established under RCW 4.24.5501 in at least
2 one legal newspaper with general circulation in the area of the sex
3 offender's registered address or location. The county sheriff shall
4 also cause to be published consistent with this subsection a current
5 list of level III registered sex offenders, twice yearly. Unless the
6 information is posted on the web site described in subsection (5) of
7 this section, this list shall be maintained by the county sheriff on a
8 publicly accessible web site and shall be updated at least once per
9 month.

10 (5)(a) When funded by federal grants or other sources, the
11 Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs shall create and
12 maintain a statewide registered kidnapping and sex offender web site,
13 which shall be available to the public. The web site shall post all
14 level III and level II registered sex offenders and all registered
15 kidnapping offenders in the state of Washington.

16 (i) For level III offenders, the web site shall contain, but is not
17 limited to, the registered sex offender's name, relevant criminal
18 convictions, address by hundred block, physical description, and
19 photograph. The web site shall provide mapping capabilities that
20 display the sex offender's address by hundred block on a map. The web
21 site shall allow citizens to search for registered sex offenders within
22 the state of Washington by county, city, zip code, last name, type of
23 conviction, and address by hundred block.

24 (ii) For level II offenders, the web site shall contain, but is not
25 limited to, the same information and functionality as described in
26 (a)(i) of this subsection, provided that it is permissible under state
27 and federal law. If it is not permissible, the web site shall be
28 limited to the information and functionality that is permissible under
29 state and federal law.

30 (iii) For kidnapping offenders, the web site shall contain, but is
31 not limited to, the same information and functionality as described in
32 (a)(i) of this subsection, provided that it is permissible under state
33 and federal law. If it is not permissible, the web site shall be
34 limited to the information and functionality that is permissible under
35 state and federal law.

36 (b) Until the implementation of (a) of this subsection, the
37 Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs shall create a web

1 site available to the public that provides electronic links to county-
2 operated web sites that offer sex offender registration information.

3 (6) Local law enforcement agencies that disseminate information
4 pursuant to this section shall: (a) Review available risk level
5 classifications made by the department of corrections, the department
6 of social and health services, and the indeterminate sentence review
7 board; (b) assign risk level classifications to all offenders about
8 whom information will be disseminated; and (c) make a good faith effort
9 to notify the public and residents at least fourteen days before the
10 offender is released from confinement or, where an offender moves from
11 another jurisdiction, as soon as possible after the agency learns of
12 the offender's move, except that in no case may this notification
13 provision be construed to require an extension of an offender's release
14 date. The juvenile court shall provide local law enforcement officials
15 with all relevant information on offenders allowed to remain in the
16 community in a timely manner.

17 (7) An appointed or elected public official, public employee, or
18 public agency as defined in RCW 4.24.470, or units of local government
19 and its employees, as provided in RCW 36.28A.010, are immune from civil
20 liability for damages for any discretionary risk level classification
21 decisions or release of relevant and necessary information, unless it
22 is shown that the official, employee, or agency acted with gross
23 negligence or in bad faith. The immunity in this section applies to
24 risk level classification decisions and the release of relevant and
25 necessary information regarding any individual for whom disclosure is
26 authorized. The decision of a local law enforcement agency or official
27 to classify an offender to a risk level other than the one assigned by
28 the department of corrections, the department of social and health
29 services, or the indeterminate sentence review board, or the release of
30 any relevant and necessary information based on that different
31 classification shall not, by itself, be considered gross negligence or
32 bad faith. The immunity provided under this section applies to the
33 release of relevant and necessary information to other public
34 officials, public employees, or public agencies, and to the general
35 public.

36 (8) Except as may otherwise be provided by law, nothing in this
37 section shall impose any liability upon a public official, public

1 employee, or public agency for failing to release information
2 authorized under this section.

3 (9) Nothing in this section implies that information regarding
4 persons designated in subsection (1) of this section is confidential
5 except as may otherwise be provided by law.

6 (10) When a local law enforcement agency or official classifies an
7 offender differently than the offender is classified by the end of
8 sentence review committee or the department of social and health
9 services at the time of the offender's release from confinement, the
10 law enforcement agency or official shall notify the end of sentence
11 review committee or the department of social and health services and
12 submit its reasons supporting the change in classification. Upon
13 implementation of subsection (5)(a) of this section, notification of
14 the change shall also be sent to the Washington association of sheriffs
15 and police chiefs.

16 (11) When a local law enforcement agency or official is unable to
17 classify an offender from another state due to insufficient
18 information, the local law enforcement agency or official shall
19 initially classify the offender at risk level II. Nothing in this
20 subsection affects the local law enforcement agency's or official's
21 authority to subsequently reclassify the offender at a different risk
22 level.

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