ASSEMBLY, No. 4956

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 12, 2020

Sponsored by:
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District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)
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District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)
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District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

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SYNOPSIS

Requires State Police to biannually report to Legislature number of sex offenders who fail to register as required by Megan's Law.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/16/2020)

AN ACT concerning sex offender registration and amending P.L.1994, c.133.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. Section 2 of P.L.1994, c.133 (C.2C:7-2) is amended to read as follows:

2. a. (1) A person who has been convicted, adjudicated delinquent or found not guilty by reason of insanity for commission of a sex offense as defined in subsection b. of this section shall register as provided in subsections c. and d. of this section.

(2) A person who in another jurisdiction is required to register as a sex offender and (a) is enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis in any public or private educational institution in this State, including any secondary school, trade or professional institution, institution of higher education or other post-secondary school, or (b) is employed or carries on a vocation in this State, on either a full-time or a part-time basis, with or without compensation, for more than 14 consecutive days or for an aggregate period exceeding 30 days in a calendar year, shall register in this State as provided in subsections c. and d. of this section.

(3) A person who fails to register as required under this act shall be guilty of a crime of the third degree.

b. For the purposes of this act a sex offense shall include the following:

(1) Aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual contact, kidnapping pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection c. of N.J.S.2C:13-1 or an attempt to commit any of these crimes if the court found that the offender's conduct was characterized by a pattern of repetitive, compulsive behavior, regardless of the date of the commission of the offense or the date of conviction;

(2) A conviction, adjudication of delinquency, or acquittal by reason of insanity for aggravated sexual assault; sexual assault; aggravated criminal sexual contact; kidnapping pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection c. of N.J.S.2C:13-1; endangering the welfare of a child by engaging in sexual conduct which would impair or debauch the morals of the child pursuant to subsection a. of N.J.S.2C:24-4; endangering the welfare of a child pursuant to paragraph (3) or (4), subparagraph (a), or sub-subparagraph (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (b) of paragraph (5) of subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:24-4; luring or enticing pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1993, c.291 (C.2C:13-6); criminal sexual contact pursuant to N.J.S.2C:14-3b. if the victim is a minor; kidnapping pursuant to N.J.S.2C:13-1,

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined <u>thus</u> is new matter.

criminal restraint pursuant to N.J.S.2C:13-2, or false imprisonment pursuant to N.J.S.2C:13-3 if the victim is a minor and the offender is not the parent of the victim; knowingly promoting prostitution of a child pursuant to paragraph (3) or paragraph (4) of subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:34-1; leader of a child pornography network pursuant to section 8 of P.L.2017, c.141 (C.2C:24-4.1); or an attempt to commit any of these enumerated offenses if the conviction, adjudication of delinquency or acquittal by reason of insanity is entered on or after the effective date of this act or the offender is serving a sentence of incarceration, probation, parole or other form of community supervision as a result of the offense or is confined following acquittal by reason of insanity or as a result of civil commitment on the effective date of this act;

(3) A conviction, adjudication of delinquency, or acquittal by reason of insanity for an offense similar to any offense enumerated in paragraph (2) or a sentence on the basis of criteria similar to the criteria set forth in paragraph (1) of this subsection entered or imposed under the laws of the United States, this State, or another state.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of this subsection, a sex offense shall not include an adjudication of delinquency for endangering the welfare of a child pursuant to paragraph (4) or (5) of subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:24-4, provided that the actor demonstrates that:

(a) the facts of the case are limited to the creation, exhibition or distribution of a photograph depicting nudity or portraying a child in a sexually suggestive manner, as defined in N.J.S.2C:24-4, through the use of an electronic communications device, an interactive wireless communications device, or a computer;

(b) the creator and subject of the photograph are juveniles or were juveniles at the time of its making; and

(c) the subject of the photograph whose nudity is depicted or who is portrayed in a sexually suggestive manner, as the case may be, knowingly consented to the making of the photograph.

c. A person required to register under the provisions of this act shall do so on forms to be provided by the designated registering agency as follows:

(1) A person who is required to register and who is under supervision in the community on probation, parole, furlough, work release, or a similar program, shall register at the time the person is placed under supervision or no later than 120 days after the effective date of this act, whichever is later, in accordance with procedures established by the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human Services, the Juvenile Justice Commission established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1995, c.284 (C.52:17B-170) or the Administrative Office of the Courts, whichever is responsible for supervision;

(2) A person confined in a correctional or juvenile facility or involuntarily committed who is required to register shall register prior to release in accordance with procedures established by the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human Services or the Juvenile Justice Commission and, within 48 hours of release, shall also register with the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality in which the person resides or, if the municipality does not have a local police force, the Superintendent of State Police;

(3) A person moving to or returning to this State from another jurisdiction shall register with the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality in which the person will reside or, if the municipality does not have a local police force, the Superintendent of State Police within 120 days of the effective date of this act or 10 days of first residing in or returning to a municipality in this State, whichever is later;

(4) A person required to register on the basis of a conviction prior to the effective date who is not confined or under supervision on the effective date of this act shall register within 120 days of the effective date of this act with the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality in which the person will reside or, if the municipality does not have a local police force, the Superintendent of State Police;

(5) A person who in another jurisdiction is required to register as a sex offender and who is enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis in any public or private educational institution in this State, including any secondary school, trade or professional institution, institution of higher education or other post-secondary school shall, within ten days of commencing attendance at such educational institution, register with the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality in which the educational institution is located or, if the municipality does not have a local police force, the Superintendent of State Police;

(6) A person who in another jurisdiction is required to register as a sex offender and who is employed or carries on a vocation in this State, on either a full-time or a part-time basis, with or without compensation, for more than 14 consecutive days or for an aggregate period exceeding 30 days in a calendar year, shall, within ten days after commencing such employment or vocation, register with the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality in which the employer is located or where the vocation is carried on, as the case may be, or, if the municipality does not have a local police force, the Superintendent of State Police;

(7) In addition to any other registration requirements set forth in this section, a person required to register under this act who is enrolled at, employed by or carries on a vocation at an institution of higher education or other post-secondary school in this State shall, within 10 days after commencing such attendance, employment or

vocation, register with the law enforcement unit of the educational institution, if the institution has such a unit.

d. (1) Upon a change of address, a person shall notify the law enforcement agency with which the person is registered and shall re-register with the appropriate law enforcement agency no less than 10 days before **[**he intends**]** intending to first reside at **[**his**]** the new address. Upon a change of employment or school enrollment status, a person shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency no later than five days after any such change. A person who fails to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of a change of address or status in accordance with this subsection is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

(2) A person required to register under this act shall provide the appropriate law enforcement agency with information as to whether the person has routine access to or use of a computer or any other device with Internet capability. A person who fails to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of such information or of a change in the person's access to or use of a computer or other device with Internet capability or who provides false information concerning the person's access to or use of a computer or any other device with Internet capability is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

e. A person required to register under paragraph (1) of subsection b. of this section or under paragraph (3) of subsection b. due to a sentence imposed on the basis of criteria similar to the criteria set forth in paragraph (1) of subsection b. shall verify **[**his**]** the person's address with the appropriate law enforcement agency every 90 days in a manner prescribed by the Attorney General. A person required to register under paragraph (2) of subsection b. of this section or under paragraph (3) of subsection b. on the basis of a conviction for an offense similar to an offense enumerated in paragraph (2) of subsection b. shall verify **[**his**]** the person's address annually in a manner prescribed by the Attorney General. In addition to address information, the person shall provide as part of the verification process any additional information the Attorney General may require. One year after the effective date of this act, the Attorney General shall review, evaluate and, if warranted, modify pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) the verification requirement. Any person who knowingly provides false information concerning **[**his**]** the person's place of residence or who fails to verify **[**his**]** the person's address with the appropriate law enforcement agency or other entity, as prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with this subsection, is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

The appropriate county or municipal law enforcement agency shall report to the State Police every 180 days a list of persons who failed to verify their address pursuant to this section. The State

Police biannually shall report to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1) the number of persons who have failed to verify their addresses and the offenses for which they were required to register.

f. Except as provided in subsection g. of this section, a person required to register under this act may make application to the Superior Court of this State to terminate the obligation upon proof that the person has not committed an offense within 15 years following conviction or release from a correctional facility for any term of imprisonment imposed, whichever is later, and is not likely to pose a threat to the safety of others.

g. A person required to register under this section who has been convicted of, adjudicated delinquent, or acquitted by reason of insanity for more than one sex offense as defined in subsection b. of this section or who has been convicted of, adjudicated delinquent, or acquitted by reason of insanity for aggravated sexual assault pursuant to subsection a. of N.J.S.2C:14-2 or sexual assault pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection c. of N.J.S.2C:14-2 is not eligible under subsection f. of this section to make application to the Superior Court of this State to terminate the registration obligation.

(cf: P.L.2017, c.141, s.3.)

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires county and municipal law enforcement agencies to report to the State Police every 180 days a list of registered sex offenders who fail to verify their address as required by Megan's Law.

Under Megan's Law, repetitive and compulsive sex offenders are required to verify their addresses with the appropriate law enforcement agency every 90 days. All other offenders are required to annually verify their addresses. As part of the verification process, a sex offender is required to provide any additional information the Attorney General may require, which may include information on co-habitants, occupation, length of employment, whether the offender is in therapy, and whether the offender has Internet access.

This bill requires the State Police to biannually report to the Legislature the number of persons who have failed to verify their address and the offenses for which they were required to register.