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Stop in-person registration requirements for sex offenders

Law enforcement agencies are putting millions of families at risk of exposure

Raleigh, North Carolina | March 30, 2020—The National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws – NARSOL – demands that all law enforcement entities immediately cease all in-person requirements for those on the registry for the duration of the coronavirus crisis.

A month after the realization that severely limiting personal contact was essential and two weeks after NARSOL issued [a press release](#) demanding that all law enforcement stop required in-person reporting of persons on sexual offense registries, a daily analysis reveals that this vital step has not been taken.

In California the situation is so desperate that the Alliance for Constitutional Sexual Offense Laws, an organization NARSOL is working with on this and other issues, has filed five lawsuits asking that the in-person visits be stopped for the duration of the health crisis. California has the third-highest confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the nation, outpaced by only New York and New Jersey.

In New York, where the virus is taking it heaviest toll, this [state-wide memo on the subject](#), March 27, stated, “According to New York Chief Judge Janet Marie DiFiore, all non-essential court functions will be postponed. Courts will continue to process criminal arraignments, bail hearings, housing court issues involving challenges to housing code violations or landlord lockouts, as well as matters pertaining to sex offenders and emergency family court.”

NARSOL’s communications director Sandy Rozek asked, “Are routine sex offender check-ins and updates so essential that it is worth putting vast numbers of people in harm’s way? These are bookkeeping tasks that can be easily managed by telephone or internet. How can they justify putting not only the registrants at risk but also the law enforcement personnel that perform the updates and the families of all? How?” she demanded.

As of this writing, two states, Oregon and Pennsylvania, have a state-wide mandate in place prohibiting these in-person verification checks during the crisis. Every other state appears thus far to have failed in issuing a state-wide ruling on this. Some counties in some states have suspended the visits, while others in the same state are still requiring them. As one example, North Carolina has 100 counties. Three of them – THREE – have suspended the personal visits; 97 still require them. Worse yet, some have issued no statements or directives, leaving the registrants -- for whom missing a required check-in or failing to update information will in some states be filed as an additional felony sexual crime -- in limbo, terrified to miss the verification check and terrified to go.

Brenda Jones, NARSOL’s executive director said, “I speak directly to those with the authority to make this decision. We beg you, we demand of you, that this needless risk of health and lives stop

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RATIONAL SEXUAL OFFENSE LAWS

Fighting to restore dignity & constitutional rights to millions.

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immediately. There is no justification whatsoever to continue doing what every medical and health professional on earth says we must not do, expose more people to the risk of getting the virus.

“Stop in-person requirements of those on the registry. Stop it now.”

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NARSOL is the nation’s largest civil rights organization advocating on behalf of registered citizens and their families. NARSOL opposes dehumanizing registries and works to eliminate discrimination, banishment, and vigilantism against persons accused or convicted of sexual offenses through the use of impact litigation, public education, legislative advocacy, and media outreach in order to reintegrate and reconcile affected individuals and restore their constitutional rights.