

6403

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N   A S S E M B L Y

March 24, 2015

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Introduced by M. of A. SIMANOWITZ, MILLER -- read once and referred to  
the Committee on Correction

AN ACT to amend the correction law, in relation to risk level determi-  
nation hearings for convicted sex offenders

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-  
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. Subdivisions 2 and 3 of section 168-d of the correction  
2     law, subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 684 of the laws of 2005 and  
3     subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 11 of the laws of 2002, are amended  
4     to read as follows:

5     2. Any sex offender, who is released on probation or discharged upon  
6     payment of a fine, conditional discharge or unconditional discharge  
7     shall, prior to such release or discharge, be informed of his or her  
8     duty to register under this article by the court in which he or she was  
9     convicted. At the time sentence is imposed, such sex offender shall  
10    register with the division on a form prepared by the division. The court  
11    shall require the sex offender to read and sign such form and to  
12    complete the registration portion of such form. The court shall on such  
13    form obtain the address where the sex offender expects to reside upon  
14    his or her release, and the name and address of any institution of high-  
15    er education he or she expects to be employed by, enrolled in, attending  
16    or employed, whether for compensation or not, and whether he or she  
17    expects to reside in a facility owned or operated by such an institu-  
18    tion, and shall report such information to the division. The court shall  
19    give one copy of the form to the sex offender and shall send two copies  
20    to the division which shall forward the information to the law enforce-  
21    ment agencies having jurisdiction. [The]

22    2-A. WITHIN FIVE DAYS OF THE CONVICTION OF ANY SEX OFFENDER, WHO IS  
23    EXPECTED TO BE, UPON SENTENCING, RELEASED ON PROBATION OR DISCHARGED  
24    UPON PAYMENT OF A FINE, CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE OR UNCONDITIONAL  
25    DISCHARGE, THE court shall [also] notify the district attorney and the

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 sex offender of the date of the determination proceeding to be held  
2 pursuant to subdivision three of this section, which shall be held [at  
3 least forty-five] WITHIN TWENTY days after such notice is given AND  
4 PRIOR TO SENTENCING. This notice shall include the following statement  
5 or a substantially similar statement: "This proceeding is being held to  
6 determine whether you will be classified as a level 3 offender (risk of  
7 repeat offense is high), a level 2 offender (risk of repeat offense is  
8 moderate), or a level 1 offender (risk of repeat offense is low), or  
9 whether you will be designated as a sexual predator, a sexually violent  
10 offender or a predicate sex offender, which will determine how long you  
11 must register as a sex offender and how much information can be provided  
12 to the public concerning your registration. If you fail to appear at  
13 this proceeding, [without sufficient excuse,] it shall be held in your  
14 absence. Failure to appear may result in a longer period of registration  
15 or a higher level of community notification because you are not present  
16 to offer evidence or contest evidence offered by the district attorney."  
17 The court shall also advise the sex offender that he or she has a right  
18 to a hearing prior to the court's determination, that he or she has the  
19 right to be represented by counsel at the hearing and that counsel will  
20 be appointed if he or she is financially unable to retain counsel. If  
21 the sex offender applies for assignment of counsel to represent him or  
22 her at the hearing and counsel was not previously assigned to represent  
23 the sex offender in the underlying criminal action, the court shall  
24 determine whether the offender is financially unable to retain counsel.  
25 If such a finding is made, the court shall assign counsel to represent  
26 the sex offender pursuant to article eighteen-B of the county law.

27 2-B. Where the court orders a sex offender released on probation, such  
28 order must include a provision requiring that he or she comply with the  
29 requirements of this article. Where such sex offender violates such  
30 provision, probation may be immediately revoked in the manner provided  
31 by article four hundred ten of the criminal procedure law.

32 3. For sex offenders WHO ARE EXPECTED TO BE, UPON SENTENCING, released  
33 on probation or discharged upon payment of a fine, conditional discharge  
34 or unconditional discharge, it shall be the duty of the court applying  
35 the guidelines established in subdivision five of section one hundred  
36 sixty-eight-1 of this article to determine, PRIOR TO SENTENCING, the  
37 level of notification pursuant to subdivision six of section one hundred  
38 sixty-eight-1 of this article and whether such sex offender shall be  
39 designated a sexual predator, sexually violent offender, or predicate  
40 sex offender as defined in subdivision seven of section one hundred  
41 sixty-eight-a of this article. At least fifteen days prior to the deter-  
42 mination proceeding, the district attorney shall provide to the court  
43 and the sex offender a written statement setting forth the determi-  
44 nations sought by the district attorney together with the reasons for  
45 seeking such determinations. The court shall allow the sex offender to  
46 appear and be heard. The state shall appear by the district attorney, or  
47 his or her designee, who shall bear the burden of proving the facts  
48 supporting the determinations sought by clear and convincing evidence.  
49 Where there is a dispute between the parties concerning the determi-  
50 nations, the court shall adjourn the hearing as necessary to permit the  
51 sex offender or the district attorney to obtain materials relevant to  
52 the determinations from any state or local facility, hospital, institu-  
53 tion, office, agency, department or division. Such materials may be  
54 obtained by subpoena if not voluntarily provided to the requesting  
55 party. In making the determinations, the court shall review any victim's  
56 statement and any relevant materials and evidence submitted by the sex

1 offender and the district attorney and the court may consider reliable  
2 hearsay evidence submitted by either party provided that it is relevant  
3 to the determinations. Facts previously proven at trial or elicited at  
4 the time of entry of a plea of guilty shall be deemed established by  
5 clear and convincing evidence and shall not be relitigated. The court  
6 shall render an order setting forth its determinations and the findings  
7 of fact and conclusions of law on which the determinations are based. A  
8 copy of the order shall be submitted by the court to the division. Upon  
9 application of either party, the court shall seal any portion of the  
10 court file or record which contains material that is confidential under  
11 any state or federal statute. Either party may appeal as of right from  
12 the order pursuant to the provisions of articles fifty-five, fifty-six  
13 and fifty-seven of the civil practice law and rules. Where counsel has  
14 been assigned to represent the sex offender upon the ground that the sex  
15 offender is financially unable to retain counsel, that assignment shall  
16 be continued throughout the pendency of the appeal, and the person may  
17 appeal as a poor person pursuant to article eighteen-B of the county  
18 law.

19 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.