

# OLYMPIC COLLEGE POLICY

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**TITLE: Olympic College Guidelines and Policy on Notification of Sex Offenders**

**POLICY NUMBER: OCP 200-04**

**REFERENCE:**

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## **Preamble**

Olympic College considers the protection of our community from sex offenders to be a matter of significant importance. The 1990 Community Protection Act allows the College to provide notice to the community concerning sex offenders who are, or will be attending classes or working on the campus, and to assist our community members in developing constructive plans to prepare themselves and their children residing near released sex offenders.

Pursuant to RCW 4.24.550 Olympic Community College is authorized to notify the College community when information is received that a registered sex offender may be expected on or near the College campus, including off-site buildings and associated College activities. Information that is relevant and necessary to protect the public and to counteract the danger created by a particular offender may be released pursuant to RCW 4.24.550.

The extent and content of the disclosure of relevant and necessary information shall be related to:

- The level of risk posed by the offender to the community;
- the location where the offender resides, expects to reside or, is regularly found; and
- the needs of affected community members for information to enhance their individual and collective safety.

## **Purpose of Notification**

An informed public is a safer public. Notification is not intended to increase fear. Sex\kidnap offenders have always lived in our communities. The purpose of the Community Protection Act of 1990 was to assist local law enforcement agency efforts to protect communities by providing relevant and necessary information. By providing the public adequate notice and information, community members can develop constructive plans to prepare themselves and their children for the offender's release.

The Department of Corrections, the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, and the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board are required to classify all sex offenders released from their facilities into levels of risk (low, moderate, or high). These agencies then issue to appropriate law enforcement agencies narrative notices regarding the pending release of sex offenders. The narrative notices describe the identity and criminal history behavior of the offender and shall include a risk level classification for the offender. Upon receiving a narrative notice, local law enforcement agencies review all available information and assign

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risk-level classifications to all sex offenders about whom information will be disseminated for the purpose of community notification.

The campus safety and security office maintains records of sex offenders who have been brought to the attention of Olympic College by the Kitsap and Mason County Sheriffs' offices. Additionally, the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office maintains an online registry of level III sex offenders who are registered to live in Kitsap County. You can review the current list of level III Sex Offenders registered in Kitsap County online by going to: <http://www.kitsapgov.com/sheriff/sexoffenders/level3.asp>; and for Level II and III Sex Offenders registered in Mason County at: <http://so.co.mason.wa.us/sexoff.htm>. Using this public information to threaten, intimidate or harass sex\kidnap offenders will not be tolerated by Olympic College.

## **Immunity**

Public employees and/or public agencies are immune from civil liability for damages for any discretionary risk level classification decisions or release of relevant and necessary information, unless it is shown that the official, employee, or agency acted with gross negligence or in bad faith. (RCW 4.24.550(7)).

## **Level I**

The vast majority of registered sex offenders are classified as Level I offenders. They are considered at low risk to re-offend. These individuals may be first time offenders and they are usually known by their victims. They normally have not exhibited predatory type characteristics and most have successfully participated or are participating in approved treatment programs

Level I offenders are generally *not* the subject of general public notification. The extent and types of notifications for Level I sex offenders may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis, but the College Community and Level I sex offenders can generally expect the following types of notifications to be made:

- Security Services
- President
- Vice Presidents
- Executive Director of Human Resource Services
- Branch Campus Directors
- Campus child care centers
- Any individual college community member upon request

## **Level II**

Level II offenders have a moderate risk of re-offending. They generally have more than one victim and the abuse may be long term. These offenders usually groom their victims and may use threats to commit their crimes, and they have a higher likelihood of re-offending than the Level I offenders. They are considered a higher risk to re-offend because of the nature of their previous crime(s) and lifestyle (drug and alcohol abuse and other criminal

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activity). Some have refused to participate or failed to complete approved treatment programs. Typically these individuals do not appreciate the damage they have done to their victims.

Washington State law may allow the Public Disclosure of Level II Registered Sex Offenders under certain conditions. Level II notifications including relevant, necessary and accurate information may be disclosed to public and private schools, child day care centers, family day care providers, businesses and organizations that serve primarily children, women or vulnerable adults, and neighbors and community groups near the residence where the offender resides, expects to reside, or is regularly found.

Level II offenders are generally *not* the subject of general public notification. The extent and types of notifications for Level II sex offenders may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis, but the College Community and Level II sex offenders can generally expect the following types of notifications to be made:

- All who receive level I notifications
- Faculty and staff in whose program and/or course the student is enrolled
- Tutoring Center, Child Care, posting on bulletin boards, including security office

## **Level III**

Level III offenders are the greatest risk to the community. Most are predatory, have other violent crime convictions, refused treatment and are known substance abusers. Community notification is the most extensive.

Washington State law permits notifications about Level III offenders that include relevant, accurate and necessary information. This information is permitted to be disclosed to the public at large. The extent and types of notifications for Level III sex offenders may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis, but the College Community will receive the following notifications:

- All college employees via internal mail/e-mail
- College bulletin boards
- Faculty in whose course the Level III sex offender is enrolled
- Students attending classes in which the Level III sex offender is enrolled

Olympic College has also developed specific procedures that assist in notifying the campus community of sex offenders on campus. According to these procedures, the Vice President of Student Services;

1. Reviews all relevant and necessary information provided to us by law enforcement personnel and the office of Safety and Security; assesses the safety issues posed for students, employees, and all minors on campus.
2. Interviews all Level III Sex Offenders attending Olympic College, as well as enrolled Level I and II sex offenders who are known to be attending Olympic College or for whom local law enforcement agencies have provided notice to the College.

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3. Releases the identity and information, according to the above guidelines.

The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office maintains an online registry of Level III Sex Offenders who are registered to live in Kitsap County at:

<http://www.kitsapgov.com/sheriff/sexoffenders/level3.asp>.

The Mason County Sheriff's Office maintains an online registry of Level II and III Sex Offenders who are registered to live in Mason County at:

<http://so.co.mason.wa.us/sexoff.htm>

For more information please contact Safety & Security at (360) 475-7805.

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