

PRESS RELEASE

TO: APPROVED PROVIDERS, COLLABORATIVE AGENCIES, AND THE
COMMUNITY

FROM: SEX OFFENDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (SOMB)

RE: OFFENSE SPECIFIC EVALUATIONS

DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 2011

The Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) has become aware of some potential confusion on the part of sex offender management professionals regarding the following two sections of the *Colorado Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment, Assessment, Evaluation, Treatment and Behavioral Monitoring of Adult Sex Offenders*. As a result, the SOMB determined on February 18, 2011 that it wished to provide the clarification below.

Standard 2.010, “Assessment and evaluation are ongoing processes and should continue through each transition of supervision and treatment. Re-evaluation by community supervision team members should occur on a regular basis to ensure recognition of changing levels of risk.”

Guiding Principle 4, “Assessment and evaluation of sex offenders is an ongoing process. Progress in treatment and level of risk are not constant over time.

The effective assessment and evaluation of sexual offenders is best seen as a process. In Colorado, criminal sexual offenders are first assessed and referred for a sex offense-specific evaluation during the pre-sentence investigation conducted by the Probation Department. Assessment of sex offenders' risk and amenability to treatment should not, however, end at this point. Subsequent assessments must occur at both the entry and exit points of all sentencing options, i.e. probation, parole, community corrections and prison. In addition, assessment and evaluation should be an ongoing practice in any program providing treatment for sex offenders.

In the management and treatment of sex offenders there will be measurable degrees of progress or lack of progress. Because of the cyclical nature of offense patterns and fluctuating life stresses, sex offenders' levels of risk are constantly in flux. Success in the management and treatment of sex offenders cannot be assumed to be permanent. For these reasons, monitoring of risk must be a continuing process as long as sex offenders are under criminal justice supervision. Moreover, the end of the period of court supervision should not necessarily be seen as the end of dangerousness.”

The SOMB has determined that Standard 2.010 and Guiding Principle 4 are written to encourage and promote ongoing risk assessment by the Community Supervision Team (CST). However,

Standard 2.010 and Guiding Principle 4 do not mandate that a new sex offense-specific evaluation be completed at every transition point (e.g. movement from prison to parole, etc.) for a sexual offender in treatment/supervision. “Assessment and evaluation” as identified in the *Standards and Guidelines* may include a sex offense-specific evaluation, or an ongoing and updated assessment of risk and treatment/supervision needs by the provider in conjunction with the CST. The CST should use discretion and make decisions collaboratively in determining which form of updated “assessment and evaluation” is appropriate for a given offender. The CST should determine whether the offender has previously undergone a sex offense-specific evaluation, what factors have changed since the completion of the evaluation, and whether it is possible for the original evaluator, or the current provider, to update the “assessment and evaluation” of risk and treatment/supervision needs. It is critical for accurate risk management, victim protection, and community safety that all evaluation and risk assessments be shared throughout the criminal justice system to ensure previous information is reviewed and incorporated into subsequent evaluation and assessment using methods relevant to each offender.

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