



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 596

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 509

Senate, April 13, 2026

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. WINFIELD of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ADDRESS VERIFICATION REFORMS FOR REGISTRANTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subdivision (11) of section 54-250 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
3 *1, 2026*):

4 (11) "Sexually violent offense" means (A) a violation of section 53a-
5 70b of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1, 2019,
6 or section 53a-70, except subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of said section,
7 53a-70a, 53a-71, except subdivision (1), (4), (8) or (10) or subparagraph
8 (B) of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of said section or subparagraph
9 (A) of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of said section if the court makes
10 a finding that, at the time of the offense, the victim was under eighteen
11 years of age, 53a-72a, except subdivision [(2)] (3) of subsection (a) of said
12 section, or 53a-72b, or of section 53a-92 or 53a-92a, provided the court
13 makes a finding that the offense was committed with intent to sexually
14 violate or abuse the victim, (B) a violation of any of the offenses specified
15 in subparagraph (A) of this subdivision for which a person is criminally
16 liable under section 53a-8, 53a-48 or 53a-49, or (C) a violation of any
17 predecessor statute to any of the offenses specified in subparagraph (A)

18 or (B) of this subdivision the essential elements of which are
19 substantially the same as said offense.

20 Sec. 2. Subsection (e) of section 54-251 of the general statutes is
21 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
22 *1, 2026*):

23 (e) (1) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this
24 section shall be guilty of a class [D felony] C misdemeanor, except that,
25 if such person violates the provisions of this section by failing to notify
26 the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection without
27 undue delay of a change of name, address or status or another
28 reportable event, such person shall only be subject to such penalty if
29 such failure continues for five business days.

30 (2) Any person who does not receive by mail an address verification
31 form described in subsection (c) of section 54-257, as amended by this
32 act, may request that the Department of Emergency Services and Public
33 Protection mail such form to such person. The department shall mail
34 such form to such person not later than five business days after
35 receiving such request.

36 (3) The court shall enter a nolle prosequi to the charges against the
37 person for a violation of the provisions of subsection (a) of this section
38 if such person (A) has no prior conviction for a violation of said
39 subsection (a), and (B) is in compliance with the provisions of said
40 subsection (a) not later than twenty business days following the
41 arraignment of such person on such charges.

42 (4) In any prosecution of a person for a violation of subsection (a) of
43 this section, it shall be an affirmative defense that (A) uncontrollable
44 circumstances prevented the person from complying with the
45 provisions of said subsection (a), (B) the person did not contribute to the
46 creation of such circumstances in reckless disregard to the requirements
47 pursuant to said subsection (a), and (C) such person was in compliance
48 with the provisions of said subsection (a) as soon as such circumstances
49 ceased to exist.

50 Sec. 3. Subsection (d) of section 54-252 of the general statutes is
51 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
52 *1, 2026*):

53 (d) (1) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be
54 guilty of a class [D felony] C misdemeanor, except that, if such person
55 violates the provisions of this section by failing to notify the
56 Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection without
57 undue delay of a change of name, address or status or another
58 reportable event, such person shall only be subject to such penalty if
59 such failure continues for five business days.

60 (2) Any person who does not receive by mail an address verification
61 form described in subsection (c) of section 54-257, as amended by this
62 act, may request that the Department of Emergency Services and Public
63 Protection mail such form to such person. The department shall mail
64 such form to such person not later than five business days after
65 receiving such request.

66 (3) The court shall enter a nolle prosequi to the charges against the
67 person for a violation of the provisions of this section if such person (A)
68 has no prior conviction for a violation of this section, and (B) is in
69 compliance with the provisions of this section not later than twenty
70 business days following the arraignment of such person on such
71 charges.

72 (4) In any prosecution of a person for a violation of this section, it
73 shall be an affirmative defense that (A) uncontrollable circumstances
74 prevented the person from complying with the provisions of this
75 section, (B) the person did not contribute to the creation of such
76 circumstances in reckless disregard to the requirements pursuant to this
77 section, and (C) such person was in compliance with the provisions of
78 this section as soon as such circumstances ceased to exist.

79 Sec. 4. Subsection (e) of section 54-253 of the general statutes is
80 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
81 *1, 2026*):

82 (e) (1) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be
83 guilty of a class [D felony] C misdemeanor, except that, if such person
84 violates the provisions of this section by failing to register with the
85 Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection without
86 undue delay or notify the Commissioner of Emergency Services and
87 Public Protection without undue delay of a change of name, address or
88 status or another reportable event, such person shall only be subject to
89 such penalty if such failure continues for five business days.

90 (2) Any person who does not receive by mail an address verification
91 form described in subsection (c) of section 54-257, as amended by this
92 act, may request that the Department of Emergency Services and Public
93 Protection mail such form to such person. The department shall mail
94 such form to such person not later than five business days after
95 receiving such request.

96 (3) The court shall enter a nolle prosequi to the charges against the
97 person for a violation of the provisions of this section if such person (A)
98 has no prior conviction for a violation of this section, and (B) is in
99 compliance with the provisions of this section not later than twenty
100 business days following the arraignment of such person on such
101 charges.

102 (4) In any prosecution of a person for a violation of this section, it
103 shall be an affirmative defense that (A) uncontrollable circumstances
104 prevented the person from complying with the provisions of this
105 section, (B) the person did not contribute to the creation of such
106 circumstances in reckless disregard to the requirements pursuant to this
107 section, and (C) such person was in compliance with the provisions of
108 this section as soon as such circumstances ceased to exist.

109 Sec. 5. Subsection (b) of section 54-254 of the general statutes is
110 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
111 *1, 2026*):

112 (b) (1) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be
113 guilty of a class [D felony] C misdemeanor, except that, if such person

114 violates the provisions of this section by failing to notify the
115 Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection without
116 undue delay of a change of name, address or status or another
117 reportable event, such person shall only be subject to such penalty if
118 such failure continues for five business days.

119 (2) Any person who does not receive by mail an address verification
120 form described in subsection (c) of section 54-257, as amended by this
121 act, may request that the Department of Emergency Services and Public
122 Protection mail such form to such person. The department shall mail
123 such form to such person not later than five business days after
124 receiving such request.

125 (3) The court shall enter a nolle prosequi to the charges against the
126 person for a violation of the provisions of this section if such person (A)
127 has no prior conviction for a violation of this section, and (B) is in
128 compliance with the provisions of this section not later than twenty
129 business days following the arraignment of such person on such
130 charges.

131 (4) In any prosecution of a person for a violation of this section, it
132 shall be an affirmative defense that (A) uncontrollable circumstances
133 prevented the person from complying with the provisions of this
134 section, (B) the person did not contribute to the creation of such
135 circumstances in reckless disregard to the requirements pursuant to this
136 section, and (C) such person was in compliance with the provisions of
137 this section as soon as such circumstances ceased to exist.

138 Sec. 6. Subsection (c) of section 54-257 of the general statutes is
139 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
140 *1, 2026*):

141 (c) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the
142 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall verify
143 the residence address of each registrant by mailing a nonforwardable
144 address verification form to the registrant at the registrant's last
145 reported residence address. Such form shall require the registrant to

146 sign a statement that the registrant continues to reside at the registrant's
147 last reported residence address and return the form by mail, facsimile
148 or electronic mail by a date which is [ten] thirty days after the date [such]
149 of the postmark on the form that was mailed to the registrant. The form
150 shall contain (1) a statement that failure to return the form or providing
151 false information is a violation of section 54-251, as amended by this act,
152 54-252, as amended by this act, 54-253, as amended by this act, or 54-254,
153 as amended by this act, as the case may be, and (2) a statement in bold
154 text explaining that such form can be returned by mail, facsimile or
155 electronic mail and provide the mailing address, facsimile number and
156 electronic mail address for return of such form. In the case of a registrant
157 who resides at a residence address for which there is no residential mail
158 delivery, the local police department or the state police troop having
159 jurisdiction where the registrant resides shall verify in person such
160 registrant's residence address. Each person required to register under
161 section 54-251, as amended by this act, 54-252, as amended by this act,
162 54-253, as amended by this act, or 54-254, as amended by this act, shall
163 have such person's residence address verified in such manner every
164 ninety days after such person's initial registration date. In the event that
165 a registrant fails to return the residence address verification form, the
166 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall notify
167 the local police department or the state police troop having jurisdiction
168 over the registrant's last reported residence address, and that agency
169 shall apply for a warrant to be issued for the registrant's arrest under
170 section 54-251, as amended by this act, 54-252, as amended by this act,
171 54-253, as amended by this act, or 54-254, as amended by this act, as the
172 case may be. The Department of Emergency Services and Public
173 Protection shall not notify the local police department or the state police
174 troop, as the case may be, of any registrant's failure to register until at
175 least thirty days have elapsed from the date of the postmark on the form
176 that was mailed to such registrant. The Department of Emergency
177 Services and Public Protection shall not verify the address of registrants
178 whose last reported residence address was outside this state.

179 Sec. 7. Subsection (a) of section 54-258 of the general statutes is
180 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*

181 1, 2026):

182 (a) (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes,
183 except subdivisions (3), (4) and (5) of this subsection, the registry
184 maintained by the Department of Emergency Services and Public
185 Protection shall be a public record and shall be accessible to the public
186 during normal business hours. The Department of Emergency Services
187 and Public Protection shall make registry information available to the
188 public through the Internet. Not less than once per calendar quarter, the
189 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall issue
190 notices to all print and electronic media in the state regarding the
191 availability and means of accessing the registry. Each local police
192 department and each state police troop shall keep a record of all
193 registration information transmitted to it by the Department of
194 Emergency Services and Public Protection, and shall make such
195 information accessible to the public during normal business hours.

196 (2) (A) Any state agency, the Judicial Department, any state police
197 troop or any local police department may, at its discretion, notify any
198 government agency, private organization or individual of registration
199 information when such agency, said department, such troop or such
200 local police department, as the case may be, believes such notification is
201 necessary to protect the public or any individual in any jurisdiction from
202 any person who is subject to registration under section 54-251, as
203 amended by this act, 54-252, as amended by this act, 54-253, as amended
204 by this act, or 54-254, as amended by this act.

205 (B) (i) Whenever a registrant is released into the community, or
206 whenever a registrant changes such registrant's residence address and
207 notifies the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection of
208 such change pursuant to section 54-251, as amended by this act, 54-252,
209 as amended by this act, 54-253, as amended by this act, or 54-254, as
210 amended by this act, the Department of Emergency Services and Public
211 Protection shall, by electronic mail, notify the superintendent of schools
212 for the school district in which the registrant resides, or plans to reside,
213 of such release or new residence address, and provide such

214 superintendent with the same registry information for such registrant
215 that the department makes available to the public through the Internet
216 under subdivision (1) of this subsection.

217 (ii) Whenever a registrant is released into the community, or
218 whenever a registrant changes such registrant's residence address and
219 notifies the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection of
220 such change pursuant to section 54-251, as amended by this act, 54-252,
221 as amended by this act, 54-253, as amended by this act, or 54-254, as
222 amended by this act, the Department of Emergency Services and Public
223 Protection shall, by electronic mail, notify the chief executive officer of
224 the municipality in which the registrant resides, or plans to reside, of
225 such release or new residence address, and provide such chief executive
226 officer with the same registry information for such registrant that the
227 department makes available to the public through the Internet under
228 subdivision (1) of this subsection.

229 (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this
230 subsection, state agencies, the Judicial Department, state police troops
231 and local police departments shall not disclose the identity of any victim
232 of a crime committed by a registrant or treatment information provided
233 to the registry pursuant to sections 54-102g and 54-250 to 54-258a,
234 inclusive, as amended by this act, except to government agencies for
235 bona fide law enforcement or security purposes.

236 (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this
237 subsection, registration information the dissemination of which has
238 been restricted by court order pursuant to section 54-255 and which is
239 not otherwise subject to disclosure, shall not be a public record and shall
240 be released only for law enforcement purposes until such restriction is
241 removed by the court pursuant to said section.

242 (5) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this
243 subsection, a registrant's electronic mail address, instant message
244 address or other similar Internet communication identifier shall not be
245 a public record, except that the Department of Emergency Services and
246 Public Protection may release such identifier for law enforcement or

247 security purposes in accordance with regulations adopted by the
 248 department. The department shall adopt regulations in accordance with
 249 chapter 54 to specify the circumstances under which and the persons to
 250 whom such identifiers may be released including, but not limited to,
 251 providers of electronic communication service or remote computing
 252 service, as those terms are defined in section 54-260b, and operators of
 253 Internet web sites, and the procedure therefor.

254 (6) When any registrant completes the registrant's term of registration
 255 or is otherwise released from the obligation to register under section 54-
 256 251, as amended by this act, 54-252, as amended by this act, 54-253, as
 257 amended by this act, or 54-254, as amended by this act, the Department
 258 of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall, not later than five
 259 business days after the registrant is released from such obligation, notify
 260 any state police troop or local police department having jurisdiction
 261 over the registrant's last reported residence address that the person is
 262 no longer a registrant, and the Department of Emergency Services and
 263 Public Protection, state police troop and local police department shall,
 264 not later than five business days after the registrant is released from
 265 such obligation, remove the registrant's name and information from the
 266 registry.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	54-250(11)
Sec. 2	October 1, 2026	54-251(e)
Sec. 3	October 1, 2026	54-252(d)
Sec. 4	October 1, 2026	54-253(e)
Sec. 5	October 1, 2026	54-254(b)
Sec. 6	October 1, 2026	54-257(c)
Sec. 7	October 1, 2026	54-258(a)

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Judicial Dept. (Probation); Correction, Dept.	GF - Potential Savings	Minimal	Minimal
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Potential Revenue Loss	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill lowers the penalty for a registrant's unintentional failure to verify their address from a class D felony to a class C misdemeanor, which results in potential savings to the Department of Correction and the Judicial Department for decreased incarceration or probation¹ and a potential revenue loss from fines in FY 27 and FY 28. On average, the marginal cost to the state for incarcerating an offender for the year is \$3,300² while the average marginal cost for supervision in the community is less than \$600³ each year for adults.

¹ Between FY 22 and FY 25, there were a total of 4,152 offenses recorded and \$10,700 in fines collected under CGS §§ 54-251 through 54-254. About 20 offenders are currently incarcerated under these statutes.

² Inmate marginal cost is based on increased consumables (e.g., food, clothing, water, sewage, living supplies, etc.). This does not include a change in staffing costs or utility expenses because these expenses would only be realized if a unit or facility opened.

³ Probation marginal cost is based on services provided by private providers and only includes costs that increase with each additional participant. This does not include a cost for additional supervision by a probation officer unless a new offense is anticipated to result in enough additional offenders to require additional probation officers.

The remaining provisions of the bill do not result in a fiscal impact because the affected agencies have the capacity and expertise to meet the bill's requirements.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of offenses and fines collected.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 509*****AN ACT CONCERNING ADDRESS VERIFICATION REFORMS FOR REGISTRANTS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes to laws on sex offender registration, including registration requirement violations, address verification forms, and removal from the registry.

The bill reduces the penalty for violations of the sex offender registration requirements from a class D felony to a class C misdemeanor. By law, a class D felony is punishable by up to five years in prison, a fine up to \$5,000, or both. A class C misdemeanor is punishable by up to three months in prison, a fine up to \$500, or both.

The bill also requires the court to enter a decision to not prosecute in certain circumstances and creates an affirmative defense for uncontrollable circumstances.

The bill makes the following changes related to sex offender registrants' address verification requirement:

1. modifies the address verification form's return instructions;
2. establishes a process for a registrant to request a form if one was not received and requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to send it within five business days of the request;
3. increases the time for a registrant to return an address verification form after receiving it, from 10 days after the form's mailing date to 30 days after the form's postmark;

4. prohibits DESPP from notifying state or local police of a person's failure to register before 30 days after the form's postmark date; and
5. sets a five-business-day deadline for (a) DESPP to inform state and local police that a person is no longer required to register and (b) DESPP and the police to remove the person's name from the registry.

It also modifies the definition of the term "sexually violent offense" as it relates to 3rd degree sexual assault by making engaging in sexual intercourse with certain relatives not a sexually violent offense, but it makes subjecting a person to sexual contact when the person is mentally incapacitated or impaired because of mental disability or disease and is unable to consent a sexually violent offense under the law (§ 1).

Lastly, the bill makes minor and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

SEXUAL OFFENDER REGISTRATION

By law, certain offenders must register as sex offenders for a specified period of time (see BACKGROUND). Sex offenders are generally required to register within three days after release, as directed by the Department of Correction commissioner, or without undue delay after moving to Connecticut. By law, these offenders are:

1. required to register their name, identifying factors (including a photograph and fingerprints), criminal history record, residential address, and email and instant message addresses and other similar Internet communication identifiers;
2. subject to address verification and the retaking of photographs; and
3. subject to the notification provisions that apply to victims and certain students and employees.

Decision to Not Prosecute

Under the bill, the court must enter a decision to not prosecute (nolle prosequi) charges for violating the registration requirements, if the person who is charged with the violation has no prior conviction for that violation and becomes compliant within 20 business days after his or her arraignment for the violation.

Affirmative Defense

In cases where a person is prosecuted for failure to comply with the registration requirements, the bill creates an affirmative defense that:

1. uncontrollable circumstances prevented the person from complying with the provisions,
2. the person did not cause the circumstances in reckless disregard to the requirements, and
3. the person became compliant as soon as the circumstances no longer existed.

ADDRESS VERIFICATION

By law, DESPP generally must verify each registered sex offender's residential address every 90 days after his or her initial registration by mailing a verification form to his or her last reported address. The bill specifies that this is an address verification form. (Under the law, if the registrant lives at an address where there is no residential mail delivery, the local police department or state police troop in whose jurisdiction the registrant resides must verify a registrant's residential address in person every 90 days.)

Form Return. Under existing law, the registrant may return the form by fax, email, or mail. The bill increases the time for a registrant to return an address verification form after receiving it, from 10 days after the form's mailing date to 30 days after the form's postmark. Correspondingly, the bill prohibits DESPP from informing the state or local police of a person's failure to register before 30 days after the postmark on the form.

Form Content. Under current law, the form must contain a statement that failure to return the form or providing false information is a violation of the applicable sex offender registration requirement. The bill additionally requires the form to include a statement in bold text explaining that the form can be returned by mail, fax, or email and provide the mailing address, fax number, and email address for the form's return.

Form Request. The bill also (1) allows a registrant who does not receive an address verification form by mail to ask DESPP to mail it to him or her and (2) requires DESPP to mail it to the registrant within five business days after receiving the request.

REMOVAL FROM THE REGISTRY

Under current law, when a person has completed their registration period, DESPP must notify the state or local police with jurisdiction that the person is no longer a sex offender registrant, and then DESPP and the applicable police department must remove them from the registry. The bill requires DESPP and the applicable police department to take these steps within five business days after the person completes their registration period.

BACKGROUND

Sex Offender Required Registration

Connecticut law recognizes four categories of sex crimes for sex offender registration purposes:

1. criminal offenses against minor victims (CGS § 54-251);
2. non-violent sexual offenses (CGS § 54-251);
3. sexually violent offenses (CGS § 54-252); and
4. felonies committed for sexual purposes (CGS §§ 54-250(2), (5), (11), and (12); CGS § 54-254).

Those convicted of crimes in the first three categories must register as sex offenders; courts may require registration of those in the fourth.

The law also requires registration for persons convicted of a sexual offense in another jurisdiction (CGS § 54-253).

Registration is with DESPP, which maintains an online, searchable registry.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 10 (03/24/2026)