

Date of Hearing: April 8, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1568 (Alanis) – As Amended March 5, 2026

Policy Committee: Public Safety

Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill makes various changes to the petition process for termination from the sex offender registry.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Specifies that a court may order a petitioner to appear, either personally or by video, at a hearing requested by the prosecutor to determine whether to order continued registration.
- 2) Requires the court to consider whether the offender was in a position of trust or authority in relation to any victim.
- 3) Requires the court to verify, in a manner subject to its discretion, the petitioner's participation in or completion of sex-offender specific treatment.
- 4) States that if the court is unable to obtain verification of participation in or successful completion of treatment, the court may order a current risk assessment.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Costs of an unknown, but potentially significant, amount to courts for risk assessments and additional hearing procedures related to sex offender registry termination petitions (General Fund).

This bill adds procedural requirements to the existing petition process for termination from the sex offender registry. The primary cost driver is the bill's provision allowing courts to order risk assessments where verification of treatment completion is unavailable. The Judicial Council estimates each assessment costs approximately \$1,000. Given the population covered by the bill — tier one and tier two registrants who have completed minimum registration periods of 10 or 20 years — it is likely that many petitioners will lack verifiable treatment records, as their original assessments may have been conducted years or decades earlier. The Judicial Council anticipates that courts will order risk assessments for a substantial share of petitioners.

These assessments would typically be a local probation cost, but because petitioners at this stage are generally no longer under probation supervision, it is unclear who would bear the cost of court-ordered assessments; the Judicial Council anticipates the costs would fall to the courts. The bill is silent on this point. The total cost will depend on the volume of petitions, which is

uncertain but expected to grow over time as more registrants reach their minimum registration periods.

The bill also adds requirements that courts verify treatment completion and consider whether the offender held a position of trust or authority. The bill allows courts to order petitioners to appear in person or by video. These provisions would add modest incremental workload to existing hearings.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year beginning in the 2027-28 fiscal year.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author,

Assembly Bill 1568 strengthens California's sex offender registration laws to better protect communities by requiring tier one and tier two sex offenders to provide proof of completing a state-approved sex offender treatment program before they can petition a court to be removed from the registry...This will make Californians safer by preventing these individuals from being removed from the registry without demonstrating behavioral change, while making the criminal justice system more equitable by applying uniform rehabilitation standards and enhancing community protections for vulnerable families and neighborhoods

2) **Background.** California was the first state to require sex offender registration in 1947; in 1996, with the introduction of Megan's Law, that information became publicly available. In 2003, California required the DOJ to put that list on a public access website with the offender's address, photo and list of offenses. At the time, the law required a lifetime registration. In a 2014 report, the California Sex Offender Management Board (CASOMB) noted there were nearly 100,000 registrants in California, as a result of California's "universal lifetime" registration for persons convicted of most sex offenses.

In 2017, California modified its sex registry to a three-tiered registration system based on seriousness of the crime, risk of sexual reoffending, and criminal history. The move to the tiered system was motivated by concern that public resources were being inefficiently allocated: law enforcement cannot protect the community effectively when they are in the office doing monthly or annual paperwork for low-risk offenders, when they could be out in the community monitoring high risk offenders. Furthermore, the Assembly Public Safety Committee's analysis of that measure noted that the public was overwhelmed by the number of offenders displayed online in each neighborhood and did not know which offenders are considered low risk and which offenders are considered high risk and therefore truly dangerous.

Under existing law, a tier one offender is required to register for a misdemeanor sex offense or a felony conviction that is not a serious or violent felony. Tier one requires a person to register for a minimum of 10 years. A tier two offender is required to register for a felony that is defined as a serious or violent felony or other specified sex offenses, unless the person is otherwise required to register under tier three. Tier two requires a person to register for a

minimum of 20 years. A tier three offender is a person who is convicted a specified offense or under the one-strike sex law, or is designated as a sexually violent predator or habitual sex offender, in addition to other qualifying offenses and circumstances. Tier three offenders register for life and are outside the scope of this bill. As of July 1, 2021, a person who has completed the minimum registration period of 10 or 20 years may petition the court for termination from the sex offender registry if the person meets certain criteria. A district attorney may request a hearing on the petition under certain circumstances.

This bill makes various changes to the petition process for termination from the sex offender registry. First, the bill specifies that a court may order a petitioner to appear, either personally or remotely by video, at the termination hearing. Second, a court is required to consider whether the offender was in a position of trust or authority in relation to the victim. Third, the court is required to consider whether the petitioner completed a sex offender-specific treatment and require verification of that completion, and if unavailable, order a risk assessment.

- 3) **Support and Opposition.** This author-sponsored bill has no formal support. It is opposed by the California Public Defenders Association and various criminal justice groups, who argue that the bill's appearance requirement could impose significant hardship on indigent, elderly, or rural petitioners who lack reliable transportation to distant courthouses.

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