



ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY

300 W. Adams Street • Suite 200 • Chicago, Illinois 60606 • (312) 793-8550

Memorandum

To: Sex Offenses & Sex Offender Registration Task Force Members

From: ICJIA Staff

Date: 06-13-2017

Re: SOMB Information

Illinois SOMB Mandate and Structure

The Illinois Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) was created by statute to assist “in the education and training of parole, probation, law enforcement, treatment providers and others involved in the management of sex offenders. . . (and) standardize the evaluation, treatment, and management of sex offenders at each stage of the criminal or juvenile justice systems or mental health systems so that those offenders will curtail recidivistic behavior and the protection of victims and potential victims will be enhanced” [20 ILCS 4026/].

As such, SOMB’s mandate includes standardizing the procedures for assessment and management of sex offenders and periodically reviewing and modifying those procedures so that they reflect the most current “best practices.” These procedures are to be used by probation, the Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, and Department of Human Services. Additionally, SOMB is required to conduct trainings for agencies that provide supervision and management to sex offenders. Currently, they conduct about two trainings per year to a broad group of practitioners, including local law enforcement, probation, parole, and treatment providers.

Per statute, SOMB is made up of 22 members from various local and state agencies. This includes:

- (1) One member representing Probation Services.
- (2) One member representing the Department of Corrections
- (3) One member representing the Department of Juvenile Justice
- (4) One member representing the Department of Human Services
- (5) One member representing the Illinois State Police
- (6) One member representing the Department of Children & Family Services
- (7) One member representing the Office of the Attorney General
- (8) One licensed mental health professional with documented expertise in the treatment of sex offenders
- (9) Two State's Attorneys or assistant State's Attorneys, one representing juvenile court matters and one representing felony court matters;
- (10) One member representing the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts
- (11) One member representing the Cook County State's Attorney
- (12) One member representing the State's Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor
- (13) One member representing the Cook County Public Defender



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- (14) Two members representing local law enforcement, with at least one officer with juvenile sex offender experience;
- (15) Two members who are recognized experts in the field of sexual assault and who can represent sexual assault victims and victims' rights organizations;
- (16) One member representing the State Appellate Defender
- (17) One member representing the Illinois Polygraph Society
- (18) One member representing the Criminal Justice Information Authority
- (19) One member representing the Illinois Chapter of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers or his or her designee.

Illinois SOMB Challenges

SOMB does not have staff or other resources outside of the appointed members, nor does it have a designated agency location. Its current structure and lack of staffing, resources, and agency location undermines its ability to carry out its mandate.

SOMB does not have the staff needed to adequately research best practices, update assessment and management procedures, and conduct needed training. Rather, SOMB's mandate is carried out by individuals who have other primary responsibilities. SOMB is not housed under any specific organization, nor does it have a set office or location. As a result, the default is having it located under the agency of the providing officer, or chairperson. The chairperson must facilitate and organize SOMB's work while also managing other, existing responsibilities.

Additionally, SOMB's ability to promote best practices is limited because it is not an independent agency. Some members may feel they are unable to make or agree upon recommendations that their respective agencies do not support. This makes promoting best practices difficult when they do not coincide with individual agency goals and procedures.

SOMBs in Other States

California

The CA SOMB was created by statute in 2006 and has had as many as 17 members (currently, there are 4 vacancies), with 7 members appointed by the Governor's Office. It meets monthly and its vision is to decrease sexual victimization and increase community safety and addresses issues, concerns and problems related to community management of adult sex offenders by identifying and developing recommendations to improve policies and practices.

It is housed within and staffed by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. It issues Year-End Reports. In 2013 the CA SOMB published a registration best practices report.

Colorado



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The CO SOMB is part of the Division of Criminal Justice, Department of Public Safety, and it has 6 full-time staff members, including a statistician. The CO SOMB does three things: (1) develops standards; (2) approves providers; and (3) recommends legislation and policy.

Washington

The WA SOMB was formed in 2008 after a high profile case. It was designed from a political standpoint to be a cushion from legislators and operated like a think tank. The WA SOMB developed recommendations to prevent legislators from engaging in reactive legislation.

Additional Differences

- Some SOMBs are statutorily enacted while others are informal coalitions (e.g., Massachusetts).
- Some SOMBs focus on one task (e.g., sex offender registry), but do not deal with broader-based policy regarding sex offenders.

Additional Information:

Center for Sex Offender Management (including links to SOMBs):
<http://www.csom.org/links/index.html>

Potential Changes to Illinois SOMB

- (1) Restructure SOMB to be staffed and located under an agency that can research and inform best practices, like the Sentencing Policy Advisory Council (SPAC).
- (2) In addition to researching best practices for managing sex offenders in Illinois, task SOMB with investigating and making recommendations for infrastructure changes that will allow for the implementation of research-based policies. For example, if risk-assessments are to be utilized for every sex offender and administered by treatment providers, there needs to be structured, consistent training for every sex offender treatment provider throughout the state on the proper usage of the risk-assessments.