

Insights: Publications

## Registered for Life: Addressing the Removal Issue within Missouri's Sex Offender Registration Act

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Based on plain text, Missouri's Sex Offender Registration Act (SORA) appears to permit sex offenders to petition for removal from the state's sex offender registry. But, in practice, the statute's removal provision is useless for almost all Missouri offenders. A 2018 amendment to Missouri's SORA was intended to replace the statute's lifetime registration requirement with a system that would allow less serious offenders to obtain removal from the state's registry once they satisfied certain prerequisites. However, the removal statute has failed to benefit registrants because the provision only applies to one of the eight statutory registration requirements. Because of this limitation, the removal provision is ineffective for many Missouri offenders who are subject to more than one registration obligation. As a consequence, qualifying sex offenders are unable to remove their names from the registry, and the purpose of the sex offender registry—to catalogue the most dangerous offenders—is severely undermined.