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## Housing, programs provide magnet

Offenders come from out-of-state

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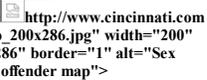
Derek Logue had never been to Ohio until he was released from an Alabama state prison in 2003.

### TOO MANY LIMITS?

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- [Restricting sex offenders \(7/26\)](#)

### SEE THE DATA

<http://news.enquirer.com/assets/AB80067729.PDF> target="\_blank"

class=smlink> [http://www.cincinnati.com/img/off-map\\_200x286.jpg](http://www.cincinnati.com/img/off-map_200x286.jpg) width="200" height="286" border="1" alt="Sex offender map">

- <http://dunes.cincinnati.com/data/crime/sexoffenders/> class=smlink>Data Center: See if a sex offender lives near you.

- <http://news.enquirer.com/assets/AB80067729.PDF> target="\_blank" class=smlink>Area map: Where sex offenders live (PDF)

### CONVERSATION

- [Video: Concerned neighbors](#)
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ineligible for public housing. The Enquirer's analysis suggests that neighborhoods with affordable rental housing and public transportation - such as Carthage, Lower Price Hill, Camp Washington, Price Hill and Avondale - have greater concentrations of sex offenders.

Some, like Logue, say sex offender laws are more lenient here than in other states. "I was supposed to go to Florida, but Florida was too tough on sex offenders," he says. Florida has a lifetime registration requirement for almost all sex offenders. In Ohio, less serious offenders must register for 20 years.

"It's not fair that they're dumping them all here. They're not naturally occurring here," says Jim McNulty of Westwood, president of the Cincinnati Homeowners Association.

## Treatment backlash

One target: The Pogue Center at 151 W. McMicken St. Westwood Concern, one of the city's most influential neighborhood groups, is perhaps the most vocal, arguing that those sex offenders will one day complete the program and move into city neighborhoods like Westwood, three miles away.

Residents have threatened pickets and launched a postcard-writing campaign to the director of the state Corrections Department.

They say the center is "importing" sex offenders from outside the area for its six-month program, which earns it \$64 per day per inmate from the state. As of last week, 20 of 57 sex offenders registered at Pogue were convicted outside Hamilton County.

The center is less than 1,000 feet from a school and a daycare center, but treatment centers are exempt from residency laws.

Most offenders return home after their stay at the Pogue Center. But at least three who have completed the program since January have made Cincinnati home.

Pogue's director, Chris Lohrman, said his program isn't the problem - it's part of the solution.

"Treatment does work," he said. "And then pairing it with effective community supervision. The two go hand-in-hand as far as I'm concerned."

In response to residents' outcry, state prison officials say they've curtailed the number of out-of-area offenders sent to the Pogue Center.

"We're real careful to keep the vast majority from Hamilton County and the surrounding areas," says Alicia Handwerk, assistant chief of the Ohio Bureau of Community Sanctions.

The problem is that "offenders are coming out whether we like it or not," she says. "We have to come up with these strategies to make sure they don't re-offend." That also means educating the community about the nature of sex offenses.

"There's a lot of misinformation out there. It's a very emotional topic," Handwerk says.

## Housing challenges

Once offenders get treatment, the goal is to get them into stable housing - preferably with family, when appropriate - and a job.

That's where the state sometimes finds itself at cross purposes.

Logue spent 10 months at the Restoration Church, completing treatment that consisted of Bible reading, prayer and spiritual counseling. He was homeless for a while, then found an apartment in Peables Corner. But the city tried to evict him, saying he was within 1,000 feet of the Life Skills Center, a charter high school.

The prison chaplain arranged to get him a one-way bus ticket to Cincinnati, where the Cincinnati Restoration Church in the West End promised him a place to stay and the chance to save his soul. In exchange, he peddled M&Ms on Central Parkway.

"People think they're not legit, but they really are. They never turn anyone away," says Logue, 30, a registered sexual predator. "There are a lot of sex offenders from the same prison I came from. I see them around town."

Hamilton County houses more out-of-state sex offenders - 113 - than any other county in Ohio.

In all, a third of registered sex offenders in the county were convicted somewhere else, an Enquirer analysis of sex offender registrations shows. Like Logue, 49 offenders are classified as sex predators - the most serious type of offender. Five are from Alabama.

What brings them here?

Treatment programs like the Restoration Church. The largest is the Pogue Center, a halfway house for male offenders, including sex offenders, in Over-the-Rhine. It's one of only three state-chartered centers, where sex offenders are sent by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections to complete their sentences. The others are Talbert House's Turtle Creek Center in Lebanon and the Volunteers of America Center in Mansfield.

Affordable housing. Like for most offenders who are rejoining society after prison, jobs are scarce. A felony record makes offenders

Logue countersued, saying the law violated the U.S. Constitution and Article 33 of the Geneva Convention (pertaining to the humane treatment of prisoners of war).

He lost. But before the city could force him to move, the city condemned the building as unsafe and gave him a relocation subsidy to find a new place.

It took him about 250 phone calls to find an apartment that was outside the 1,000-foot buffer and that would rent to a felon, much less a sexual predator, he says.

Logue now pays \$395 a month for a Spartan basement unit in Corryville. His neighbors don't complain much - his landlord has rented to three other sex offenders in the same building.

Logue pleaded guilty in 2000 to first-degree sexual abuse, for kissing and fondling an 11-year-old girl. A psychological evaluation described him as "self-centered, self-indulgent and passively dependent on others." It assessed his risk of re-offending as moderate to low, suggesting that the odds were 9 percent over five years .

Logue looks at it this way: "If you keep treating us like dogs, people are going to behave that way."

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