

Once Fallen Surveys



Once Fallen Compliance Check / Address Verification Survey Results

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Executive Summary

This survey was intended to study the impact of in-person address verification/ compliance check operations on registered citizens and their loved ones. It was rightfully assumed these in-person checkups caused a number of negative consequences. In all, 195 individuals responded to this survey. Below are the key findings:

1. *Most respondents were NOT on probation/ parole at the time of this survey:* Of the 195 responses, 49 (25.13%) were on supervision at the time the survey was completed; 146 (74.87%) were not.
2. *Compliance checks are frequent events for many registrants:* Over half of respondents had experienced a compliance check within three months prior to taking the survey, with just over a fourth subject to a compliance check within a month prior to taking the survey. Nearly three out of five respondents have endured multiple compliance checks within the past year, and three out of five respondents have endured at least 10 compliance checks during their registration period.
3. *SWAT attire is used infrequently, but other intimidation tactics are commonly utilized:* Only 10.86% of respondents reported seeing officers in SWAT type gear at their doorstep, though none reported seeing SWAT vehicles. However, respondents reported in the comment sections seeing other intimidation tactics like officers dressed in all black, arriving in large numbers, and wearing special clothing marked “Sex Offender Unit,” “Special Victims Unit” and the like. In nearly half the cases where others were present at the time of the compliance check, officers addressed other members of the household (46.84% total), and in one out of every ten checks (10.13%), the officers pulled those present off to the side to speak to them alone.
4. *Officer attitudes vary somewhat between different agencies:* Respondents were most likely to report local law enforcement as “Officer Friendly” (pleasant), “Mutt and Jeff” (The good cop-bad cop duo), or “Robocop” (cold, by the book) than the US Marshals; US Marshals were reported to be more likely to be “Buford T. Justice” (bossy/authoritarian), “Joe Friday” (nosy and asking questions), and “SVU” (disrespectful and bullying), but also noted USMS agents were more likely to be forceful and “pound on the door.” Respondents who endured compliance checks by the private group “Parents For Megan’s Law” were few, but the results matched both local and federal agents in range of attitudes, though the most frequent response was “Robocop” (cold, by the book).
5. *Compliance checks have immediate and long term negative consequences for registered citizens:* An overwhelming majority of respondents agreed the registry led to feelings of anger (83.1%), worry over effects of checks on their loved ones (85.02%), concern over how the neighbors will react (89.23%), fear of retaliation (52.36%), and feeling like they are treated like a criminal or suspect (73.55%). In addition, one in four (25.66%) have experienced harassment shortly after experiencing a compliance check. Surprisingly, 8.81% of respondents agreed the registry was a “necessary evil” to ensure registrants are obeying the law.
6. *Awareness of their rights:* The 4th Amendment guarantees the right against unreasonable searches and seizures. If you are not on supervision, officers need a warrant to enter your household. However, about one in six respondents (16.84%) reported they were not even aware of this fact. About one in four (26.84%) were aware of their rights but allowed officers to conduct warrantless searches out of fear or the belief of having “nothing to hide.” Over half (56.32%) of respondents were both aware of their rights and have exercised the right to refuse warrantless searches.

Once Fallen Compliance Check/ Address Verification Survey Results

Introduction

Perhaps there is no more humiliating and frightful experience to most registrants than enduring an “address verification check” or “compliance check.” If you are a registered citizen, you will experience an in-person address verification at some point during your registration tenure. If you have yet to experience a compliance check, perhaps the survey may help you prepare for one. If you have already experienced a compliance check, chances are you may relate to results of this survey.

As a registered citizen, I have endured a handful of address verification checks, both by local law enforcement and as part of a joint operation involving the US Marshals Service (USMS). In my personal experience, I had noticed a difference in approach and attitude from the officers involved. The local Sheriff’s deputies acted in a more respectful manner than the US Marshal that came to my door in May 2013. I found the US Marshal to be very rude, incompetent, and very threatening (he was dressed in full SWAT attire, only missing a riot helmet). Whereas local law enforcement would merely require me to stand outside my apartment building and sign a piece of paper to verify that the officer stopped by, the US Marshal attempted a warrantless search of my property. (I refused entry, and he threatened to return, but never did.) The US Marshall made many threats and accusations, and also made a very explicit demand that I showed him my bedroom to confirm I lived at my residence. He accused me of fighting something after I refused entry.

A few days after this very unnerving compliance check, the local news ran articles on this joint operation, formally called “Adam Walsh Compliance Operation,” but informally called “Spring Cleaning,” in the words of Hamilton County (OH) Sheriff Jim Neil.¹ When I first read the report, I became very angry, particularly at the Sheriff’s comments which implied he was taking out trash instead of harassing human beings.

Expect compliance check operations to become more frequent in the coming years; as of August 2016, S.2613, the Reauthorization of the Adam Walsh Act, awaits further approval in Congress, and if it passes, it will grant \$61 million a year to the USMS to conduct more address verification checks.

The goal of this survey is twofold. First, this survey attempts to gauge the behaviors of compliance check officers. One hypothesis is that compliance check operations conducted by the USMS are fundamentally different than compliance checks conducted by local law enforcement. In addition, Suffolk County NY registrants endure compliance check operations by Parents For Megan’s Law, a private business; this survey also studies the unique compliance checks conducted by this organization. Second, this survey studies the impact of compliance check operations on individual registrants. The hypothesis is registered citizens experience a number of ill effects as the result of compliance check operations. It is my hope the survey also inspires other researchers to conduct similar studies on this issue.

¹ “Deputies check addresses on hundreds of Hamilton Co. sex offenders.” WLWT. Hearst Television. 28 May 2013. Web. <<http://www.wlwt.com/news/local-news/hamilton-county/deputies-check-addresses-on-1400-hamilton-co-sex-offenders/20329496>>

Methodology

This survey was posted online using the website esurv.org, a completely free, secure, and unlimited online survey website independently funded by The Ohio State University, The University of Edinburgh, UK, Indiana University, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Universit de Provence lettres et sciences humaines, France, and the University of Toronto, Canada. The survey allows unlimited responses and has options to filter responses. Because a small minority of survey takers had experienced web browser-related issues, a handful of responses were duplicate copies of completed responses, and were subsequently manually purged from the results. This in no way affects the survey, as only these duplicate submissions as the result of web-related issues were purged from the results.

Over the course of four and a half months, from March 20, 2016 to August 5, 2016, this survey was advertised on various websites and social networks dedicated to providing resources, support, or activism for registered citizens and their families. These sites include Sex Offender Solutions & Education Network (SOSEN), Refom Sex Offender Laws (RSOL), Daily Strength's "Families of Sex Offenders" subforums, all of Once Fallen's affiliate websites and blogs, and various forms of online social media associated with Once Fallen. In addition, those contacting Once Fallen for assistance were solicited for responses to the survey.

The Survey itself was a 28-question multiple choice survey soliciting responses specifically to registered citizens in the US who were not currently incarcerated (or detained in a "civil commitment center) as well as loved ones living with a registered citizen And who had experienced at least one in-person address verification/ compliance check.

In all, 195 registered citizens completed the survey. Not every question was answered by every survey seeker, so the results will be based on the number of answered questions instead of the number of total Survey takers.

Results

Question 1: "The person filling out this survey is..."

This survey was open to anyone who had experienced a compliance check survey, which included family members, roommates, or anyone else living in the household of a registered citizen. Of the 194 who responded to this survey, 168 (86.6%) were registered citizens, 17 (8.76%) were the significant others or spouses of registrants, 8 (4.12%) were the parents of registrants, and one (0.52%) was not related to the registrant (i.e., a friend or roommate).

Question 2: "Is the registrant in your household currently on probation or parole?"

Those on supervision are subject to more rules (and likely more in-person verifications) than those not on supervision. Of the 195 responses, 49 (25.13%) were on supervision at the time the survey was completed; 146 (74.87%) were not.

Question 3: "Please Choose Your US State or Territory of Residence."

It should be noted I received some emails from survey takers that this question would not allow responses. Only 152 survey respondents were able to answer this question. Of the 152 who were able to respond, Over a fourth (26.97% to be exact) came from one state—Florida, and about one in 10 were from California. Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Kansas, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia,

Washington DC, and Wyoming were not represented among the 152 respondents (although of the 43 who were unable to answer the question due to a glitch in the system, it is possible respondents could have been residents of any of these states).

Question 4: Does your registration office conduct regular compliance checks or are they completely random?

Of the 192 respondents, 31 (16.15%) answered they endured regularly scheduled compliance checks; 161 (83.85%) stated the compliance checks are completely random.

Question 5: Where have officers visited for conducting compliance checks? (Check all that apply)

Most often, compliance checks are conducted at the residence of registered citizens. Of the 195 respondents, 186 (88.16%) experienced a compliance check at home; 7 (3.32%) had an officer show up at the home of a friend or family member; 16 (7.58%) reported having an officer show up at a place of employment; and 2 (0.95%) had an officer show up at a school. This question allowed multiple answers to a selected so the total number of responses will not equal 195.

This question allowed a space for further comments. Three individuals stated they have never experienced a compliance check (and thus should not have taken this survey). One stated a compliance officer showed up at a homeless camp where the registrant resided. Another stated an officer only stopped by once to notify a change in registration laws.

Question 6: When was the last time you experienced a compliance check?

Of the 192 respondents, 17 (8.85%) experienced a compliance check within a week before taking the survey; 37 (19.27%) replied, "Over a week but within the past month"; 50 (26.04%) replied, "Between one and 3 months"; 33 (17.19%) replied, "Between 4-6 months"; 23 (11.98%) replied, "6-12 months"; 32 (16.67%) replied, "Over a year ago."

Over half had experienced a compliance check within three months prior to taking the survey, with just over a fourth subject to a compliance check within a month prior to taking the survey.

Question 7: In the past 12 months, how many compliance checks have you endured?

Of the 195 respondents, 29 (14.87%) stated "None"; 52 (26.67%) replied, "Just One"; 91 (46.67%) replied, "More than one but less than five"; 23 (11.79%) replied, "Five or more."

Nearly three out of five registrants have endured multiple compliance checks within the past year.

Question 8: Please estimate the number of compliance checks you have experienced during the time you are forced to register.

Of the 191 respondents, 12 (6.28%) responded, "Once"; 46 (24.08%) responded, "More than one but less than five"; 37 (19.37%) responded, "More than five but less than ten"; 96 (50.26%) have responded, "Ten or more." Over half of our survey takers have experienced at least ten compliance checks.

Question 9: What types of Law Enforcement Officers have come to your door for compliance checks? (check all that apply)

Most compliance checks are done at the local level. Of the 193 respondents, 37 (12.13%) replied compliance checks were conducted by a constable/ state police or equivalent; 101 (33.11%) were checked by city/local police; 7 (2.3%) were checked by Township Police ; 116 (38.03%) were checked by the County Sheriff's Office;; 27 (8.85%) were checked by the US Marshals Service (USMS) ; 10 (3.28%) were checked by Other Federal Agents (ATF, FBI, CIA, DEA, etc); just one (0.33%) was checked by a Military Police officer; and 6 registrants were checked by private agents working with the state (specifically, Parents For Megan's Law).

In the additional comments area, 14 stated a parole or probation officer, two stated a member of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation; one stated he was checked by a member of the local prosecutor's office once; one stated he was checked by a member of the state Attorney General's office; and one stated he met a "Warrant Officer" during a joint operation called "Operation Predator."

Question 10: What type of vehicle were the officers driving during the compliance checks?

Surprisingly, law enforcement does not tend to turn compliance checks into public spectacles on a regular basis. Of the 193 respondents, 104 (59.09%) have seen officers pull up in standard police cars and 71 (40.34%) pulled up in Mark police vehicle. Only one respondent (0.57%) reported the officers pulled up in a specially marked "sex offender unit" squad car, and none reported officers pulling up in SWAT vehicles.

In the additional comments section, the respondent stated the officers pulled up in a "SWAT type vehicle;" another reported the vehicle stated "Special Victims Unit," many stated that they have dealt with both unmarked and marked cars, a couple stated they had seen cars with "probation department" written on the side, and one reported he "was told by neighbor the entire police force came in marked cars and riot gear while...at work."

Question 11: How were the officers performing the compliance checks dressed?

While SWAT vehicles are extremely rare sight or standard compliance checks, about one in 10 of the respondents reported seeing the officers themselves in SWAT gear. Of the 193 respondents, 19 (10.86%) reported seeing officers in SWAT type gear; 111 (63.43%) reported officers approached the door in a standard uniform; and 45 (25.71%) reported officers approached their door in plainclothes.

In the additional comments section, some stated the officers were dressed all in black, some reporting the officers wearing their vests on the outside of their shirts, others with the word "Police" written in white over the black lettering. One respondent stated the officers were in plainclothes, but their shirts read "Sex Offender Unit." Some reported seeing the officers heavily armed.

Questions 12, 13, and 27: Describe the attitudes of local law enforcement (#12), the US Marshals (#13), and Parents For Megan's Law officers (#27)

The following three questions concerns the attitudes experienced by law enforcement agencies on different levels. Specifically, this survey focused on the attitudes of local law enforcement officials versus the US Marshals Service (USMS) versus the unique officers hired by Parents For Megan's Law (PFML) in Suffolk County, New York.

Each question offered seven “officer personality types” corresponding to famous TV or movie police officer portrayals. (See below for a description of each.) One of the main goals of this survey is determining the difference is in how various agencies approach registered citizens. In all, 182 respondents had experienced a compliance check at some point by a local law enforcement agent; 43 respondents reported having experienced at least one compliance check involving a US Marshal; 15 respondents reporting having experienced at least one compliance check involving a private law enforcement officer hired by Parents For Megan’s Law.

These questions also allowed multiple answers and contained an additional comments section.

Officer Type	Local Police	USMS	PFML
“Officer Friendly” (overall pleasant demeanor)	112 (32.37%)	12 (18.75%)	5 (25%)
“Mutt and Jeff” (The old two person “good cop-bad cop” routine)	21 (6.07%)	2 (3.12%)	0 (0%)
“Robocop” (By the book, cold, “just doing my job”)	71 (20.52%)	11 (17.19%)	7 (35%)
“Barney Fife” (Big talker, usually comes off as incompetent or a blowhard)	10 (2.89%)	2 (3.12%)	0 (0%)
“Buford T. Justice” (authoritarian, bossy, rude)	47 (13.38%)	14 (21.88%)	4 (20%)
“Joe Friday” (Always asking questions, being nosy, trying to get info from you)	49 (14.16%)	13 (20.31%)	3 (15%)
“Law & Order SVU”: You are treated like complete scum, officers very threatening, verbally abusive	36 (10.4%)	10 (15.62%)	1 (5%)

Overall, it seems registrants are most likely to receive a friendly or non-threatening encounter from local law enforcement than from the USMS. It is hard to make a conclusion of the PFML officer attitudes based on a mere 15 reports, but the numbers seemingly match up with the results of the larger groups. Perhaps a future study could compel more Suffolk County registrants to take a similar survey.

In the additional comment section for local police checks, one respondent stated that the officers generally leave once they just see her son, but the female officers acted arrogant and shine their flashlights all over the place. One respondent stated that he was called a liar, and “Another visit they stated my step son, who they saw in a picture, was a sex offender and I had to remove his picture because they claimed I cannot associate with him. The picture was a standard military recruit photo, and he is deceased. I was still made to remove it.” A couple of respondents have stated they do not answer the door. One received a note in his mailbox to finish the compliance check at the local police station; he described the officer at the station as “mellow” and “apologetic for having to interrupt his life.” One responded they pounded loudly on his door at 10 AM on Sunday, and sat in his driveway 20 minutes after they had finished talking to him. One stated the officers hung “Major Case Squad” badges around their necks and acted arrogant and rude. One person stated the officers tried to force his wife to allow a warrantless search, and when she refused, they demanded she leave her front door open while she went inside to retrieve her son; she responded in doing so would allow her cats to escape the house.

In the additional comment section for compliance checks from the US Marshals, one individual stated the probation office just knocks on his door, but the US Marshals pounded on his door.

And the additional comment section for PFML compliance checks, one individual stated he refused to show his ID to the agents on two occasions; he responded to them they have a picture of his house, and that was all they needed and told them to leave. Another individual stated he now resides in Florida and will invoke “Stand Your Ground” laws to defend himself and made law enforcement aware of this fact.

Question 14: This question is SPECIFICALLY for those who have experienced a compliance check by a US Marshal’s Service (USMS) Officer. If you have not been subject to a compliance check by a USMS Officer, please SKIP this question. Did the US Marshal use some form of the phrase, “We need to see your BEDROOM in order to verify you live here”?

In videos discussing joint compliance check operations², officers sometimes ask to be allowed inside to verify you are living there. Since officers are “always on duty,” allowing officers inside is one way to give them the opportunity to find a reason to arrest you.

Of the 37 respondents to this question, 13 (35.14%) responded they had been asked by a US Marshal to let them inside to see their bedrooms; 24 (64.86%) reply they had not.

Question 15: If you are NOT on probation or parole, or if you were once on supervision but have since completed your supervision period, have Law Enforcement Agents asked or tried to enter your home without a warrant? (If you are currently on probation/ parole, or if you have not endured a compliance check after getting off supervision, please skip this question)

This question was asked specifically because many register citizens believe that they have no constitutional rights even if they are off probation or parole. Obviously, if you are on supervision, you have no right to refuse entry into your home. If you are not on supervision, however, a law enforcement agent cannot enter your home without a warrant or your consent. Since law enforcement agents do not have any obligation to take the truth, they may at times use various methods of intimidation, coercion, or force to try to gain entry into your home without a warrant. If you stand your ground, and you tell them no entry without a warrant, then they cannot enter your home legally.

Of the 151 responses to this question, 91 (60.26%) stated that officers have not tried to enter their home without a warrant; 27 (17.88%) stated officers tried entering without a warrant, but they invoked their fourth amendment rights against warrantless searches and refuse entry to the officers; 24 (15.89%) stated that they willingly allowed officers to enter their homes; and 9 (5.96%) stated that officers forced themselves into their residences.

Question 16: At the time of the compliance check, who else was in the residence with you? (check all that apply)

Many register citizens have loved ones, be at family, friends, coworkers, or other acquaintances who may be present at the time a compliance check operation may be conducted. Of the 186 respondents, 69 (21.23%) stated they were alone at the time of the compliance check; 88 (27.08%) reported their spouse was in the house at the time; 50 (15.38%) stated their kids were in the house; 33 (10.15%) reported their parents were in the house; 33 (10.15%) reported other relatives in the house at the time; 43 (13.23%) reported a friend, roommate, or acquaintance was in the house at the time; and nine (2.77%) reported strangers were in the house at the time (such as a Jehovah’s Witness or individuals invited to a party).

² See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0I2yNLeguM8> at 1:10

Question 17: If there were other people in the household during the time of the compliance check, did the officers speak to anyone in the household? If you have never had a compliance check with another person in the residence at the time of the compliance check, please SKIP this question.

Sometimes law enforcement agents will try talking to other individuals in the household at the time about the registrants living at the residence. Of the 158 respondents, 84 (53.16%) stated the officers did not address anybody else in the household; 58 (36.71%) stated the officers addressed other members of the household in their presence; 16 (10.13%) stated the officers pulled others within the household off to the side and spoke to them apart from the registrant.

Questions 18-24: Registrant feelings about being subjected to compliance check operations

The following six questions address a number of specific feelings that register citizens may feel in the aftermath of a compliance check operation. Registrants were asked to strongly agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree, strongly disagree, or remain ambivalent or unsure to the following six questions:

Question	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Ambivalent /Unsure	Slightly Disagree	Strongly disagree
18. After the compliance check is over, I feel upset or angry about being subject to the compliance check.	125 (64.77%)	35 (18.13%)	12 (6.22%)	10 (5.18%)	11 (5.7%)
19. I believe the compliance check has an adverse effect on others in my household.	131 (70.05%)	28 (14.97%)	12 (6.42%)	6 (3.21%)	10 (5.35%)
20. I worry about the reactions of my neighbors after a compliance check.	137 (71.35%)	35 (18.23%)	10 (5.21%)	3 (1.56%)	7 (3.65%)
21. After the compliance check is over, I feel afraid to walk down the street because the local media focus on the operation will stir anger against registrants in the community.	70 (36.65%)	30 (15.71%)	46 (24.08%)	26 (13.61%)	19 (9.95%)
22. After the compliance check is over, I have experienced harassment, vigilante violence, or other direct adverse effect from the compliance check.	30 (15.71%)	19 (9.95%)	48 (25.13%)	30 (15.71%)	64 (33.51%)
23. Compliance checks are a necessary evil to ensure sex offenders are complying with Megan’s Law for the sake of public safety.	10 (5.18%)	7 (3.63%)	17 (8.81%)	21 (10.88%)	138 (71.5%)
24. I was treated as if or made to feel as if I was under a criminal investigation or suspected of a crime.	89 (47.09%)	50 (26.46%)	11 (5.82%)	23 (12.17%)	16 (8.47%)

Except for the question about experiencing harassment or vigilante violence, the overwhelming majority of registered citizens report negative feelings and effects following a compliance check operation. It should come as no surprise few of the respondents agree with the perceived goal of Megan’s law as promoting public safety. To most registrants, the registry promotes vigilante violence, harassment, and other forms of discrimination.

Question 25: Are you aware of your right to refuse entry to members of law enforcement UNLESS they have a search warrant OR if you are on probation or parole?

Amazingly, a number of registered citizens reported they did not fully understand their rights to refuse warrantless entry by members of law enforcement that they are no longer on probation or parole; the 190 respondents, 32 (16.84%) were not even aware they could refuse law enforcement access to their homes without a warrant. About a fourth (51, or 26.84%) responded they were aware of their right to refuse warrantless entry, but allow officers to conduct warrantless searches out of concern of being accused of wrongdoing or simply because they feel they have nothing to hide. Thankfully, 107 (56.32%) of respondents are not only fully aware of their constitutional right against warrantless entry of their homes, they have exercised that right to deny entry.

Question 26: How did you first hear about this survey? (If you were given notice through email or found on social networks affiliated with an activist website, please select the origin of the email)

This question was asked for the sole purpose of gauging the reach of our grassroots network. The source of the announcements which led registrants to participate in the survey was fairly even across the anti-registry network of websites. As the primary source of this survey, Once Fallen and its affiliate sites were the source for 52 (29.71%) of the 191 respondents, followed by “State specific groups” such as California RSOL or Florida Action Committee (44 or 25.14%), Reform Sex Offender Laws/ National RSOL (34 or 19.43%), the Daily Strength public “Families of Sex Offenders” forums (18 or 10.29%), Sex Offender Solutions & Education Network/ SOSEN (17 or 9.71%) , and Women Against Registry/ WAR (10 or 5.71%). In the additional comment section, Helping Hands Safe House, a non-registrant friend, a random internet search, and even a letter in the mail were among the other resources leading registrants to take this survey.

Question 28: Add any additional comments you feel is important to share here:

This question allowed respondents to add further comments respondents felt was important for further discussion. Many respondents described their feelings about compliance checks in more detail. Below are responses dealing directly with the feelings about compliance checks [some responses edited only to fit typos]:

- “All I can say is, I'm not sure how much longer I can take this! The end of time is looking good to me!”
- “I believe that compliance checks create unbelievable emotional damage to anyone who has to endure them. I also don't think that complaining about this is going to change anything.”
- “FUCK Compliance checks!!!”
- “I go through weeks of PTSD after they leave.”
- “Local police have grown increasingly hostile under new regime expect issues to arise in the future.”
- “After being on the list for over 22 years and serving 2 years house arrest and 8 years’ probation, you figure they would know I am no threat. Not to mention I have had some say they seen my file, and I got "screwed" cause my case Should have been thrown out It still sucks, having my license stamped with my crime Lost business relations cause of it.”
- “I feel that this whole sex offender registration debacle is a violation of my constitutional rights, especially after 28 years since my conviction, and I have not been in trouble with the law since my conviction. I am very disgusted with the whole system. Have had enough!”
- “They treat every registered citizen as a non-human being. Very embarrassing and I feel like I am always being targeted and cannot move on with my life, very unfair.”

- “I have PTSD and OCD as a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. I also have Aspergers, I DO NOT like loud noise or unexpected visitors and after any unexpected visit from Law Enforcement, I am pretty much in panic mode. I feel victimized all over again.”
- “If not on probation or parole, why does a RSO need to comply with a compliance check? Unless there is a statutory requirement then it is a voluntary request to comply is this correct?”
- “The sex offender registry does not prevent new sex offenses.”
- “I am the mother of a registered citizen. As a result of these ridiculous laws, I have NO respect for law enforcement. Although I realize that it is actually politicians that are wholly responsible for these laws (I have no respect for them either) LE are the ones who play the henchmen. Next week I have ‘jury duty.’ I have every intention of (if interviewed) to let the powers who deem themselves so high, that I fully intend to exercise ‘jurors power of veto.’ I am certain that will disqualify me - but regardless of what the case is about - I would never put another person or family thru the hell of the U.S. legal system.”
- “A lot depends upon the professionalism of whatever parole officer is currently assigned to the case. In addition to a monthly "office visit and pee check etc...some snoop through everything during their monthly 'home visit' (several times they have even checked through my computer even though I have written permission to have and use a computer) some keep their hand on their gun the whole time they are here...some just do their job but there is always the threat that they might decide to try to revoke on some stupid something. It just depends on what mood they're in so I hate to see them come (no matter how 'nice' they are) and I love to see them go. They waste a hell of a lot of time snooping around but it pays their salary I guess.”
- “It's fairly obvious that the current registry requirements are little more than a thinly veiled excuse to oppress a certain group of people and further strip a citizen of his/her rights under the Constitution.”
- “The address checks only validate that a person’s address is correct via registration. It does nothing to insure community safety and the resources used to do this could be put to more effective use. A five minute visit once a year speaks for itself. Perhaps the officer could spend his/her time talking to our kids about pertinent issues which would be proactive and much more beneficial to our communities.”
- “I have no bad feeling about being on the registry. I do what is required of me and try to live my life to the best of my ability. I have my own business and I work long hours. I just feel that Parents For Megan's is just to give jobs to people who go out of their way to harass, the same registrants that are fulfilling what the law requires of them. I feel that the money could be better spent elsewhere. I believe that they're not doing compliance checks for minimum wage. That is how I feel about the contract between Suffolk County and Parents For Megan's Law.”
- “I think that people need to make it clear that they do not support compliance checks or appreciate our governments wasting resources doing them. People who are listed on a registry should either refuse compliance checks completely (e.g. do not allow government employees onto their property) or only interact with anyone doing them to the smallest degree possible, preferably limited to only signing a form. ‘F’ all people who support the sex offender registries.”
- “The authorities have my home phone number they can call and get verification of where I live. No need to come to my home.”
- “Compliance checks are always in the back of my head. Every time I hear the doorbell ring I become extremely anxious and fearful. The police in my city do not usually notify neighbors if there is a sex offender living next door. The police have shown other neighbors a picture of me to verify my identity but they didn’t say what it was for. I dread not being home and having my neighbors ask me why the police are looking for me.”
- “These laws are cruel and unusual punishment and therefore, should be changed. It targets a specific group of people to appease certain politicians for selfish gain. Murderers, arm robbers, and repeated drunk drivers who killed people in auto accidents do not have to register or have the word "sex offender" on their license. This is totally unconstitutional and should be stopped immediately. It is causing more harm to the offender and their families than it is helping.”

- “I was convicted 18 years ago and for 17 years now I have been subject to a compliance check every year. I feel like I'm part of a study. A rat.”
- “Being a sex offender is really downing I have been compliant I do everything they ask I was only supposed to be on list for 10 years that’s what I signed up for now there trying to get me on list for. Life why I’ve done my time even went through treatments why must I keep suffering I feel discriminated why do I have to keep living this nightmare I’m a class H felon there’s way worse people why don’t they leave me alone?”
- “I paid my debt to society and it is time for the law to butt out of my life. It's been over 15 years since my conviction and I am now a model citizen. All I ask is for me and my family to be left alone and go about our business unimpeded.”
- “My husband and I cried after they left. They made us feel completely humiliated.”

A number of respondents described their personal experiences with compliance checks. Because of the number and the length of each story, these will be included in the study as an appendix.

Discussion

It should come as no surprise that the overwhelming majority of register citizens view compliance check operations as extremely negative events with lingering effects lasting long after the compliance check is over, such as feelings of anger, concern over the effects of compliance checks on their loved ones, concern over how the neighbors will react, fear of retaliation, and feeling like they are treated as a criminal or a suspect of a crime. About a fourth of respondents had experienced some form of harassment in the days following a compliance check.

First off, it is noted that compliance check operations are not focused primarily on those on supervision. Most respondents to this survey are not on probation or parole. Most respondents reported compliance check operations where frequent events, with many receiving multiple visits just within the past year. The overwhelming majority of compliance checks are conducted by local law enforcement agents; only 8.85% of respondents endured a compliance check involving a US Marshal, and only 3.28% reported that during a compliance check by other federal agents.

The results of this survey suggest that registered citizens are more likely to face negative officer behavior from federal agents than from local law enforcement. In addition, while SWAT attire is not utilized often during compliance checks, other forms of intimidation, such as dressing in all black, arriving in large numbers, or wearing special “Sex Offender Unit” or related monikers were utilized by compliance check officers.

Many respondents reported that law enforcement agents have requested a warrantless entry into their homes despite not being on probation or parole. While most registered citizens are aware of their rights, a minority of registrants have allowed warrantless entry into their homes, whether out of fear of being considered a suspect of a crime, or at a feeling they have nothing to hide. About one in six respondents reported not even being aware they have a right to refuse entry if not on probation or parole.

Amazingly, a small minority of individuals (less than 10% of respondents) agreed with the premise of the registry being a “necessary evil” to ensure registered citizens are complying with registration requirements. Interestingly, the responses for the questions regarding negative feelings and consequences of those who agree the registry is a necessary evil are not drastically different (though slightly less) from

the responses given by those who disagree with the premise of the registry, except in one area – Only 52% of respondents agreeing the registry is a necessary evil reported being angry immediately after a compliance check, compared to 83.1% of registrants who disagree with the premise of the registry. Also noteworthy is the fact that those who agree the registry is a necessary evil were less likely to deny entry when an officer conducts a warrantless search; only 29% of respondents who agreed the registry was a necessary evil denied warrantless entry into their homes, compared to 56.3% of those who disagreed with the premise of the registry. Of course, it should be duly noted that only 17 respondents at least “slightly agreed” the sex offender registry was a “necessary evil,” so these variations should be studied further.

This survey comes at a time when the federal government looks to increase funding for the US Marshals Service to ramp up compliance check operations across the country. The findings of this survey strongly suggest allowing the USMS to conduct these operations increases the likelihood of registered citizens experiencing long-lasting negative consequences, and thus compliance checks performed by federal agents should be completely abolished. Furthermore, the results of this survey strongly suggest the activity of law enforcement officials in general as it relates to compliance checks should be reevaluated. Responsible law enforcement officials should take efforts to minimize their visibility and approach registered citizens in a respectful and nonthreatening manner during compliance check operations. There is no evidence to suggest any degree of an elevated threat during a compliance check operation, so the use of intimidation and threatening tactics is unnecessary and simply reinforces the viewpoint of the registry being a form of punishment and vengeance.

Is my hope to inspire other researchers to replicate and expand upon the existing research presented in this report. To date, there are too few studies examining the potential negative consequences of interactions between American citizens and members of law enforcement, particularly as it relates to enforcement of sex offense laws. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of strained relations between law enforcement and the general public, particularly in topics unrelated to this issue like the shootings of unarmed minorities. Confidence and members of law enforcement is as an all-time low as legislators pontificate about criminal justice reform. However, large-scale, multijurisdictional operations spearheaded by federal agencies such as the US Marshals, and relying on intimidating and threatening SWAT-like tactics have been a staple of law enforcement for at least the past decade. It is hard to argue these external issues do not impact the treatment of registered citizens subjected to compliance check operations. After all, it has been duly noted within this survey a number of individuals have faced SWAT-like tactics. Any conversation about registry reform should also consider the impact of compliance check operations on those forced to register as a “sex offender.”

Derek W. Logue of OnceFallen.com

August 11, 2016

Appendix: Tales From the Compliance Check Operations

The following responses were given under the “additional information” question of the Survey, which allowed anyone to freely add any information they felt was necessary to include in this study. As described earlier, many expressed their personal feelings about compliance checks or registration in general. However, a couple dozen of respondents shared their personal experiences with compliance checks; thus it was necessary to add these stories in this section.

Researcher’s note: These stories are cut-and-pasted directly from the survey results and only edited for spelling errors for the sake of clarity and withholding any personal information that may lead to the identity of the respondent. Some are longer than others.

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“LE just comes in. They don't knock or ask. I just looked up and they are already in. They said a burglary was reported in the neighborhood.”

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“Whenever a child goes missing in the area an officer comes to the door as well to check I am there.”

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“So far the only home checks have been while I was on probation. Have been ‘off paper’ for three months and have not had a home check as yet. I have been fortunate that we have only been "egged" once and no other vigilante activity has occurred as yet.”

.....

“Officers usually block off the ends of the street with their cars and also block off my driveway and one car in the middle of the street. All with red lights going. They beat on the door with their billy clubs and yell at the top of their lungs that I have to let them enter to verify my IP address and to check each computer. They say they have a warrant. I still refuse entry. Same story the last 16 years. My attorney says that if they have a warrant they must break down the door and I must not open it. They have never broken down the door. They have insisted the warrant was on the way and they have said okay it is here now open up. But still I refuse. After an hour or two they all go away. The last time they said sheepishly, "You are not going to let us in are you?" I say "I am not letting anyone in". They also visit every neighbor within 10 houses in each direction before they come to my door. Last year I built a 4 foot high solid wood fence 12 feet away around my front door area and put the doorbell button on the outside of the fence and a very secure lock on the gate. They are a lot less intimidating when they are that far away and they can't spit in my face when they talk, like they did in years past. Plus I have time to shut and lock my solid steal house door after verifying I live here. I would be happy if every officer and prosecutor and lawmaker on the face of the earth dropped dead. We could start over. Either that or time travel to undo just one mistake, but retain knowledge of all this to fix it all before it happens. Anything to keep my sanity in this evil world. The police are the terrorists, terrorizing the public about a falsified danger. Isn't that the same as making a false bomb threat? If Janice's IML suit fails we need to fire off another identical in district after district without giving up. Life like this cannot continue. Sorry I get carried away, can you tell how angry I am? I am no danger to the public, but I am a danger to the corruption.”

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“In my 2.5 years as an RSO/on probation I've never had a full-on compliance check really, just the local guy that is supposed to come around every 6 months to verify my info based on a printed page pulled

from the state's registry. It's the same officer, and he is responsible for this area - pretty young, about 25 in my opinion. My PO does come by every 3-4 months but that's different.”

“My fiancée is blessed in a way because his probation officer is respectful toward him and me. It could have been worse as once he moved from Texas to Louisiana to be with me, his status changed from Tier 1 to overnight Tier 3 level. Louisiana really needs to reform its laws but that's a mindset that is very difficult to conquer here. We are very compliant and we open our home to his probation officer. She talks with him for a few minutes and then with me, if I am here and not at work, and then she off she goes to her next appointment. She is easy to reach to answer questions that we may have. So for a State that is very backwards in many ways and has laws based on knee jerk reactions, those who practice in the field understand that there is a human being attached to legal entitlements. Respect is the key and we receive it and give it right back!”

“I don't believe that Connecticut does compliance checks as a matter of routine, my only visit aside from my Parole Officer when I was on parole was from the local police when I first paroled to the state. That was nearly 10 years ago. It was a private and fairly easy meeting and they let me know that I could call them if I experienced any harassment or problems in the community.”

“Thank you for collecting this information and aggregating research. I know of many that due to internet restrictions wouldn't be able to take the survey in this format so their stories are being missed and many of theirs are much worse than what I presented here though in the same region (i.e., from county to county, officer to officer, the quality or type of enforcement varies greatly from ‘ok and sensible’ to ‘horrific’ just yesterday I personally heard of an federal SO on probation, having his home raided while he was at work (allegedly this is a no-no). his PO came to his work with another officer to search his car and were not discrete (i.e., he felt embarrassed in how they barged in to get him) and their 'search' consisted of peering into the vehicle cabin briefly and having him open a duffle bag. They didn't search the trunk, glove box or anything else and barely even looked at his opened duffle bag (which had no type of contraband in it). While they were with him at his work, multiple officers apparently stormed his home where his significant other and two grade school aged daughters were. The officers made them wait outside in the cold, patted down his significant other. His 9 y.o. daughter is disabled with breathing issues, had no coat and yet was made to wait outside - and later they took her to ER due to complications believed to be due to the raid and treatment. Their 6 y.o. ended up urinating herself as they wouldn't allow her into the house to use the bathroom, or to leave with adult to go down the street. A sheriff who was at the scene witnessing all this agreed that he didn't feel any of it was handled properly. We encouraged the SO to have his significant other file complaints. Seems that in general federal SO's definitely get poorer treatment (regardless of actual crime) than non-federal, but not always so.”

“In my county, we must always carry a ID card issued by the SCSO You are asked to produce this ID and your driver's license and a warrants Check is done at the door. It is very unnerving whaling for them to decide if the will take you to jail or not based on what might show up on the computer or if you cannot find your ID.”

“They come late at night, after midnight, which is disturbing but at least the neighbors do not know.”

“I recognize my experiences are atypical. As a former Marine and Combat Vet I believe I get a little bit of courtesy from officers that most registrants wouldn't. In turn I am friendly and respectful of the officers themselves and have not had negative experiences with them during compliance checks. Once more, my experiences are atypical and I have worked hard during my time since offense to ensure I have made a good name for myself among police / law enforcement.”

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“I am answering this survey for a registrant. The compliance checks required by probation have put their job at risk. They required them to be at home to sign the piece of paper stating they lived there, or they required them to sign it at their place of work. The place of their work did not like them missing work to go home, or stopping working to go sign the paper. Also, their coworkers started asking questions when they would see the probation department's car and him having to sign papers. The "field visits" are scheduled, but they still cause a disruption at the registrants job place. This causes a large strain on the registrant because jobs are not easy to come by in this area for people with convictions. The registrant's job was threatened twice due to these visits.”

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“Remember that I am responding as the loved one of a registered citizen...so when I answer about how someone else in the house felt about the compliance check, I am speaking of my significant other who is the subject of these checks. I am not personally affected by them directly, but rather by the effect on my loved one. He is supposed to be checked quarterly but sometimes his compliance officer misses a quarter. I am not always home during the visit, but when I am, it has always been an ‘officer friendly’ type visit. However, he has told me that sometimes the officer is more like ‘Robocop.’”

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“I live in a country so it wasn't much to worry about.”

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“#25 I am not on probation or parole and I was told I had no choice but to allow entry to my home or i would be arrested.”

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“What pisses me off the most is when they come to my door, ask me if I am the registrant they are seeking and when I say yes, they ask if they can see some ID to prove it. The answer is always ‘no, but have a good day’ as the door closes. Most of the time, they'll ring the doorbell again and will tell me that if they don't see my ID, they'll have to put my address down as unverified. I say ‘do what you have to do but have a good day.’ The door closes and I'm done with them until they decide to send someone else, usually a blowhard, who is ‘going to see my ID if it's the last thing he does.’ They go away without seeing it, too. This is all because I have to go to the police station, be fingerprinted and/or photographed every 90 days (usually both) and tell them that my address hasn't changed. It started out being an annual registration, but they changed it to 90 days at some point. Then they send someone to my house, again, to make sure I'm not lying to them. I've been doing this for 19 years.”

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“I had one officer pounding on my door at 5am. I woke up startled and didn't know what was going on. By the time I realized what happened the officer was gone and had left a threatening message on my cellphone. I waited a while to cool down, then called him to ask what the hell he was doing. He insisted that he had the right to pound on my door any time he wanted. I tried to get in touch with his supervisor.

“They came twice in the last 12 months while my son was on parole and thank GOD it was both at night around 8-8:30pm and it was already dark. However, they came with separate cars so there were several cars in front of our house. The first time they came, my daughter had just opened the door to get a package (door we seldom use)and she came in terrified saying there were people in our yard with flashlights and then the doorbell rang. My husband opened the door and they announced who they were and why they had come. Then the female officer asked why did we close the door on them and my daughter answered that they had freaked her out and she didn't know who they were. Both times my son, who was the reason they came, was not home but we let them in so they wouldn't have to come back again. While on probation, just his probation officer came and he was friendly and polite and wanted my son to do well.”

“I have been on the registry and probation since 2013, I have only opened my door once for a compliance check done by the sheriff's office, that was when I was first placed on the registry. Since then i have never opened my door to any law enforcement simply because the law doesn't say I have to open my door when law enforcement comes. I am on probation and they can search my home any time, but i have never had probation in my house, I don't answer the door and they simply leave a door hanger. During my time on probation, I've come to learn it's absolutely about money, at least in northern Kentucky.”

“In major cities like Hartford, New Haven, etc. they do sex offender sweeps, all are involved, police, FBI, Marshals. Then there is a write-up on the news about it.”

“My county, Orange County Florida conducts compliance checks every 4 months to my home. The officer in uniform, unmarked car is generally friendly. He says I'm the best one on his route which makes me feel good. I ask him in if he needs to ask questions since I live in condo building. It's easy to overhear conversations. They took pics of me, house and vehicle once. He is always in a hurry, leaves car running. Conversation lasts a few minutes. That's all to report.”

“It's supposed to be a quarterly inspection compliance check here in Seminole County Florida but I notice they are no always on time or they a month late or a month early it goes to show you how well they do their job what a waste of TAX dollars!!”

“I don't answer the door to anyone uninvited. I personally can afford an attorney and invoke my right to counsel. When law enforcement contact informant is left behind, such as a business card. I have my attorney make contact and inform that I am represented.”

“I live in Orange County Florida with my husband who is also a sex offender. I am not only a sex offender but also work with sex offenders helping them find housing and assisting with transition. I am in contact with many on the county SO Squad and we are fortunate here that the officers who do our address verification checks are very courteous, helpful and overall nice. They try to be as inconspicuous and accommodating as possible by doing the checks early in the morning when the neighbors are not up and about yet and will help us stay compliant during times of family emergencies, etc. (They have even called me to say they needed a verification, when could we meet.) In Orange County they do address

verification after each time you register. So if you are required to register twice per year, they will do a verification twice a year although the law states they only need to do it once a year. All this being said, I still believe, as many do, that registration is completely unnecessary for 95% of sex offenders and does nothing to make our communities safer. They are going about this the wrong way.”

“They ask me is everything ok. Where is blah blah and tell them he's at work when he's not here. And then they say what time does he get off blah blah. They already know this crap but always ask me. And when hub is home our son who is 8 yrs. old has to experience this crap of them coming in and looking around etc. One even threatened to violate my hub if I didn't have my own phone locked when they came around. Talk about cruelty and I'm not even on probation. Just my hub's wife , it's brought me to feel like I'm a criminal in my home. Just cause I'm married to my hub whom happens to be on the registry.”

“In Denver, Colorado Police District 3, the police officers have been professional and polite. Both times, verification checks were conducted by one officer, shortly after the mandatory 1 yr re-registration date. The verification check/conversations took place on the front porch. In each case, the officers did not ask to come in, nor were they invited in. From what we have been told by others, experiences vary widely across Colorado and Denver may not be typical. Our gripe is not with local police in this instance, it is with the Legislatures of Colorado and the US Federal Government who passed the unjust, counterproductive, and harmful registry laws in the first place.”

“In my county of residence, the registrant officers have mostly been fairly reasonable. The officers to whom I have to register in person with, not so much. The county I live in has some fairly draconian laws that are being challenged in the courts. It has been the subject of open speculation on the county commission in public of whether the local laws are 'enough' to get all the local sex offenders to move elsewhere. This attitude either filters downward or is embraced by some of those doing the registering. Some of the others just treat it as a job.”

“Monthly checks by my PO are almost always friendly. Bi annual checks by local police are mixed. They are usually pleasant but check the entire apartment. One officer has threatened me on two occasions saying he doesn't see anything against the law but he doesn't like it (I am gay and date younger, he doesn't like that I have head pictures of some ex and current boyfriends. I've since erased them to stop his threats). Probation department has shown up once wearing all black, vests, clearly marked PROBATION, gun belts, boots, all but the helmets. They were pleasant but there were 8 of them, they searched my entire apartment and my car. I was so afraid one of my neighbors would see them. All of this for one count of possession of CP on my laptop. I was 57 when convicted and am 60 now. Was tried by the state but the feds took my beautiful 41 foot sailboat that I lived on (so it was my home) and was preparing to cruise with. They sold it at auction. I must register for life and after all this it seems extremely harsh all things considered. I would be happy so share the entire story with someone if there is interest.”

“Not sure if this is the place for this, but my offense was around 25 years ago (never repeated any offense like this since then), I restored where possible, completed successfully my probation and rehabilitation. complied with all regulations, and then went out in public to inform the public how to protect their child for some 3 years of my own accord through speaking engagements which included actual public speaking engagements, the DA's office, the Sheriff's department, grade schools, high schools, colleges, therapists

in the area, national associations and received many appreciation awards from places like the DA's office, California juvenile youth authority correction center, and many more. Some of the awards were given to me personally and others were given to us as a group. Although I was a victimized myself by multiple aggressors in child hood, that was no excuse for my poor judgments, decisions and choices. However, I paid my legal price (which by the way was the smallest legal price I paid), what followed was much worse and in a few cases in danged my own under age children at the time. Over time I earned the respect of my family and my community. When I moved to FL to help my mother, the laws changed and it is like living in a mine field of felonies with their regulations, and basically feel as though I am in a jail without bars and has really destroyed me emotionally, mentally, and spiritually not to mention the effects on my family. While with my under age child, I was chased, threatened, my house was paint balled and one time a law enforcement had to follow me home. If you're familiar with FL law, you can already see how and why this happens. I am neither a pedophile nor a predator, and I think that some do need to be behind bars, but were all not the same. If what I have done doesn't prove after 25 years or so that I am not the person I once was, then I don't know what would. Aside from all else, living in an area has become almost impossible aside from employment. I am always up front, but when I am I am bared. I had to call the UCLA for help because they wanted to evict me just because of an old offense. The way it is here and now, I can do no more than a person in prison can do. When I left CA, I had a new way of seeing things, when I got here my self-esteem was torn apart, myself image was destroyed, my family has to deal with this too, and now it seems that life is not worth living if they're going to keep hammer away at you. If it weren't for the ACLU, I would have no place to live. The ACLU called him and told him to back off in so many words. But even so I still was restricted where I should not have been. I realize it is a political thing but these dummies have no clue what the consequences are of enacting the laws they have. Where they are supposed to be protecting children, they are putting them in harm's way and destroying families. A good example of this is because of the laws that are enacted, they kill the child. I had 6 children, and I don't know about you, but I rather get a damaged kid back then a dead one which is a direct consequence of their laws. One of my own children was offended, but as I mentioned above, I'd rather have a damaged kid back then a dead one. Different states vary in their laws, but FL is really off the wall period and causes more damage than good."

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"Many of the law enforcement people are decent people and quite nice. The ones that are frightening, especially to my wife, are the big, burly uniformed officers who come to the door and pound on it rather than ringing the doorbell. We live in a condo/townhouse community with people out walking dogs and getting fresh air regularly. It is embarrassing and concerning. I am running for the Board of our Association and I worry about this getting out and becoming a major negative for my wife and I."

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"Not even sure how I should begin. I don't have a criminal case nor one pending or under investigation. I'm crime, drug and alcohol free abiding by all the laws of the land. Not sure if I need a criminal, defense or civil attorney. From what I've gathered it would appear my civil and or constitution rights are being violated which is creating panic, fear, stress, concern and worrisome for me and my family. I'm reaching for your professional help and or advice or at the least you can point me in the right direction for some. I'll try keeping this as short as possible. I'm 53 yr old Native American married for 19 yrs to the most amazing woman (critical care RN 25yrs) we're home owners in Santa Clarita for the last 15 years. I'm not on probation or parole nor is anyone in our home. Having a non-violent drug offense in 2009 led me to jail in which to our sadness before I paroled I was forced to register as a 290 due to an offense I took a deal for over 21 years ago. An offense that I paid my dues for and moved on at that time. So now I live as a registrant which is ever so tormenting. To some relief the DOJ has classified me as a low risk on the bases that the offense is a non-violent sexual offense and it involves no children or anyone under 18 yrs. of age. The DOJ has even granted me an 'internet exclusion' so my name, face and address is nowhere on

Megan's list because I'm not considered a danger or harm to society. Aside from the horrible dilemma of being forced to be a registrant on a case that I already had paid my debt, I feel that the sheriffs' continually coming to my house in the name of "compliance check" are violating my civil rights. I'm not on parole or probation; we work hard to make a living, pay taxes like everyone else with bills and a mortgage. I go in to the local station per pc290 once a year as I have been doing (full compliance) show proof of my address via DMV CDL or ID and bills that are in my name. Nowhere in PC290 does it indicate local authorities are to be knocking on my door to verify my residence, the very thing I prove once a year to them. For what I understand the sheriffs should only knock on my door if there is probable cause, if the law has been broken or someone called them. My concern is if I'm not here to answer that knock they'll just keep coming over raising curiosity with my neighbors which now defeats the purpose why I applied for an Internet exclusion because the neighbors begin to wonder why the police keep showing up at our house. I'm concerned for my home and family becoming a target. I know the only way to truly make this all stop is expungement, and certificate of rehabilitation which those whom have been granted an Internet exclusion by the DOJ makes that possible for them to be removed from the list. I haven't proceeded towards those steps yet because I'm not exactly sure what that entails. What's important now is the safety of my home and family by having these sheriffs stop coming to my house doing a check that isn't described in PC290. We don't know what to do :-(. Is there any relief in sight for this or let alone hope. I appreciate your time."

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"We have experienced officers that barged in, asked to be let in, and refrained entirely from requesting entrance. We have also invited them in a couple of times. One other point I wish to add is the time of day they have conducted compliance checks, we experienced one after midnight on a weekday which was unnerving."

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"When the PO shows up, it is randomly, always in an unmarked vehicle, always with at least one other PO, and they do wear SWAT type vests over their standard polo type shirts. EVERY time. Not once have they shown up in just the polo shirts. ALWAYS the SWAT type vests. Occasionally, one or both of the officers will be using a thigh type holster for their firearm, bolstering the appearance they are confronting a dangerous person."

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"About 3 or 4 years ago Marshal came with state police. They wanted to take photos of me in case I decided not to re-register. Asked about my work, and looked around within sight of all in living room kitchen. For 7 years my neighbor across street video me, yell sex offender every time me or my family came out the front door. He video me and binoculars. He called my work, which was listed on the website twice I lost my job from anonymous caller....He showed my printed picture from website to neighbors, waved a pistol in front of his house. Threaten to kill me, harassed my children, video my children. State and County Police did nothing but go talk with him. He continued daily, hourly to harass my family. He emailed state police I was suspicious. The state police showed up at my house to arrest me. I was getting ready to eat breakfast. I told state police what he has been doing and trooper went into car to call Richmond. Finally, came back and said he was not going to arrest me. Since, State Police hired a woman to twice a year compliance check. She has not done any of the above. County police, were abusive, three barged in in uniform, made me re register, even though I just did two weeks prior, took my picture and made it seem like I was being investigated. I Paid 40,000.00 to get off registry and VA Circuit court judge signed I was no threat to society and to be removed. SORNA came into law and I was retro put back one with no due processes and upgraded to violent on the website. VA state police will not comply with court order I am not violent..... Took me over 7 years to find a job because of registry. I could only find work overseas. Every time I came back into the USA, ICE searched me, my computer, my luggage, demanded

who I met with on business, where I went, who I spoke with and have an intelligence file on me. I wrote to get my own file, it is redacted supposedly for Law enforcement sensitive. Like I am a terrorist. Every year it gets worse.....”

“Usually the LEOs in this area are very professional, very understanding. Also the Commonwealth of Virginia employs assistants to the SOU officers to assist in compliance checks. They have always been professional as well. The only time I was subjected to a compliance check by local/county officers was during a sex offender scare that happened close to my work place. Those officers were a bit sketchy.”

“I understand why these laws are in effect. They are there for the politicians who want points to ensure their re-elections on the grounds of ‘public safety’. I also understand that the state officials who have to monitor cannot refuse because it is their job. I have been real fortunate here in Northern Virginia as all the State Police and D.O.C. officers I have dealt with (with the exception of one) have been very nice and helpful. I don't have much of a problem sharing everything with them and pretty much let them do what they want. I would like to state for the record though I have been harassed but not only one county police officer but by some private citizens as well resulting in minor property damage. I could go on and on about being a registrant but that could take a while. Thank you very much.”

“For the 1st 4 years or so, it was always a female uniformed state trooper - very 'Buford T Justice'. The last 4 years or so it's been the same plain clothes officer. I believe he actually said he was a retired trooper. I'd say he's more of a 'Barney Fife'. He's friendly enough and usually interacts with my young daughter - he said he has a granddaughter the same age. He comes once in the winter and once in the summer every year.”

“Officers woke me up at gunpoint and flashlights at 7am.....when I asked them why are you in my house they said door was unlocked....after I challenge there entry they said this is a compliance check. Asked if I had Facebook and left very quickly without anymore said.”

“The last time the compliance officer came I was not home so he spoke with my wife. He was very rude to her and asked any questions about my work schedule what I drive when I get home and such. He asked for my cell phone number which he already has. Scared my wife. Time before that he quizzed me on different laws and he had the wrong answer on one of them but would not listen to me. Told me I didn't know what I was talking about. I am very familiar with the laws and he was clearly wrong. He is trying to trip me up. I have been on registry for 13 years. I will not trip up and he knows it.”

“Compliance checks are nothing more than standard crime investigations. Officers try to ‘catch you’ in your words by talking fast and repeating questions. They ALWAYS reprimand me for something yet I've been off probation for 16 years. I was yelled at once because an officer claimed although I completed my annual update within appropriate time frames, he did not like when I had done it and stated you ‘will come on’, gave me a specific date from his cell phone calendar, and said ‘if I don't then’ and threatened legal action. Texas DPS questioned my mother if she does my laundry or not. The process is a blanket system that falls on all offenders but is not at all fair to all offenders.”

“Harris County, Texas Precinct 4 Constables are coming to my house every 90 days for "compliance" checks. They once told me that they had the right to enter my house and go into my bedroom. As far as I know the only police agencies that I am required to interact with is the Texas DPS (for a yearly license and photo update,) and the Harris County Sheriff's Department Sex Offender Registration and Compliance. For 6 years I was checked on a couple of times. -I am a 90 day (Low Risk) registrant.- Then 3 years ago the Constables Department started showing up at my door. They cause my family to have to tell their friends, girlfriends, boyfriends and strangers why the police are at my home so often. It's horrible. I am not a troublemaker and live a legal and productive life. If you doubt me, watch this video. The time stamp is incorrect. Faulty DVR hardware. But it took place May 22, 2016. <https://youtu.be/7SviFeB8NM4> [Note: I have personally verified the link and thus included it here, valid as of August 11, 2016.]

“While I personally see 'Compliance Checks' as an unnecessary waste of time and illegal, I understand that the local police department over me must do them. I have had 4 visits within 3 years and I'm not on probation/parole. Most have been pleasant, just doing their job officers. The last one was as rude and threatening, most likely because I exercised my right to refuse. He threatened me with a warrant, which I knew was false. The matter was resolved as I spoke with a sergeant with the dept.”

“I have never experienced a compliance check in any county I have lived in since my conviction: Orange County (where I was convicted) San Francisco County (where my case was immediately transferred and ultimately expunged) San Mateo County (where I currently live) I am not on any public list. I am also a woman. These facts may make a difference in why I have never experienced what most registered citizens have.”

“I have only had home search/compliance check while on probation by the probation officers, in the 7 months since it ended I have not had a compliance check.”

“You need to add a question about officers trying to contact one by phone or parking on the street near the registrant's house and waiting to try to catch one when he leaves.”

“San Francisco, from my experience, is WAY better than other places of which I have heard for compliance checks. At least, it has been for me. I've been on the Registry here and off of parole for twenty years and have had only two or three compliance checks in that time and none for the past seven or eight years. When they come here, all they want to do is to establish that I can be found here, i.e. at the address I have registered. They don't ask to come in or go off in any insinuating direction. It's all business and lasts for a minute or less.”

“Almost directly after completing parole I was unable to find housing so I was sleeping in my car, I had a 4X4 so I was able to camp in less accessible areas which I did so as to protect myself, During this time I would go to my mother's to clean up and wash my clothes, while there one morning a uniformed sheriff showed up as I was leaving and threatened to arrest me for not having an address (I had been doing the 30 day homeless register without fail) and stated that he would also add fail to register that I was at my

mom's part time. In my area (Southwest Riverside County, CA) I have spoken to other RC's that have to register homeless and they are threatened just the same if they don't camp out in "specifically approved" areas regardless of being on any type supervised release or not."

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"All the officers I have encountered have been very professional."

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"I've had officers that have forced their way through a locked gate to get on to my property. Most of them act as though they have no information about you and ask who lives with you and all the same information that you give on your annual registration. Some treat you as if you are still on probation and want to enter your home, and they argue with you that you are on probation even though you completed probation several years ago. After a compliance check usually feel depressed and angry and don't want to be around anybody for a while."

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"In my state, compliance checks seem to be at a bare minimum to satisfy the law. It almost seems like the officers doing the checks don't even like doing them, but it's part of their job. My state has not really been in the news for re-offenses, registry violations, or anything else that seems to be national news that plagues advocates for reform. I have had neighbors see a compliance officer come by when I wasn't home and asked me what was going on and I always just brush it off and tell them not to worry about it, nobody's in trouble. The neighborhoods I've lived in are poverty stricken higher crime areas, so nobody trusts the police. I'm in the process of moving to a higher class neighborhood where I may have a significantly different experience, but I don't know yet. I do know that due to my range restrictions, finding a house to buy was a nightmare and there was no definitive way to determine what the thousand feet rule covered. I also avoided HOAs because I didn't want them to adopt a rule against SOs later down the road. When it says public parks, does that count community parks for residents since they aren't public? I know better than to ask the sheriff's office because their answer is always yes even if it isn't. I found this out while on parole. I verified that our home we have under contract is safe on range restrictions, but the officer I talked to said that if someone decides to open something up, then I would have to move being there's no "grandfather" clause in my state. I would fight this tooth and nail if they ever tried it, but I'm ok right now. Now my state is restricting our voting options due to voting booths taking place on school grounds, although they allow mail in votes. I find this to be a violation of my free speech since a lot of campaigning is done at the voting booth. I'm glad my state still allows me to vote though or I'd be fighting hard on that part too. I was fired from a job after a full year of employment and after disclosing my history on the sole fact that my state shows employers on the registry and they didn't want to be associated with it. I've been denied jobs, housing, and even schooling due to my inclusion on the registry. Most of these have nothing to do with my crime specifics, but rather the registry itself. One employer was worried about their customers finding out about me and deciding to boycott. At a place I worked at as a sales rep, I secured a "preferred vendor" contract with a prestigious company. The company then rescinded the contract a few weeks later because my company had registrants working there. None of these things that have happened to me, even if I was considered a "dangerous" offender, protects the community. It only serves to harass me and my family. Shame on American politicians and judges for allowing such gross violations of the constitution because they don't like the class of people the laws harass."

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"I had multiple visits by a probation officer during my two year supervised probation. He was a nonsense guy but otherwise very fair. Only once since probation ended did law enforcement come to my

house and it was insanelly over the top - Sheriff and US Marshal, multiple officers, multiple cars. Some officers remained outside the house while others came to the door. I was convicted of a misdemeanor sexual battery and yet was made to feel like a repeat rapist.”

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“Officers have asked to see the bedroom but they were local county law enforcement, not USMC. Place of employment checked twice. Average number of residence checks are approximately 3 per year, They have come within the same month and the County was unaware of the City hiring 'Robo Cops' (cops given USMS uniforms through a grant received by the city) so they were each conducting checks during the same time frame. It would have been good to include frequency of the checks and to ask what information is being asked. They have asked other household members who they are too.”

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“I believe that unless you are a repeat offender or your crime was severe enough to classify you as a sexual predator you shouldn't have to register. I was incarcerated for a total of 12 Years. I am a sex offender. I was released on October 26th 2006 on probation. I violated my probation December 28th 2006 because my probation officer was calling me up to 6 times a day 7 Days a week to find out if I found a job yet. I was released in February of 2010 and other than a traffic violation for not wearing a seatbelt I have been in no trouble whatsoever. I had a job at a local convenience store working midnight shift through a locked window. My boss fired me because a concerned citizen decided I shouldn't be working there because his wife and children shopped at the store. That was 3 years ago and I haven't worked since. Before I apply for a job anywhere ask two questions. Question 1: Do you hire convicted felons? They usually answer yes. Question 2: Do you hire sex offenders? They always answer no. I always thank them, tell them to have a nice day and leave. The reason they ask these two questions is I am required by law to inform employers that I'm a sex offender. Even if I choose not to disclose that fact my sheriff's department will do so within 2 days of my employment. I refuse to fill out an application go through the interview process and be hired for a job just to be fired two days later because of sex offender registration. Thank you for your time.”