

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Sex Offender Electronic Monitoring and Victim Notification

### 1. Why did I receive a letter from the Department of Correctional Services?

- Effective July 1, 2009, the Iowa Legislature enacted a new law, which requires that victims registered with the Iowa Department of Corrections be notified when a convicted sex offender is required to wear an electronic monitoring device – either a GPS or Radio Frequency Unit.
- You received the notification letter because you are registered with the Iowa Department of Corrections, or you are registered as the parent/legal guardian of a minor child who is a victim of a sexual offense.

### 2. What is Global Positioning System or GPS?

- Some people refer to GPS as an “ankle bracelet.” It is a device using wireless satellite technology to track the movements and location of an offender in the community.
- It is important to understand that a report of violation is dependent upon cellular coverage and other factors that may result in potential delays. Please do **not** assume that EMS monitoring will ensure your safety.

### 3. What is a radio frequency unit?

- This is a landline-based system typically used to monitor whether a sex offender is at home, or any other location specified by the Department of Correctional Services. If the individual leaves the specified location, notification is sent to the Department of Correctional Services.

### 4. What is the Iowa law?

- Effective July 1, 2009, the Iowa Legislature passed new laws regarding the use of GPS monitoring for sex offenders who are under the supervision of a judicial district department of correctional services:

*1. A sex offender who is placed on probation, parole, work release, special sentence, or any other type of conditional release, may be supervised by an electronic tracking and monitoring system in addition to any other conditions of supervision;*

*2. The determination to use electronic tracking and monitoring to supervise a sex offender shall be based upon a validated risk assessment approved by the department of corrections, and also upon the sex offender's criminal history, progress in treatment and supervision, and other relevant factors; and*

*3. If a sex offender is under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, the determination to use electronic tracking and monitoring to supervise the sex offender shall be based upon a risk assessment performed by a juvenile court officer.*

- In addition, new standards were established for the notification of registered victims:

*A judicial district department of correctional services shall notify a registered victim regarding a sex offender convicted of a sex offense against a minor who is under the supervision of a judicial district department of correctional services, of the following:*

*1. The beginning date for use of an electronic tracking and monitoring system to supervise the sex offender and the type of electronic tracking and monitoring system used; and*

*2. The date of any modification to the use of an electronic tracking and monitoring system and the nature of the change.*

- To view the full text of the law, go to <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/Cool-ICE/default.asp?Category=billinfo&Service=Billbook&menu=false&hbill=SF340>

## **5. Whom do I contact if I have more questions?**

For specific information about a registered sex offender, you may contact the judicial district Department of Correctional Services where the offender is located. Go to this website and click on the judicial district you wish to contact:

<http://www.doc.state.ia.us/Institutions.asp>

For more information about victim registration, you may contact:

Mary Roche  
Director of Victim & Restorative Justice Programs  
Iowa Department of Corrections  
510 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
515-725-5742 or 800-778-1182