

*Sex Offenders Act, 2001: Implications for the Probation and Welfare Service, Policy and Practice*

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**Summary**

The implementation by the Oireachtas of The Sex Offenders Act, 2001 places statutory responsibility on the Probation and Welfare Service (PWS) for the post-release supervision of convicted sex offenders in instances where the Court, at the time of sentencing, includes such supervision in the sentence. The Post Release Supervision Order (PRSO) is aimed at enhancing public safety by protecting the community and reducing victimisation. This protection of the community is achieved by managing and reducing the risk of re-offending through supervision. From the perspective of the PWS, the introduction of this legislation therefore has implications for service delivery in both institutional and community settings. This article details the main provisions of the Sex Offenders Act, 2001 and examines the issues for PWS practice, as well as detailing the Service's response to its additional statutory obligations.