Section 1: Introduction and Overview

I. NATIONAL LANDSCAPE, PRECEDENCE FOR STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Throughout the country, policymakers in over half of the states have developed state-level sex offender management policy groups, including sex offender management boards, as a mechanism to advance sound sex offender management efforts. Such entities may be fairly broad and all-encompassing in their scope and mandates (e.g., generally addressing sex offender management issues and concerns), designed with more narrow mandates (e.g., developing formal standards or guidelines), or a combination of these functions, and that the objectives include[1]:

- Modeling and supporting the establishment of multi-agency collaborative partnerships to ensure the integration of the various system components that play key roles in sex offender management;
- Advancing well-informed, research-supported state laws and agency policies to shape practices; and
- Providing practitioners system-wide with specialized knowledge, proper training, and skills to implement those laws and policies effectively, with ongoing quality assurance mechanisms.

National organizations have taken leadership roles by integrating research and promising strategies into standards and guidelines for assessing, treating, and managing sex offenders.[2] In turn, many state-level policy teams, including sex offender management boards in multiple states, have built upon such parameters to create minimum requirements, standards, and guidelines in their respective states that guide and inform sex offender management policy initiatives and case management practices.

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[1] See Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM, 2010). *Advancing sex offender management efforts through state-level policy groups*. Silver Spring, MD.

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II. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATIVE MANDATE IN IDAHO

The Idaho Criminal Justice Commission (ICJC) and the various agencies represented on the ICJC have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to promoting public safety by advancing sex offender management efforts in the State of Idaho. Subsequent to a series of expert informational forums and training events convened for legislators, agency officials, and practitioners in the State of Idaho, the ICJC commissioned an independent review of the state's policies and practices specific to sex offender management, in order to gauge the extent to which current policies and practice are consistent with the contemporary research-informed and promising strategies and to obtain accompanying recommendations in these areas. Among the priorities identified in the 2010 report were the following:[3]

- Strengthen the Sexual Offender Classification Board standards and guidelines for psychosexual evaluations to promote consistency and alignment with contemporary research and practices;
- Establish statewide standards and guidelines for sex offender-specific treatment; and
- Establish a multidisciplinary, policy-level entity (e.g., a sex offender management board) charged specifically with the advancement and oversight of sound sex offender management policies and practices system-wide.

In 2011, the Idaho Legislature established the Sexual Offender Management Board (SOMB) – replacing the Sexual Offender Classification Board (SOCB) – to develop, advance, and oversee sound sexual offender management policies and practices statewide (Section 18-8312, Idaho Code). Included among the mandates for the Idaho SOMB are to establish standards for psychosexual evaluations; establish standards for sexual offender treatment programs based on current and evolving best practices; establish qualifications for and develop and administer an approval/certification process for professionals who conduct psychosexual evaluations, provide treatment to sexual

[3] The full report can be accessed at http://www.idoc.idaho.gov/sites/default/files/webfm/documents/about_us/ICJC%20Final%20CSOM%20Report%20April%2010%202010_1.pdf

offenders, or conduct post-conviction polygraphs of sexual offenders; and set forth and administer accompanying quality assurance procedures. The SOMB was granted the authority to promulgate rules to carry out these and other provisions.

III. INTENDED SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

A. The standards and guidelines as outlined in this working document apply to professionals conducting psychosexual evaluations pursuant to Section 18-8316, Idaho Code; professionals providing treatment to adult sexual offenders as ordered or required by the Court, Idaho Department of Correction, Idaho Commission of Pardons and Parole; professionals conducting post-conviction sexual offender polygraphs as ordered or required by the Court, Idaho Department of Correction or Idaho Commission of Pardons and Parole; and other individuals to whom conformity to SOMB standards is required. However, these standards and guidelines can ideally provide consistency and direction for any and all professionals conducting these services in the State of Idaho to promote risk-reduction and risk-management involving sex offenders and thereby enhancing public safety.

B. These standards and guidelines are designed to complement existing statutes or provisions, administrative rules, relevant agency policies or operating procedures, or promulgated ethical codes or practice requirements/parameters established for regulated professions.

IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES, UNDERLYING TENETS

This working SOMB document of standards and guidelines is intended to be grounded within a framework of the following guiding principles and tenets:

A. The rights, needs, and interests of victims and their families must remain a priority at all phases of the system in the State of Idaho. Policies, operating procedures, and practices cannot be exclusively offender-focused.

B. The individual rights, needs and interests of children who have been sexually abused within the family must remain a priority in all aspects of community response and intervention systems over the interests of parental or family interests. All phases of response to child sexual abuse should be designed to promote the best interests of children rather than focusing primarily on the interests of adults.

C. The prevention and management of sexual offending behavior is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted set of policies and strategies.

D. Individuals who engage in sexual offending behavior are a heterogeneous population who vary in multiple ways (e.g., demographics, criminal history, level of functioning, degree of psychosexual disturbance, etiological factors, motivation to change, nature of intervention needs, and short- and long-term recidivism risk). As such, intervention and management strategies in the State of Idaho must be designed to take into account these differences.

E. A multidisciplinary, comprehensive, collaborative sex offender management system in the State of Idaho can contribute to risk-reduction and risk management among individuals who have engaged in sexual offending behaviors. The range of entities and disciplines includes, but is not limited to, state- and agency-level policymakers, the courts, victim advocates, prevention specialists, clinical evaluators, treatment providers, institutional and community-based practitioners, release decision makers, supervision agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

F. Outcomes and resources in the State of Idaho will be maximized when sex offender management policies, operating procedures, and practices are grounded in current research and implemented with fidelity.

G. Professionals responsible for implementing risk-reduction and risk-management strategies in the State of Idaho require specialized training, ongoing professional development, and supervision and support to maximize their knowledge, skills, competency and effectiveness.

H. Intervention needs and recidivism risk of individuals who engage in sexual offending behavior change over time. Policies and operating procedures in the State of Idaho must require assessment-driven case management to ensure that interventions and strategies for a given individual are developed and adjusted in accordance with an individual's current risk, needs, and circumstances.

I. Sound data must be consistently collected and routinely analyzed to examine the quality, consistency, efficiency, impact, and effectiveness of current approaches in the State of Idaho and to guide future efforts.

J. Policies, operating procedures, and practices should be reviewed and adjusted to align with contemporary research findings and other advances in the field.

K. Sex offender management strategies are a necessary aspect of promoting public safety and reducing sexual victimization in the State of Idaho, but are not sufficient in and of themselves. Rather, resources and efforts must also be prioritized toward the primary prevention of sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, early intervention and public education.

L. Evaluation, ongoing assessment, treatment and behavioral monitoring of individuals who engage in sexual offending behavior should be non-discriminatory, humane and bound by the rules of ethics and law. Offending individuals and their families shall be treated with dignity and respect, without discrimination based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or socio-economic status, by all members of the multidisciplinary team regardless of the nature of the sexual offending behavior.

V. RECOGNIZED LIMITATIONS AND ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. These SOMB standards and guidelines address several important areas of practice – namely evaluation and treatment, and to a lesser degree, supervising sex offenders in the community – but are not designed to be all-encompassing or to represent the full range of procedures and practice components necessary for a comprehensive system of sex offender management in the State of Idaho.

B. At the time of its development, this working document was based on current research and generally accepted promising practices, to the extent possible, particularly with respect to providing specialized evaluation and treatment services.
    a. Because the sex offender management field continues to evolve, these standards and guidelines must not be considered static.
    b. These standards and guidelines must be reviewed and adjusted to align with contemporary research findings and other advances in the field over time.
    c. The Idaho SOMB recognizes that post-implementation, independent external reviews of the established standards and guidelines are an important mechanism for facilitating the ongoing currency of these standards and guidelines and gauging the fidelity of their implementation.

C. These minimum requirements, standards, and guidelines for specialized evaluation, treatment, polygraph, and/or other management services represent an important step toward facilitating a consistent, informed, and effective sex offender management system in the State of Idaho by providing clarity and direction to support sound evaluation, treatment, and other management practices statewide. Complementary quality assurance provisions are designed to provide yet another mechanism to advance the integrity and effectiveness of Idaho's sex offender management system in this regard.
    a. The Idaho SOMB recognizes, however, that the establishment of such minimum requirements and expectations, standards and guidelines, and quality assurance protocols is not a panacea.
    b. The quality and effectiveness of the sex offender management system in Idaho is further contingent upon agencies' and practitioners' individual and collective commitments to responsible, ethical, and well-grounded practices.
    c. It is, therefore, incumbent upon each professional to assume personal responsibility for adhering to these SOMB standards and guidelines and other ethical codes and standards for their respective professions, to

encourage and support the adherence of their seasoned colleagues to the SOMB standards and guidelines; to participate in and support ongoing professional development activities that promote alignment with contemporary research-informed and promising practices; and to contribute to the refinement, enhancement, and expansion of the Idaho SOMB standards and guidelines and other guiding resources over time.