

UTRSOL WEEKLY

Utah for Rational Sex Offense Laws

Week of August 31 – September 4, 2026

This week, California became the 18th state to ban child marriage, sharpening our own push for identical legislation in Utah. We provided public comment at the September Utah Sentencing Commission meeting on major proposed sentencing guideline changes affecting some of the state's most serious offense categories, deepened several coalition partnerships across housing and reentry services, and published three News From The Wire pieces following up on last week's trafficking conference. Here's the rundown, track by track.

LEGISLATIVE TRACK: CALIFORNIA BANS CHILD MARRIAGE

On September 1, California passed into law Assembly Bill 1267, enacting a complete ban on child marriage, with no exceptions. This made California the eighteenth state in the country and the second in 2026 behind Oklahoma to abolish underage marriage. We marked the occasion with a new investigative piece on [News From The Wire](#) examining California's new law alongside Utah's own unfinished history on this issue, and we sent coordinated outreach to nine Utah legislators and two victim services organizations, inviting them to engage with the complete-ban legislation we've drafted for the 2027 General Session. Utah's current law still allows narrow exceptions for minors to marry; we believe this is the moment to close them for good.

SENTENCING COMMISSION: PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW GUIDELINES

On September 2, UTRSOL provided public comment at the September Utah Sentencing Commission meeting where they voted to adopt presumptive-prison sentencing guidelines for several offense categories, including CSAM possession, enticement of a minor, forcible sexual abuse, and a broader list of serious second-degree offenses. State fiscal projections presented at the meeting estimate this change could add as many as 390 additional inmates and roughly twenty million dollars annually in corrections costs at full implementation. Our comment focused on the importance of grounding sentencing policy changes of this scale in recidivism data, and on ensuring the Legislature, not just the Commission, bears visible accountability for the resulting costs and outcomes.

COALITION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We had a busy week building new and existing partnerships. On August 31, we met with a parallel housing and reentry organization in Weber County, exchanging referral practices and discussing shared interest in reforming the Good Landlord Program during the 2027 session, along with the possibility of a Weber County host site for AfterMath Alliance. On September 2, we presented UTRSOL's housing data and landlord referral network to Utah

Case Management, an agency that coordinates health, housing, and social services for Utah residents. We explored how their Medicaid-funded deposit and household-setup assistance could pair with our referral network to move shared clients into stable housing. We also continued engaging with the Weber County Community Reentry Coalition (WCCRC), and registered for the Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault (UCASA)'s upcoming Sexual Violence Conference this month.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM: NEWS FROM THE WIRE

Following our attendance at the Utah Trafficking in Persons Conference August 25-26, we published [UTIP Conference In Review](#), a detailed piece examining a case the Attorney General's Office highlighted at the conference as a trafficking prosecution success story. Our review of the conference noted Utah's registry framework and its trafficking statutes were built somewhat independently of each other, and closing that gap will take deliberate legislative attention rather than assuming existing law already covers it. We also published a [post-conference companion piece](#) summarizing our broader conference takeaways for readers who couldn't attend. In response to the Victim Services Commission's meeting August 26, we published a [NFTW piece](#) on the emerging push for a fourth Utah offender registry, this one for domestic violence, examining Tennessee's "Savanna's Law" as the only nationally existing model from which a Utah registry establishes as a guideline.

EDUCATION POLICY: USBE VOTES TO PURSUE LEGISLATION

On September 4, the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) voted 10-2-3 to direct staff to work with legislators toward a statutory change of Utah Code 53-29-306 on registry-related restrictions for school property and school-sponsored activities, heading into the 2027 General Session. This moves the issue from a Board rulemaking process into an active legislative push for "Sex offender restrictions."

Our position has not changed from our first interaction with the Board: we believe targeted administrative rulemaking is the proportionate way to close the specific coverage gap that prompted this proposal, and we've flagged unaddressed conflicts between the proposal and existing law, including Utah's AP&P supervision framework and the statute governing a registered parent's ability to accompany their own child. We are working toward monthly sequential deliveries of our analysis and impact of these changes directly with USBE's policy team as a resource for the legislative language that comes next. We asked to be notified as soon as a legislative sponsor is identified so we can engage with that office early, before draft language is finalized.

The two no votes plus three abstentions on a fifteen-member board reflect real, unresolved disagreement rather than a unified mandate, even among the board's own education policy experts. That kind of split matters going forward, since any legislative sponsor who takes this up will be doing so without the board fully behind them.

LOOKING AHEAD

Thursday September 10 — Utah Sexual Violence Conference, hosted by UCASA

- 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM | Zions Tech Center | 7860 South Bingham Junction Blvd, Midvale

Friday September 11 — Utah Sexual Violence Conference, hosted by UCASA

- 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM | Zions Tech Center | 7860 South Bingham Junction Blvd, Midvale

Friday September 11 — Salt Lake Housing Stability Division HEART Homeless Resource Fair

- 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM | Library Square | 200 E 400 S, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Friday September 11 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]

- Email communications@utrsol.org or call 801-871-5215 to learn more

September

- September 14 — Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP) Advocacy Outreach
- September 16 — Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Hearing
- September 16 — Presentation to UDC's Second Chance Employment, The Hive
- September 29–October 1 — UDC Ranger Simulation

October

- October 14 — Salt Lake Valley Coalition to End Homelessness (SLVCEH)
- October 15 — Sex Offense Task Force (SOTF) Quarterly SOTP provider training
- October 18 — Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP) Advocacy Outreach
- October 21 — Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Hearing

AfterMath Alliance

- September 11 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- September 16 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]
- September 25 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- September 30 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]

UTRSOL is an evidence-based policy research and advocacy organization. This newsletter is distributed to external partners, coalition members, and stakeholders to share updates on our research, legislative activities, and organizational initiatives.