

Sex Offense Primer: Sexual Abuse and Failure to Register Offenses



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SEX OFFENSE PRIMER: SEXUAL ABUSE AND FAILURE TO REGISTER OFFENSES

The purpose of this Primer is to provide a general overview of the statutes, sentencing guideline issues, and case law relating to sexual abuse and failure to register offenses.

I. Relevant Statutes

A. The Statutory Scheme

Offenses Against the Person: Sexual Abuse (Chapter 109A of title 18):

18 U.S.C. § 2241 Aggravated Sexual Abuse.

Section 2241(a) prohibits knowingly causing another person to engage in a sexual act by using force against that person or by threatening or placing that person in fear that any person will be subjected to death, serious bodily injury, or kidnapping.

Subsection (a) includes attempt, and has no statutory minimum penalty and a maximum penalty of life;

Section 2241(b) prohibits knowingly rendering another person unconscious and engaging in a sexual act with that person or administering to another person a drug or intoxicant by force or threat of force or without knowledge or permission of that person and substantially impairing the ability of that person to appraise or control conduct and engaging in a sexual act with that person.

Subsection (b) includes attempt, and has no statutory minimum penalty and a maximum penalty of life;

Section 2241(c) prohibits crossing state lines with the intent to engage in a sexual act with a person under the age of 12 years; knowingly engaging in a sexual act with a person under the age of 12 years; or knowingly engaging in a sexual act under circumstances described in subsections (a) or (b) with a person who is at least 12 years old and is not yet 16, and who is at least four years younger than the person engaging in the act.¹ Pursuant to § 2241(d), the government does not have to prove that the defendant knew the other person engaging in the sexual act was under 12 years old. *Subsection (c) includes attempt, and has a statutory minimum penalty of 30 years in prison and a maximum*

¹Many of the offenses found in Chapter 109A must have been committed in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States or in Federal custody.

penalty of life. If the defendant was previously convicted of an offense under subsection (c) or an analogous state crime, there is a statutory minimum penalty of life in prison.

18 U.S.C. § 2242 Sexual Abuse.

Prohibits knowingly causing another person to engage in a sexual act by threatening or placing that person in fear (other than by threatening or placing that other person in fear that any person will be subjected to death, serious bodily injury, or kidnapping); or engaging in a sexual act with another person if that person is not capable of appraising the nature of the conduct or is physically incapable of declining or communicating unwillingness to engage in that sexual act. *Section 2242 includes attempt, and has no statutory minimum and has a maximum penalty of life.*

18 U.S.C. § 2243 Sexual Abuse of a Minor or Ward.

Section 2243(a) prohibits knowingly engaging in a sexual act with another person who has attained 12 years but not 16 years and is at least 4 years younger than the person so engaging. Pursuant to § 2243(c), it is a defense that the defendant reasonably believed that the other person had reached age 16. Pursuant to § 2243(d), however, the government does not have to prove that the defendant knew the age of the other person engaging in the act, or that the requisite age difference existed between the people involved in the act. *Section 2243(a) includes attempt, and has a statutory maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.*

Section 2243(b) prohibits knowingly engaging in a sexual act with another person in official detention and under the custodial, supervisory, or disciplinary authority of the person so engaging. *Section 2243(b) includes attempt, and has a statutory maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.*

18 U.S.C. § 2244 Abusive Sexual Contact.

Section 2244(a) prohibits knowingly engaging in or causing sexual contact with or by another person if doing so would violate 18 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2242, or 2243, had the sexual contact been a sexual act. *If the contact would have violated § 2241(a) or (b), there is a statutory maximum penalty of ten years in prison. If the contact would have violated § 2241(c), there is a statutory*

maximum penalty of life in prison. If the contact would have violated § 2242, there is a statutory maximum penalty of three years in prison. If the contact would have violated § 2243(a), there is a statutory maximum penalty of two years in prison. If the contact would have violated § 2243(b), there is a statutory maximum penalty of two years in prison.

Section 2244(b) prohibits knowingly engaging in sexual contact with another person without that other person's permission. *This subsection has a statutory maximum of two years in prison.*

Subsection 2244(c) doubles the statutory maximum in cases that otherwise violate this section (except § 2244(a)(5)) and involve an individual who is younger than 12 years old.

18 U.S.C. § 2245

Offenses Resulting in Death.

Anyone who murders an individual while in the course of committing any of the offenses listed above should be sentenced by death or to any term of years or for life.

18 U.S.C. § 2246

Definitions.

The definitions relevant to this Primer appear below:

(2) the term "sexual act" means:

(A) contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, and for purposes of this subparagraph contact involving the penis occurs upon penetration, however, slight;

(B) contact between the mouth and the penis, the mouth and the vulva, or the mouth and the anus;

(C) the penetration, however slight, of the anal or genital opening of another by a hand or finger or by any object, with an intent to abuse, humiliate, harass, degrade, or arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person; or

(D) the intentional touching, not through the clothing, of the genitalia of another person who has not attained the age of 16 years with an intent to abuse, humiliate, harass,

degrade, or arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person;

(3) the term “sexual contact” means the intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person with an intent to abuse, humiliate, harass, degrade, or arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person;

(4) the term “serious bodily injury” means bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, unconsciousness, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

18 U.S.C. § 2247

Repeat Offenders.

If the defendant has violated one of the above statutes after a prior sex offense conviction, the statutory maximum is twice the term otherwise provided (unless § 3559(e) (Mandatory life imprisonment for repeated sex offenses against children) applies).

The term “prior sex offense” means a conviction for an offense: (1) under chapter 117, 109A, or 110 of title 18; or (2) under State law for an offense consisting of conduct that would have been an offense under the chapters listed above if the conduct had occurred within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 2426.

18 U.S.C. § 2248

Mandatory Restitution.

This section mandates an order of restitution for any offense listed above. The defendant shall pay the full amount of the victim’s losses, which includes: (1) medical services relating to physical, psychiatric, or psychological care; (2) physical and occupational therapy or rehabilitation; (3) necessary transportation, temporary housing, and child care expenses; (4) lost income; (5) attorney fees, plus any costs incurred in obtaining a civil protection order; and (6) any other losses suffered by the victim as a proximate result of the offense.

Offenses Related to Registration as a Sex Offender (Chapters 109B and 110A of title 18):

18 U.S.C. § 2250 Failure to Register.

Section 2250(a) prohibits knowingly failing to register or update a registration as required by the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act if the defendant is (1) required to register under the Act, or (2) is a sex offender as defined for purposes of the Act by reason of a conviction under Federal law, or travels in interstate or foreign commerce, or enters or leaves, or resides in, Indian country. Pursuant to § 2250(b), it is an affirmative defense that: (1) uncontrollable circumstances prevented the individual from complying; (2) he or she did not contribute to the creation of such circumstances; (3) and he or she complied as soon as such circumstances ceased to exist. *This subsection has a statutory maximum penalty of ten years in prison.*

Section 2250(c) provides for a statutory minimum of five years and a statutory maximum penalty of thirty years in prison for any individual described in subsection (a) who commits a crime of violence under Federal law. This penalty is in addition to, and runs consecutive to, the punishment provided in subsection (a).

18 U.S.C. § 2260A Penalties for Registered Sex Offenders.

This section provides for a ten-year term of imprisonment for anyone who is required by Federal or other law to register as a sex offender and who commits a felony offense involving a minor violating, among others, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2241-2245. The ten-year sentence is in addition to, and runs consecutive to, any sentence imposed for the offense under the provisions listed in this section.

B. Legal Issues Relating to the Statutes

“Force” under 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a).

How courts define the term “force” in § 2241(a) is important in determining whether the defendant violated the statute, because a violation of § 2241(a) is used to prompt cross-references in the guidelines, and because such a violation subjects the defendant to an enhancement in §2A3.1.

The element of “force” in § 2241(a) “is satisfied by showing the use of such

physical force as is sufficient to overcome, restrain, or injure a person; or the use of a threat of harm sufficient to coerce or compel submission by the victim.” *United States v. Bercier*, 506 F.3d 625 (8th Cir. 2007) (quotation omitted) (holding that the evidence was sufficient to sustain a conviction under 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a) where the victim testified that the defendant “pushed her back on the bed and would not let her push him away when he put his head and hand up her shirt and began touching and kissing her breasts[,]” and then “forcibly held her legs apart while he performed oral sex”); *United States v. Two Elk*, 536 F.3d 890 (8th Cir. 2008) (affirming the district court’s finding of force where “there was a substantial discrepancy between the body mass of [the defendant]” and the minor, the defendant lifted the minor off the floor and placed her on the bed, and muffled the minor’s cries with his hand); *United States v. Sharpfish*, 408 F.3d 507 (8th Cir. 2005) (finding an adequate showing of force where the evidence showed that the defendant “had a great size advantage over the victim: he was said to weigh 235 to 240 pounds, whereas [the victim] was three years old,” the defendant “had used his size advantage to brutalize the child over time by beating and kicking her,” and the victim testified that the defendant would “lay on her, despite her telling him ‘no,’ and that he hurt her ‘down there’”); *but see United States v. Blue*, 255 F.3d 609 (8th Cir. 2001) (holding that “size difference alone cannot establish use of force”).

Attempt under 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a).

Another key issue involves the difference between attempted aggravated sexual abuse and sexual contact. Where the defendant had the intent to cause another person to engage in a sexual act by use of force, and has taken a substantial step to do so, he can be convicted of attempted aggravated sexual abuse. *See United States v. Crowley*, 318 F.3d 401 (2d Cir. 2003) (finding sufficient evidence to support a conviction for attempted aggravated sexual abuse where the victim testified that the defendant “placed his hand on her vagina and tried to insert his finger, but was prevented by her physical resistance,” and that “all of the sexual contact that [the defendant] did accomplish . . . was committed, according to the victim’s testimony, over her express verbal objection and against her physical resistance, by means of physical force”); *see also infra*, at 15.

II. Chapter Two: Offense Guideline Sections

A. Applicable Offense Guideline is Driven by the Offense of Conviction

The applicable Chapter Two (Offense Conduct) offense guideline section is determined by looking up the **offense of conviction** in the Statutory Index (Appendix A). *See* §1B1.2 (Applicable Guidelines).

For purposes of determining which offense guideline section is applicable where the Statutory Index specifies the use of more than one section for the offense of conviction, use the offense guideline section for the most specific definition of the offense of conviction.

B. Applicable Base Offense Level, Specific Offense Characteristics, and Cross References Can be Driven by Relevant Conduct

Many of the subsections of the sex offense guidelines include the phrase “**if the offense involved.**” Section 1B1.1 defines “offense” to include “the offense of conviction and all relevant conduct under §1B1.3 (Relevant Conduct) unless a different meaning is specified or is otherwise clear from the context.” §1B1.1, comment. (n.1(H)). Section 1B1.3 states that the base offense level, any specific offense characteristics, and cross-references in Chapter Two, and adjustments in Chapter Three, are to be determined on the basis of relevant conduct. Therefore, while the applicable Chapter Two offense guideline section is determined by looking up the offense of conviction in Appendix A, relevant conduct is important to the application of many subsections.

C. §2A3.1 (Criminal Sexual Abuse; Attempt to Commit Criminal Sexual Abuse)

Appendix A specifies offense guideline §2A3.1 for use when the offense of conviction is 18 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2242, 37 (Violence at international airports), or 1153 (Offenses committed within Indian country). In §2A3.1, the term “minor” means an individual (including fictitious individuals and law enforcement officers) who had not attained the age of 18 years (or who was represented to have not attained the age of 18 years). See §2A3.1, comment. (n.1).

1. **Determining the Base Offense Level.** If the defendant was convicted under 18 U.S.C. § 2241(c), the base offense level is **38**. Otherwise, the base offense level is **30**.
2. **Specific Offense Characteristics.**
 - a. Conduct described in 18 U.S.C. 2241 (a) or (b). Section 2A3.1(b)(1) states that, if the offense involved conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a) or (b), the offense level is to be increased by **4** levels. See *supra* page 6 for a discussion of cases. This enhancement does not apply, however, if the conduct that forms the basis for a conviction under 18 U.S.C. § 2241(c) is that the defendant engaged in conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a) or (b). See §2A3.1(b)(1), comment. (n.2(B)). This express prohibition avoids unwarranted double-counting. *C.f. United States v. Beith*, 407 F.3d 881 (7th Cir. 2005) (“Double counting is permissible unless the guidelines expressly provide otherwise or a compelling basis exists for implying such a prohibition.”) (quotation omitted).

Thus, since the November 1, 2007 amendment to this guideline, it is impermissible double-counting to apply the enhancement in §2A3.1(b)(1) in a case where the defendant was convicted under § 2241(c) for knowingly engaging in a sexual act with a person who is at least 12, but younger than 16 by: (1) using force against the victim; (2) threatening or placing the victim in fear that any person will be subjected to death, bodily injury, or kidnapping; (3) rendering the victim unconscious, administering by force or threat of force; (4) or without knowledge or permission of the victim, a drug, intoxicant, or other similar substance and substantially impairing the ability of the victim to appraise or control conduct.

- b. Age of the victim. Section 2A3.1(b)(2) provides for a 4-level enhancement if the victim was under 12 years old and a 2-level enhancement if the victim was at least 12, but was under 16 years old. This enhancement only applies, however, if the base offense level is 30. The base offense level of 38 under §2A3.1(a)(1) already takes the age of the victim into account. Again, this avoids unwarranted double-counting.

For purposes of this guideline, the term “victim” includes an undercover law enforcement officer. §2A3.1, comment. (n.1).

- c. Custody, care, or supervisory control. Section 2A3.1(b)(3) provides for a 2-level enhancement if the victim was in the custody, care, or supervisory control of the defendant or if the victim was held in the custody of a correctional facility. This subsection is to be construed broadly, *see* §2A3.1(b)(3), comment. (n.3(A)); *United States v. Kenyon*, 481 F.3d 1054 (8th Cir. 2007) (stating that “[s]o long as the defendant has some responsibility for the child, he has been entrusted with the child, even if another shares that responsibility,” but that mere “proximity with the child is not enough”), and it applies both to adults and victims less than 18 years of age. *See United States v. Simmons*, 470 F.3d 1115 (5th Cir. 2006) (finding that the district court erred in failing to apply the enhancement for a police officer who raped an arrestee in his cruiser because the enhancement was applicable to adult victims in police custody), *cert. denied*, 127 S. Ct. 3002 (2007).

If section 2A3.1(b)(3) applies, §3B1.3 (Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill) does not apply. *See* §2A3.1, comment. (n.3(B)).

- d. Bodily injury. Section 2A3.1(b)(4) provides for (1) a 4-level enhancement if the victim sustained permanent or life-threatening bodily injury; (2) a 2-level enhancement if the victim sustained serious bodily injury; and (3) a 3-level enhancement if the degree of injury is between that specified in (1) and (2).

Permanent or life-threatening injury. Section 1B1.1, comment. (n.1(J)) defines “permanent or life-threatening bodily injury” as “injury involving a substantial risk of death; loss or substantial impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty that is likely to be permanent; or an obvious disfigurement that is likely to be permanent.” *See also United States v. James*, 957 F.2d 679 (9th Cir. 1992) (ruling that a four-level enhancement for infecting a nine-year-old child with Herpes Type-II virus was appropriate because the enhancement encompasses the impairment of organs as well as bodily members and that the defendant inflicted an incurable serious disease).

Serious bodily injury. According to §1B1.1, comment. (n.1(L)), “serious bodily injury” is “injury involving extreme physical pain or the protracted impairment of a function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or requiring medical intervention such as surgery, hospitalization, or physical rehabilitation. *See also United States v. Long Turkey*, 342 F.3d 856 (8th Cir. 2003) (upholding the district court’s application of the enhancement for a victim who suffered rectal laceration which needed to be repaired and who compared having the defendant’s fist in her vagina to childbirth); *United States v. Guy*, 340 F.3d 655 (8th Cir. 2003) (holding that an enhancement for serious bodily injury was appropriate where the crime was rape and the 14-year-old victim was impregnated and suffered extreme physical pain during her labor and delivery). For purposes of this guideline, “serious bodily injury” means conduct other than the criminal sexual abuse, which has already been taken into account in the base offense level. *See* §2A3.1, comment. (n.1).

- e. Abduction. Section 2A3.1(b)(5) provides for a 4-level enhancement if the victim was abducted. The word “abducted” means that a victim was forced to accompany an offender to a different location. *See* §1B1.1, comment. (n.1(A)); *see also United*

States v. Hefferon, 314 F.3d 211 (5th Cir. 2002) (holding that the victim was “moved to another location” when the defendant moved the victim from one location on the property, where he first sexually assaulted the victim, to another location on the property, where he sexually assaulted the victim again); *United States v. Hawkins*, 87 F.3d 772 (5th Cir. 1996) (holding “the term ‘a different location’ . . . to be flexible and thus susceptible of multiple interpretations, which are to be applied case by case to the particular facts under scrutiny, not mechanically based on the presence or absence of doorways, lot lines, thresholds, and the like”).

Actual threatened force is not necessary for the application of this enhancement; the abduction can also be committed by “the use of a force substitute such as inveigling,” that is, imposing one’s will through “trickery” or “gentle urging” or flattery. *See United States v. Romero*, 189 F.3d 576 (7th Cir. 1999); *c.f. United States v. Beith*, 407 F.3d 881 (7th Cir. 2005).

- f. Knowing misrepresentation of identity and use of a computer. Section 2A3.1(b)(6) provides for a 2-level enhancement if, to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct, or if, to facilitate transportation or travel by a minor or a participant, to engage in prohibited sexual conduct, the offense involved:

(A) the knowing misrepresentation of a participant’s identity; or

(B) the use of a computer or interactive computer service

Subsections (b)(6)(A) and (b)(6)(B) are intended to apply only to misrepresentations made directly to a minor or to a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. *See* §2A3.1, comment. (n.4(A), (B)).

Misrepresentation of participant’s identity. Such misrepresentation includes misrepresentation of a person’s name, age, occupation, gender, or status *with the intent to* persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct, or if, to facilitate transportation or travel by a minor or a participant, to engage in prohibited sexual conduct. The use of a computer screen name,

without such intent, does not prompt the application of this enhancement.

3. **Cross References.** Section 2A3.1 has two cross references. Section 2A3.1(c)(1) provides a cross reference to §2A1.1 (First Degree Murder), but only if a victim was killed under circumstances that would constitute murder under 18 U.S.C. § 1111, and only if the resulting offense level is greater than that determined under §2A3.1.

Section 2A3.1(c)(2) provides a cross reference to §2G2.1 (Sexually Exploiting a Minor by Production of Sexually Explicit Visual or Printed Material; Custodian Permitting Minor to Engage in Sexually Explicit Conduct; Advertisement for Minors to Engage in Production) if the criminal sexual abuse offense involved causing, transporting, permitting, or offering or seeking by notice or advertisement, a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct. Section 2G2.1 only applies if the offense level is greater than when determined under §2A3.1. This cross reference should be construed broadly. *See* §2A3.1, comment. (n.5(A)). The term “sexually explicit conduct” has the meaning provided in 18 U.S.C. § 2256(2).

4. **Special Instruction.** Section 3A1.2(c)(2) (Official Victim) applies in cases in which the offense occurred in the custody or control of a prison or other correctional facility and the victim was a prison official. *See* §2A3.1(d)(1).
5. **Upward Departure Provision.** An upward departure may be warranted if the victim was sexually abused by more than one participant. *See* §2A3.1, comment. (n.6). For purposes of this guideline, a participant" is a person who is criminally responsible for the commission of the offense, but need not have been convicted. §3B1.1, comment. (n.1).

D. §2A3.2 (Criminal Sexual Abuse of a Minor Under the Age of Sixteen Years (Statutory Rape) or Attempt to Commit Such Acts)

Appendix A specifies offense guideline §2A3.2 for use when the offense of conviction is 18 U.S.C. §§ 2243(a) or 1153. Although in other sex offense guidelines, the definition of “minor” is a person who has not attained the age of 18, for purposes of §2A3.2, the definition of “minor” only includes an individual (including fictitious individuals and law enforcement officers) who had not attained the age of 16 years (or who was represented to have not attained the age of 16 years). *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.1). The Seventh Circuit has also stated in dicta that “the logic of the guideline definition [of “minor”] embraces an impersonator who is not an officer.” *United States v. Morris*, 549 F.3d 548 (7th Cir. 2008). Section 2A3.2 only applies in a case in which the defendant is convicted of a statutory violation of sexual abuse of a minor over

the age of 12 years but under the age of 16 years when the minor is at least 4 years younger than the defendant, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2243(a).

1. **Base Offense Level.** This guideline has one base offense level of **18**.
2. **Specific Offense Characteristics.**
 - a. **Custody, care, or supervisory control.** Section 2A3.2(b)(1) provides for a **4**-level enhancement if the minor was in the care, custody, or supervisory control of the defendant. This subsection is to be construed broadly and applies whenever the minor is entrusted to the defendant, whether temporarily or permanently. *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.2(A)). If section (b)(1) applies, §3B1.3 (Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill) does not apply. *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.2(B)).
 - b. **Knowing misrepresentation of identity or undue influence.** Section 2A3.2(b)(2) provides that if the minor was not in the care, custody, or supervisory control of the defendant, and the offense involved either knowingly misrepresenting a participant's identity to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce the minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct; or otherwise unduly influencing the minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct, a **4**-level enhancement applies.

Misrepresentation of identity. Such misrepresentation applies only to misrepresentations made directly to the minor or to a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.3(A)).

Undue influence. Courts should look at the facts of each case closely to determine whether a participant's influence over the minor compromised the voluntariness of the minor's behavior. *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.3(B)). Courts are split over whether this enhancement applies when the "minor" is an undercover officer and in other cases of attempted sexual conduct. *Compare United States v. Root*, 296 F.3d 1222 (11th Cir. 2002) (holding that when there is no actual child involved, the court "must focus on the offender's conduct," and not the fact that the undercover officer's will was not actually overborne, and stating that the enhancement can apply in other cases of attempted

sexual conduct); *with United States v. Chriswell*, 401 F.3d 459 (6th Cir. 2005) (holding that “§2A3.2(b)(2)(B) is not applicable in cases where the victim is an undercover agent representing himself to be a child under the age of sixteen,” but that the enhancement can apply in other cases of attempted sexual conduct); *United States v. Mitchell*, 353 F.3d 552 (7th Cir. 2003) (stating that §2A3.2(b)(2)(B) “does not apply where no sexual act has occurred”).

If the participant is at least ten years older than the minor, there is a rebuttable presumption (for purposes of this subsection only) that there was at least some degree of undue influence. §2A3.2, comment. (n.3(B)).

- c. Use of a computer. Section 2A3.2(b)(3) provides for a 2-level enhancement if a computer or an interactive computer service was used to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce the minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct. This subsection applies only to communication directly with the minor or with a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.4).

3. **Cross Reference.** Section 2A3.2(c) provides a cross reference to §2A3.1 if the offense involves criminal sexual abuse (or attempt to commit criminal sexual abuse) as defined in 18 U.S.C. §§ 2241 or 2242. Additionally, if the victim was younger than 12 years old, §2A3.1 applies, regardless of the “consent” of the minor.

Criminal sexual abuse. *See United States v. Tyndall*, 521 F.3d 877 (8th Cir. 2008) (affirming the district court’s cross-reference to §2A3.1 for a defendant convicted under 18 U.S.C. § 2243(a), even though the defendant was acquitted of the charges under 18 U.S.C. § 2242, because the minor’s “inebriated state made her incapable of appraising the nature of the sexual act and physically incapable of refusing or communicating her refusal to participate in the sexual act”); *United States v. Searby*, 439 F.3d 961 (8th Cir. 2006) (affirming the district court’s decision to apply the cross-reference to §2A3.1 where the minor testified that the defendant “restrained her by holding her hands above her head” and that “she tried to fight him away and that she protested several times”); *United States v. Archdale*, 229 F.3d 861 (9th Cir. 2000) (holding that the district court did not engage in impermissible double-counting

when the court added four levels for use of force based on §2A3.1(b)(1) after properly applying the cross reference from §2A3.2).

Victim under 12 years old. *See United States v. Beith*, 407 F.3d 881 (7th Cir. 2005) (finding the application of the cross reference to §2A3.1 appropriate because the court was free to consider relevant conduct to which the defendant had admitted, and the victim was less than 12 years old).

4. **Upward Departure Consideration.** In cases in which the offenses level determined under this guideline substantially understates the seriousness of the offense, an upward departure may be warranted. *See* §2A3.2, comment. (n.6) (listing as examples instances in which the defendant committed the act in furtherance of a commercial scheme such as pandering, transporting persons for the purpose of prostitution, or the production of pornography).

E. §2A3.3 (Criminal Sexual Abuse of a Ward or Attempt to Commit Such Acts)

Appendix A specifies offense guideline §2A3.3 for offenses committed in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2243(b) and 1153. In §2A3.3, the term “minor” means an individual (including fictitious individuals and law enforcement officers) who had not attained the age of 18 years (or who was represented to have not attained the age of 18 years). *See* §2A3.3, comment. (n.1). The term “ward” means someone in official detention under the custodial, supervisory, or disciplinary authority of the defendant. *See* §2A3.3, comment. (n.1).

1. **Base Offense Level.** This guideline has one base offense level of **14**.
2. **Specific Offense Characteristics.**
 - a. **Knowing misrepresentation of identity.** Section 2A3.3(b)(1) provides for a **2**-level enhancement if the offense involved the knowing misrepresentation of a participant’s identity to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct.

Such misrepresentation applies only to misrepresentations made directly to a minor or to a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. Further, the use of a misleading computer screen name, without the intent to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct does not prompt the application of this enhancement. *See* §2A3.3,

comment. (n.2).

- b. Use of a computer. Section 2A3.3(b)(2) provides for a 2-level enhancement if the participant used a computer or interactive computer service to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct. This subsection applies only to communication directly with the minor or with a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. *See* §2A3.3, comment. (n.3)

Note: Section 3B1.3 (Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill) should not apply if the defendant is sentenced under §2A3.3, because an abuse of position of trust is assumed in all case and is built into the base offense level. §2A3.3, comment. (n.4).

F. §2A3.4 (Abusive Sexual Contact or Attempt to Commit Abusive Sexual Contact)

Appendix A specifies offense guideline §2A3.4 for offenses involving abusive sexual contact in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2244, 1153, or 37. This section applies to abusive sexual contact that does not amount to criminal sexual abuse. In §2A3.4, the term “minor” means an individual (including fictitious individuals and law enforcement officers) who had not attained the age of 18 years (or who was represented to have not attained the age of 18 years). *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.1).

Several courts have struggled with the distinction between attempted sexual abuse and sexual contact. *Compare United States v. Hayward*, 359 F.3d 631 (3d Cir. 2004) (finding that pushing the victim’s head toward the defendant’s penis while his pants were still on amounted to sexual contact (properly sentenced under §2A3.4), not an attempted sexual act) *with United States v. Miranda*, 348 F.3d 1322 (11th Cir. 2003) (holding that arranging in a chat room to meet with the victim (an undercover officer posing as a 13-year-old girl) at a school to engage in sex, and then showing up at the school at the time arranged, constituted an attempted sexual act that falls under §2A3.2).

1. **Determining the Base Offense Level.** The different base offense levels in this guideline take into account the different means that could be used to commit the offense.

If the offense involved conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a) or (b), the base offense level is **20**. For purposes of this subsection, such conduct is engaging in, *or causing sexual contact with*, or by another person by: (1) using force against the victim; (2) threatening or placing the victim in fear that any person will be subjected to death, bodily injury, or kidnapping; (3)

rendering the victim unconscious; or (4) administering by force or threat of force, or without knowledge or permission of the victim, a drug, intoxicant, or other similar substance and substantially impairing the ability of the victim to appraise or control conduct. *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.2).

If the offense involved conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2242, the base offense level is **16**. For purposes of this subsection, such conduct is: (1) engaging in, *or causing sexual contact with*, or by another person by threatening or placing the victim in fear (other than fear of death, kidnapping, or serious bodily injury); or (2) engaging in, or causing sexual contact with, or by another person who is incapable of appraising the nature of the conduct or physically incapable of declining participation in, or communicating unwillingness to engage in, the sexual act. *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.3).

Otherwise, the base offense level is **12**.

2. **Specific Offense Characteristics.**

- a. Victim under 12 years. Section 2A3.4(b)(1) provides for a **4**-level enhancement if the victim had not attained the age of 12 years. The section also provides that if the resulting offense level is less than **22**, the offense level must be increased to level **22**.
- b. Victim between 12 and 15. Section 2A3.4(b)(2) provides for a **2**-level enhancement if the base offense level is either **20** or **16**, and the victim had attained the age of 12 years but not the age of 16 years.
- c. Custody, care, or supervisory control. Section 2A3.4(b)(3) provides for a **2**-level enhancement if the victim was in the custody, care, or supervisory control of the defendant. This subsection is to be construed broadly and applies whenever the minor is entrusted to the defendant, whether temporarily or permanently. *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.4(A)). If section (b)(3) applies, §3B1.3 (Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill) does not apply. *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.4(B)).
- d. Knowing misrepresentation of identity. Section 2A3.4(b)(4) provides for a **2**-level enhancement if the offense involved the knowing misrepresentation of a participant's identity to persuade,

induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct.

Such misrepresentation applies only to misrepresentations made directly to a minor or to a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. Further, the use of a misleading computer screen name, without the intent to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct does not prompt the application of this enhancement. *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.5).

- e. Use of a computer. Section 2A3.4(b)(5) provides for a 2-level enhancement if a computer or interactive computer service was used to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct. This subsection applies only to communication directly with the minor or with a person who exercises custody, care, or supervisory control of the minor. *See* §2A3.4, comment. (n.6)

- 3. **Cross References.** Section 2A3.4 has two cross references. Section 2A3.1 applies if the offense involved criminal sexual abuse or attempt to commit criminal sexual abuse, as defined in 18 U.S.C. §§ 2241 or 2242. *See United States v. No Neck*, 472 F.3d 1048 (8th Cir. 2007) (affirming the district court’s cross reference to §2A3.1, even when the defendant was acquitted of criminal sexual abuse charges).

Section 2A3.2 applies if the offense involved criminal sexual abuse of a minor or attempt to commit criminal sexual abuse of a minor, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2243(a).

G. §2A3.5 (Failure to Register as a Sex Offender)

Appendix A specifies offense guideline §2A3.5 for offenses violating the newly enacted federal offense at 18 U.S.C. § 2250(a) for failing to register as a sex offender.² In §2A3.5, the term “minor” means an individual (including fictitious individuals and law enforcement officers)

²The Fifth Circuit recently held in regards to the new guideline §2A3.5 that, “where, at the time of sentencing there is no guideline in effect for the particular offense of conviction, and the Sentencing Commission has promulgated a proposed guideline applicable to the offense of conviction, the district court’s failure to consider the proposed guideline when sentencing the defendant may result in reversible plain error.” *United States v. Sanchez*, 527 F.3d 463 (5th Cir. 2008).

who had not attained the age of 18 years (or who was represented to have not attained the age of 18 years). *See* §2A3.5, comment. (n.1).

1. **Determining the Base Offense Level.** The alternative base offense levels for §2A3.5 depend on the sexual offense of conviction for which the defendant was required to register, whether a state or federal offense. The statute determines how serious the offender is based on the sexual offense committed and categorizes each offender into one of three tiers. Tier III offenders are the most egregious.

A) If the offender is a Tier III offender, the base offense level is **16**;

(B) if the offender is a Tier II offender, the base offense level is **14**; and

(C) if the offender is a Tier I offender, the base offense level is **12**.

The definition of each tier is found in 42 U.S.C. § 16911(2)-(4).

2. **Specific Offense Characteristics.**

- a. **Sex offense while in failure to register status.** Section 2A3.5(b)(1) provides alternative enhancements. The greatest applicable enhancement applies. If, while the defendant was in failure-to-register status, he committed either a sex offense against someone other than a minor or committed a felony offense other than a sex offense against a minor, a **6**-level enhancement applies. If, while in failure-to-register status the defendant committed a sex offense against a minor, an **8**-level enhancement applies.

- b. **Excuse for failing to register.** Section 2A3.5(b)(2) provides for a **3**-level *decrease* if the defendant voluntarily corrected the failure to register or tried to register but was prevented from registering by uncontrollable circumstances to which the defendant did not contribute. For the decrease to apply, the defendant's attempt to register or to correct the failure to register must have occurred before he knew or should have known that a jurisdiction had detected his failure to register. *See* §2A3.5, comment. (n.2(A)).

Note: The specific offense characteristic at §2A3.5(b)(2) does not apply if the specific offense characteristic at §2A3.5(b)(1) also applies. §2A3.5, comment. (n.2(B)).

H. §2A3.6 (Aggravated Offenses Relating to Registration as a Sex Offender)

Appendix A specifies offense guideline §2A3.6 for offenses violating the newly enacted 18 U.S.C. §§ 2250(c) or 2260A for aggravated offenses relating to failing to register as a sex offender.

If the defendant was convicted under 18 U.S.C. § 2250(c), the guideline sentence under §2A3.6 is the minimum term required by statute. Section 2250 provides a mandatory minimum term of five years and a statutory maximum term of 30 years of imprisonment.

A sentence above five years of imprisonment is considered an upward departure, and may be warranted, for example, in a case involving a sex offense committed against a minor or if the offense resulted in serious bodily injury to a minor. *See* §2A3.6, comment. (n.4). The statute requires any sentence under this statute to be applied consecutively to any sentence imposed under 18 U.S.C. § 2250(a) (Failure to Register). *See* §2A3.5, comment. (n.1).

If the defendant was convicted under 18 U.S.C. § 2260A, the guideline sentence is the term of imprisonment required by statute, which is ten years of imprisonment. This term must also be imposed consecutively to any sentence imposed for an offense listed under § 2260A.

Note: Chapters Three (Adjustments) and Four (Criminal History and Criminal Livelihood) do not apply to sentences under this guideline. The guideline sentence for these offenses is determined only by the relevant statute. *See* §2A3.6, comment. (n.2).

Note: If a defendant is sentenced under this guideline in conjunction with a sentence for an underlying offense, any specific offense characteristics that are based on the same conduct as the conduct comprising the conviction under 18 U.S.C. §§ 2250(c) or 2260 does not apply. *See* §2A3.6, comment. (n.3).

III. Chapter Three: Adjustments

A. §3A1.1(b) (Vulnerable Victim)

Section 3A1.1(b)(1) provides for a **2**-level adjustment if the defendant knew or should have known that a victim of the offense was a vulnerable victim. Further, §2A3.1(b)(2) provides that if (b)(1) applies and the offense involved a large number of vulnerable victims, the offense level should be adjusted another **2** levels.

For purposes of this subsection, “vulnerable victim” means a person who is a victim of the offense of conviction and any conduct for which the defendant is accountable under §1B1.3 (Relevant Conduct) and who is unusually vulnerable due to age, physical or mental condition or who is otherwise particularly susceptible to the criminal conduct. §3A1.1, comment. (n. 2); *see United States v. Chee*, 514 F.3d 1106 (10th Cir. 2008) (upholding the district court’s vulnerable

victim enhancement where the victim “suffer[ed] from mental and physical handicaps, including a diminished mental capacity, seizures, and partial paralysis”); *United States v. Julian*, 427 F.3d 471 (7th Cir. 2005) (finding no double-counting where the district court increased the defendant’s sentence based on the victim’s age under §2A3.1(b)(2) and based on the “economic vulnerability of the victims” under §3A1.1 because the defendant took “advantage of the poor and homeless children by offering shelter, housing and food”).

The adjustment under §3A1.1(b) does not apply, however, if the factor that makes the person vulnerable is already incorporated into the offense guideline. Therefore, in sexual abuse offenses against minors, if the guideline provides an enhancement for the age of the minor, §3A1.1 does not apply unless the victim was unusually vulnerable for reasons unrelated to the age of the victim. §3A1.1, comment. (n. 2); see *United States v. Beith*, 407 F.3d 881 (7th Cir. 2005) (holding that “allegations of molestations standing alone are insufficient to establish vulnerability” when the victim’s “age has already been the subject of an enhancement” under 2A3.1(b)(2)).

B. §3A1.3 (Restraint of Victim)

Section 3A1.3 provides for a 2-level adjustment if a victim was physically restrained in the course of the offense. “Physically restrained” means the forcible restraint of the victim such as by being tied, bound, or locked up. §1B1.1, comment. (n.1(K)). This adjustment does not apply where the offense guideline specifically incorporates this factor, or where the unlawful restraint of a victim is an element of the offense itself. §3A1.3, comment. (n. 2); but see *United States v. Johnson*, 492 F.3d 254 (4th Cir. 2007) (holding that the defendant’s “act of gripping the victim’s arms and holding her down while [the defendant] raped her is sufficiently akin to the [guideline] definition’s examples (being tied, bound, or locked up) to constitute forcible restraint,” and stating that a conviction under 18 U.S.C. § 2241(a)(1) “does not hinge on whether the victim was restrained or confined”). If the restraint was sufficiently egregious, an upward departure may be warranted. §3A1.3, comment. (n. 3).

C. §3B1.3 (Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill)

Section 3B1.3 provides for a 2-level adjustment if the defendant abused a position of public or private trust, or used a special skill, in a manner that significantly facilitated the commission or concealment of the offenses. However, this adjustment does not apply in the sexual abuse guidelines if the specific offense characteristics for a victim being in the care, custody, or supervisory control of the defendant or the victim being held in the custody of a correctional facility apply. See §2A3.1, comment. (n.3(B)); §2A3.2, comment. (n.2(B)); §2A3.3, comment. (n.4); §2A3.4, comment. (n.4(B)).

IV. Chapter Four: Repeat and Dangerous Sex Offender³

A. §4B1.5 (Repeat and Dangerous Sex Offender Against Minors)

Section 4B1.5 applies to offenders whose offense of conviction is one of the “covered sex crime[s]” committed against a minor and who present a continuing danger to the public. §4B1.5, comment (n.2), (background). The “covered sex crime[s]” relevant to this Primer are offenses (including attempt and conspiracy to commit the offense), perpetrated against a minor, under Chapter 109A (18 U.S.C. §§ 2241-2248).

For purposes of this guideline, the term “minor” means an individual (including fictitious individuals and law enforcement officers) who had not attained the age of 18 years (or who was represented to have not attained the age of 18 years). *See* §4B1.5, comment. (n.1).

Section 4B1.5(b)(1) specifically states that the enhancement is to be added to the offense levels determined under Chapters Two and Three. Thus, the guidelines intend the cumulative application of most enhancements in conjunction with §4B1.5, foreclosing many double-counting arguments.

V. Chapter Five: Probation, Supervised Release, and Departures

A. §5B1.3 (Conditions of Probation)

Section §5B1.3 sets out mandatory, standard, and special conditions of probation.

1. §5B1.3(a) (Mandatory Conditions). Section 5B1.3(a)(9)(A) provides that, in a state in which the requirements of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act do not apply, a defendant convicted of a sexual offense must report the address where he will reside and any subsequent change of address, and must register as a sex offender in any State where the defendant resides, is employed, carries on a vocation, or is a student. This subsection applies if the state continues to register sex offenders pursuant to the sex offender registry in place before the enactment of the Adam Walsh Act. *See* §5B1.3, comment. (n. 1).

Section 5B1.3(a)(9)(B) provides that, in a state in which the requirements of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act apply, a sex offender must register and keep the registration current in both the jurisdiction where he lives, works, or is a student and where he was convicted.

³For a detailed description of the issues and case law associated with §4B1.5, *see* Sex Offense Primer: Offenses Involving Commercial Sex Acts and Sexual Exploitation of Minors.

2. §5B1.3(b). The guidelines allow courts to impose other conditions of probation if the conditions are “reasonably related to”: (1) the nature and circumstances of the offense and the history and characteristics of the defendant; (2) the need for the sentence imposed to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote respect for the law, and to provide just punishment for the offense; (3) the need for the sentence imposed to afford adequate deterrence; (4) the need to protect the public from further crimes by the defendant; and (5) the need to provide the defendant with educational or vocational training, medical care, or other correctional treatment in the most effective manner.

Such conditions can only involve deprivations of liberty or property as are reasonably necessary for the purposes of sentencing indicated in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). *See* §5B1.3(b)(2).

3. §5B1.3(d) (Policy Statement). Section 5B1.3(d)(7) sets forth “special” conditions of probation that might be appropriate in sex offense convictions. Subsection (A) allows for a condition requiring the defendant to participate in a program approved by the United States Probation Office for the treatment and monitoring of sex offenders. Subsection (B) allows for a condition limiting the use of a computer or an interactive computer service in cases in which the defendant used such items. Finally, subsection (C) allows for a condition requiring the defendant to submit to a search, at any time, with or without a warrant, and by any law enforcement or probation officer, of the defendant’s person and any property, papers, or things upon reasonable suspicion concerning a violation of the supervised release or unlawful conduct.

B. §5D1.1 (Imposition of a Term of Supervised Release)

Pursuant to this section, the court must order a term of supervised release to follow imprisonment when a sentence of more than one year is imposed, or when required by statute.

C. §5D1.2 (Term of Supervised Release)

This section provides that the length of the term of supervised release cannot be less than the minimum term of years specified for the offense, and may be up to life if the offense is a sex offense. *See* §5D1.2(b)(2). The statutory maximum term of supervised release is recommended if the offense is a sex offense. §5D1.2(b)(2), p.s.

In the Adam Walsh Act of 2006, 18 U.S.C. § 3583 was amended to increase the authorized term of supervised release for, among other offenses, any sexual abuse offense perpetrated against a minor (including undercover law enforcement officers) under chapter 109A

of title 18 to a mandatory minimum of five years with a statutory maximum term of life. *See* §5D1.2, comment. (n.1).

D. §5D1.3 (Conditions of Supervised Release)

Section §5D1.3 sets out mandatory, standard, and special conditions of supervised release.

1. §5D1.3(a) (Mandatory Conditions). Section 5D1.3(a)(7)(A) provides that, in a state in which the requirements of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act do not apply, a defendant convicted of a sexual offense must report the address where he will reside and any subsequent change of address, and must register as a sex offender in any State where the defendant resides, is employed, carries on a vocation, or is a student. This subsection applies if the state continues to register sex offenders pursuant to the sex offender registry in place before the enactment of the Adam Walsh Act. *See* §5D1.3, comment. (n. 1).

Section 5D1.3(a)(7)(B) provides that, in a state in which the requirements of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act apply, a sex offender must register and keep the registration current in both the jurisdiction where he lives, works, or is a student and where he was convicted.

Section 3583 of title 18 states that, if a defendant required to register under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act commits a criminal offense under, among others, chapter 109A of title 18, the court is to 1) revoke a term of supervised release, and 2) require a defendant to serve a term of imprisonment for not less than 5 years.

2. §5D1.3(b). The guidelines allow courts to impose other conditions of supervised release if the conditions are “reasonably related to” any or all of the factors listed below. Following the statutory language of 18 U.S.C. § 3583(d)(1), there are four factors tied to the goals of supervised release. The first is the defendant’s history and characteristics and the nature and circumstances of his offense. The second is the need for adequate deterrence of future criminal conduct. The third is the need to protect the public from further crimes by the defendant, and the fourth is an effective provision of educational or vocational treatment, medical care, or other needed correctional treatment to the defendant.

Such conditions must also entail “no greater deprivation of liberty than is reasonably necessary” to achieve the goals of supervised release; must be consistent with any pertinent policy statements issued by the Commission;

and must have adequate evidentiary support in the record. *See* §5D1.3(b)(2); *see also United States v. Levering*, 441 F.3d 566 (8th Cir. 2006) (holding that the district court did not abuse its discretion by imposing a condition of supervised release requiring a total prohibition on contact with juvenile females—without prior approval of his probation officer—where the defendant had pleaded guilty to the forcible rape of a female juvenile); *United States v. Morgan*, 44 Fed. Appx. 881 (10th Cir. 2002) (holding that a special condition of supervised release requiring the defendant “to participate in a sex offender treatment and ‘submit to a risk assessment including physiological testing,’ violates neither [the defendant’s] constitutional rights nor the statutory and Guideline requirements for the imposition of special conditions of supervised release”).

3. §5D1.3(d)(7) (Policy Statement) (Sex Offenses). Section 5D1.3(d)(7) lists “special” conditions of supervised release. Subsection (A) allows for a condition requiring the defendant to participate in a program approved by the United States Probation Office for the treatment and monitoring of sex offenders. Subsection (B) allows for a condition limiting the use of a computer or an interactive computer service in cases in which the defendant used such items. Finally, subsection (C) allows for a condition requiring the defendant to submit to a search, at any time, with or without a warrant, and by any law enforcement or probation officer, of the defendant’s person and any property, papers, or things upon reasonable suspicion concerning a violation of the supervised release or unlawful conduct.

E. §5F1.5 (Occupational Restrictions)

Section §5F1.5(a) authorizes a court to impose occupational restrictions in limited circumstances. These occupational restrictions can do two things. First, they can prevent a defendant from taking a certain type of employment. For example, a sex offender may not be allowed to work around children. Second, a lesser restriction can limit the “terms” of a defendant’s employment. For example, a defendant convicted of fraud may be restricted from working in a position handling money at a bank or may be required to discuss with the employer bank the details of his criminal history. *See United States v. Du*, 476 F.3d 1168 (10th Cir. 2007) (stating that specific findings are required before a court imposes any employment conditions that are considered “occupational restrictions”).

Such restrictions can only be imposed, however, if the court determines (1) that there is a reasonably direct relationship between the defendant’s occupation and the offense conduct; and (2) that imposition of the restriction is reasonably necessary to protect the public. Pursuant to §5F1.5(b), an occupational restriction may only be in place for “the minimum time and to the minimum extent necessary to protect the public.

F. §5K2.0 (Grounds for Departure (Policy Statement))

Pursuant to §5K2.0(b), the only grounds for a departure for “sexual offenses” below the range established by the applicable guidelines are those enumerated in Part K. *See* §5K2.0, comment. (n.4(B)). The definition of “sexual offenses” includes offenses under chapter 109A of title 18. *See* §5K2.0, comment. (n. 4(A)).

G. §5K2.22 (Specific Offender Characteristics as Grounds for Downward Departure in Child Crimes and Sexual Offenses (Policy Statement))

For offenses committed under chapter 109A (among others), of title 18, (1) age is only a reason to depart downward if and to the extent permitted by §5H1.1, (2) an extraordinary physical impairment is only a reason to depart downward if and to the extent permitted by §5H1.4, and (3) drug, alcohol, or gambling dependence or abuse is not a reason to depart downward.

VI. Post-Booker Reasonableness Determinations

United States v. Ausburn, 502 F.3d 313 (3d Cir. 2007) (vacating the district court’s sentence of 144-months of imprisonment—double the high-end of the guidelines range—“because the court did not did not provide sufficient reasons on the record to justify its sentence”), *cert. denied*, — S. Ct. —, 2008 WL 533761 (2008).

United States v. Poynter, 495 F.3d 349 (6th Cir. 2007) (applying a “proportionality principle,” and holding that the district court’s “60-year sentence, a 206% upward variance from the top of the guidelines range, cannot be sustained” because nothing distinguished the defendant from other repeat sex offenders).