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Offender

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Administrators in Admissions, Department of Residence Life, University Police Department and the Corp of Cadets said they do not consider background checks to be in their jurisdiction.

Residence Life Director Ron Sasse said criminal screening is not performed on students who apply for on-campus housing and he was unaware of the student sex crime offender.

"I assume the police would notify us if there was someone living on campus. To my knowledge, we have not been notified about this," he said.

Sasse said hall staff, including resident advisers, hall directors and maintenance staff undergo criminal screening.

University Police Director Bob Wiatt said there is no screening of a student's criminal record unless a student commits an offense requiring a background check while at A&M. Wiatt said he was unaware of the student sex offender.

General Don Johnson, deputy commandant of the Corps, said just because a student goes to A&M and is in the Corps, does not mean Corps administration would be aware of a student's criminal history.

"Especially not if they have already paid for what they did," he said.

"It is not the ideal neighbor you want to have, but you can not discriminate."

— Tanya Knapp
Brazos County registered sex offender coordinator

Johnson said any screening would have to be performed by the University and not the Corps.

"If A&M says they are not a threat to anyone and can be a student and can live in a dorm — and they decide to join the Corps, we will put them in an outfit," Johnson said. "There is no reason for me to know who they are and no need to discriminate against that individual because of what they did."

He said the issue is not easy and all implications must be considered.

The student sex offender said he spent some time in jail, and since then has changed his life drastically.

"I went to God and asked for forgiveness and repented of my sins and I've lived my life totally different now since I've found that peace that Jesus Christ has given me, with total remorse for everything I've done," he said.

He said he hopes students and administrators will not pass judgment.

"When I look back on it, I think I did a very pitiful thing that should be looked down upon," he said. "Now that I've changed my life, when people judge me or others with what I've done that makes me kind of mad because they don't know me on a personal basis."

He said he has learned not to judge others and encourages others to keep an open mind.

UPD said 10 sexual assaults have been reported on campus in the last five years.

Tanya Knapp, registered sex offender coordinator for Brazos County Sheriff's Office, said strong vigilante laws against sex offenders from retaliation. However, Knapp said apartments can refuse to rent to sex offenders. She suggested the University should be performing background checks on students during the admissions process. Also, she said she is concerned about sex offenders living in the neighborhood.

Sasse said residence life would deal with the situation by contacting the proper authorities before deciding if any action should be taken.

"You have to look at each case on an individual basis and try to protect privacy as much as we could," he said. "If it is something we found important to share, we will do so within the limits of the law."

The DPS Website lists three risk levels for sex offenders. Civil Commitment and Risk Level 3 offenders pose, "a basis for concern because they pose a serious danger to the community or will continue to engage in criminal conduct."

Level two offenders present a lesser danger to the community than level one offenders. Level 3 offenders offer no chance of re-offense. Offenses that occurred before 2000, have not been assigned a risk level.


Risk levels rarely decrease over time. An offender requests that a court reduce his risk level, but Knapp said this has not happened in Brazos County.

Knapp said anyone concerned about a sex offender should realize the offender has finished their state-set punishment.

"It is not the ideal neighbor you want but you cannot discriminate," she said.

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