

# **Hundreds of sex offenders have changed their names**

**According to figures obtained from Police Scotland, more than 500 registered sex offenders in the country have changed their name in the last two years by exploiting a legal loophole.**

Police Scotland records reveal they were notified of 506 instances of sex criminals changing their names within a 23-month period between April 2023 and March 2025.

The data was obtained through a Freedom of Information request by the Scottish Conservatives, who say they have been calling for years for the government to ban this practice.

Shadow justice secretary, Liam Kerr MSP, expressed his dismay that government ministers continue to allow hundreds of sex offenders “to play the system” by changing their name every year.

As recently as 26 March 2025 Mr Kerr asked in parliament whether the government will take steps to prevent such name changes.

The written answer provided by Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs, reads: “The Scottish Government takes the safety of the public very seriously. Sex offender notification requirements apply to an individual, irrespective of what name they use. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements record any aliases in their

documentation. The current position in legislation is that sex offenders must inform the police of a name change within three days and failure to notify such a change can result in a prison sentence.

“We are aware that the Crime and Policing Bill, recently introduced to the UK Parliament, contains legislative change in this area. We are exploring the possibility of extending the provisions in the Crime and Policing Bill to Scotland. Any such amendment would be the subject of the legislative consent process.”

Mr Kerr said: “It’s indefensible that the SNP continue to allow hundreds of sex offenders to play the system by changing their name every year.

“The public are being kept in the dark about the true identity of dangerous predators, which is putting them at greater risk.

“Those placed on the sex offenders’ register are there for good reason, yet our calls for this dangerous name-change loophole to be closed have been repeatedly and inexplicably ignored by SNP ministers.

“These rising figures are testament to the SNP’s relentless pandering to criminals at the expense of victims.

“It is vital that SNP’s ministers apply some common sense and urgently scrap this practice. They must do more to support police in monitoring these offenders.”



Liam Kerr MSP