



# Pennsylvania Sex Offense Statute of Limitations

## CRIMINAL CASES

Criminal cases are filed by the state and must be proven **beyond a reasonable doubt**. Convicted offenders may face incarceration, fines, or both.

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How old was the victim at the time of the abuse?

### Over 18 years old

**Adult victims** of sexual assault have

**12 YEARS**

to file criminal charges of sexual assault in PA.

### Under 18 years old

A **child victim** whose 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is on or before **August 27, 2002** has

**5 YEARS**

**after their 18th birthday** to file charges. The last day to file charges is on their

**23<sup>rd</sup> BIRTHDAY**

regardless of when the abuse occurred.

A **child victim** whose 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is on or after **August 28, 2002** has

**32 YEARS**

**after their 18th birthday** to file charges. The last day to file charges is on their

**50<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY**

regardless of when the abuse occurred.\*



\*The criminal statute of limitations was extended on January 28, 2007 to 32 years, ensuring that any survivor whose statute of limitations had not yet expired prior to the 2002 change would be eligible for the extended amount of time. The 2002 change to the criminal statute of limitations extended the amount of time a victim has to report to 12 years after their 18th birthday.



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## CIVIL CASES

Civil cases are filed by individuals and must be proven by a preponderance of the evidence, or **more likely to have occurred than not**. Civil law is designed to make the victim "whole," usually in the form of monetary damages.

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How old was the victim at the time of the abuse?

### Over 18 years old

**Adult victims**  
of sexual  
assault have

**2**  
YEARS

to file civil  
charges of sexual  
assault in PA.

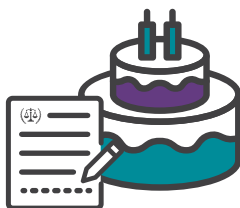
### Under 18 years old

**Child victims**  
of sexual assault  
have

**12**  
YEARS

after their  
18<sup>th</sup> birthday to  
file charges.

The last day to  
file charges is on their  
**30<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY**  
regardless of when the  
abuse occurred.



However, some factors may extend the statute of limitations.  
**Always consult a legal professional.**