

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0009

Grooming of children-offenses and amendments.

Sponsored by: Joint Judiciary Interim Committee

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to crimes and offenses; establishing the
2 criminal offense of grooming of a minor for a sexual
3 offense; specifying penalties; providing definitions;
4 making conforming amendments; and providing for an
5 effective date.

6

7 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

8

9 **Section 1.** W.S. 6-2-321 is created to read:

10

11 **6-2-321. Grooming of minor for sexual offense;**
12 **definitions; penalties.**

13

14 (a) As used in this section:

15

1 (i) "Electronic communication" means a sign,
2 signal, writing, image, sound, data or intelligence of any
3 nature transmitted or created, in whole or in part, by a
4 wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or
5 photo-optical system;

6

7 (ii) "Grooming" means behavior that seeks to
8 prepare, induce or persuade a minor to engage in sexual
9 conduct or exploitation, even if no meeting or sexual
10 conduct is completed. "Grooming" includes:

11

12 (A) Deliberate acts that establish an
13 emotional connection with a minor through manipulation,
14 trust-building or influence to facilitate acts of sexual
15 conduct, sexual abuse or exploitation;

16

17 (B) Online or in-person activities, the use
18 of third parties or indirect methods to facilitate the
19 manipulation of a minor.

20

21 (iii) "Sexual conduct" means:

22

23 (A) Actual or simulated:

1

2 (I) Sexual intercourse, whether
3 between persons of the same or opposite sex;

4

5 (II) Penetration of the vagina or
6 rectum by any object, except when done as part of a
7 recognized medical procedure;

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9 (III) Bestiality;

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11 (IV) Masturbation;

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13 (V) Sadomasochistic abuse;

14

15 (VI) Lewd exhibition of the genitals,
16 breasts, pubic or rectal area or other intimate parts of a
17 person; or

18

19 (VII) Defecation or urination for the
20 purpose of the sexual stimulation of the viewer.

21

1 (B) The depiction or observation of a child
2 in the nude or in a state of partial undress with the
3 purpose to:

4

5 (I) Abuse, humiliate, harass or
6 degrade the child;

7

8 (II) To arouse or gratify the person's
9 own sexual response or desire; or

10

11 (III) To arouse or gratify the sexual
12 response or desire of another person.

13

14 (iv) "Simulated" means any depiction of the
15 genitals or pubic or rectal area that gives the appearance
16 of sexual conduct or incipient sexual conduct.

17

18 (b) A person commits the offense of grooming of a
19 minor for a sexual offense if the person:

20

21 (i) Is seventeen (17) years of age or older and
22 not less than four (4) years older than the minor; and

23

1 (ii) Purposely or knowingly engages in a pattern
2 of grooming aimed at a minor or the minor's parent or
3 guardian with the intent to:

4

5 (A) Manipulate the minor into engaging in
6 sexual conduct;

7

8 (B) Coerce or entice a minor under sixteen
9 (16) years of age to meet in person to engage in sexual
10 conduct;

11

12 (C) Distribute or facilitate access to
13 sexually explicit material; or

14

15 (D) Exploit a position of authority to
16 develop an intimate or secretive relationship with a minor.

17

18 (c) Except as provided in subsections (d) and (e) of
19 this section, grooming of a minor for a sexual offense is a
20 felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than ten
21 (10) years, a fine not to exceed ten thousand dollars
22 (\$10,000.00), or both.

23

1 (d) A person who commits grooming of a minor for a
2 sexual offense against a minor who is younger than sixteen
3 (16) years of age shall be guilty of a felony punishable
4 for imprisonment of not less than four (4) years up to and
5 including life imprisonment according to law, a fine not to
6 exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00), or both.

7
8 (e) A person who is not less than eighteen (18) years
9 of age who commits the offense of grooming of a minor for a
10 sexual offense against a minor who is less than twelve (12)
11 years of age shall be guilty of a felony punishable by
12 imprisonment for not less than twenty-five (25) years, a
13 fine not to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00), or
14 both.

15
16 (f) A person guilty of grooming of a minor for a
17 sexual offense under this section shall:

18
19 (i) Complete a sexual offender treatment program
20 provided or approved by the department of corrections;

21
22 (ii) Be subject to probation for a period not to
23 exceed ten (10) years.

1

2 **Section 2.** W.S. 6-2-301(a)(intro), 7-13-301(a)(intro)
3 and 7-19-302(g) are amended to read:

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5 **6-2-301. Definitions.**

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7 (a) As used in this article, unless otherwise
8 defined:

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10 **7-13-301. Placing person found guilty, but not**
11 **convicted, on probation.**

12

13 (a) If a person who has not previously been convicted
14 of any felony is charged with or is found guilty of or
15 pleads guilty or no contest to any misdemeanor except any
16 second or subsequent violation of W.S. 31-5-233 or any
17 similar provision of law, or any second or subsequent
18 violation of W.S. 6-2-510(a) or 6-2-511(a) or any similar
19 provision of law, or any felony except murder, sexual
20 assault in the first or second degree, grooming of a minor
21 for a sexual offense, aggravated assault and battery or
22 arson in the first or second degree, the court may, with
23 the consent of the defendant and the state and without

1 entering a judgment of guilt or conviction, defer further
2 proceedings and place the person on probation for a term
3 not to exceed thirty-six (36) months upon terms and
4 conditions set by the court. The terms of probation shall
5 include that he:

6

7 **7-19-302. Registration of offenders; procedure;**
8 **verification; fees.**

9

10 (g) For an offender convicted of a violation of W.S.
11 6-2-316(a)(i) and (iv), 6-2-321, 6-2-705, 6-4-303(b)(iv) or
12 6-4-304(b) if the victim was a minor, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252B,
13 2252C, 2424 and 2425, an offense in another jurisdiction
14 containing the same or similar elements, or arising out of
15 the same or similar facts or circumstances as a criminal
16 offense specified in this subsection or an attempt or
17 conspiracy to commit any of the offenses specified in this
18 subsection, the division shall annually verify the accuracy
19 of the offender's registered address, and the offender
20 shall annually report, in person, his current address to
21 the sheriff in the county in which the offender resides,
22 during the period in which he is required to register.
23 During the annual in-person verification, the sheriff shall

1 photograph the offender. Confirmation of the in-person
2 verification required under this subsection, along with the
3 photograph of the offender, shall be transmitted by the
4 sheriff to the division within three (3) working days. Any
5 person under this subsection who has not established a
6 residence or is transient, and who is reporting to the
7 sheriff as required under subsection (e) of this section,
8 shall be deemed in compliance with the address verification
9 requirements of this section.

10

11 **Section 3.** This act is effective July 1, 2026.

12

13 (END)