

**Title:** Polygraph: Friend or Foe in Sex Offender Management

**Course Description:**

Polygraphs have been widely used in the treatment and supervision of sex offenders since the 1980's. Over the last five years, the polygraph has been met with criticism and several programs are questioning its utility in sex offender management. The training will explore the arguments against the use of the polygraph and offer a model on how the polygraph can be utilized that will minimize the potential negative impact while improving treatment & supervision outcomes. This will include how the polygraph should be utilized within the framework of the fundamental principles and key components of the Comprehensive Approach to Sex Offender Management. In addition, participants will gain insight on how to develop appropriate targets/questions; how to properly prepare offenders; and how to assist the offender in processing the results of the polygraph.

**Outline:**

1. Introduction
  - a. Overview of the polygraph
  - b. History of the polygraph and sex offender management
2. A discussion of the primary arguments against the use of the polygraph
3. Incorporating the polygraph into the Comprehensive Approach to Sex Offender Management (CSOM):
  - a. Fundamental Principles
    - i. Victim Centered: How can a polygraph be used to improve the impact to victims.
    - ii. Evidenced Based: What does the research tell us?
    - iii. Carried out by those with specialized knowledge: Finding the right polygrapher.
    - iv. Engaging the public: How does the public view?
    - v. Collaboration: What does collaboration look like?
  - b. Core Components
    - i. Investigation, Prosecution, and Disposition: How can a polygraph be used in investigation?
    - ii. Assessment: Improving assessment outcomes using polygraphs.
    - iii. Supervision: The role of the polygraph in the supervision of sex offenders.
    - iv. Treatment: Incorporating the polygraph into treatment while maintaining a therapeutic milieu.
    - v. Reentry: Using the polygraph in the reentry process.
    - vi. Registration & Notification: Megan's Law & the Polygraph.
4. A discussion of the current legal issues surrounding polygraphs.
5. Developing appropriate polygraph questions.
6. Preparing clients for a polygraph and dealing with a failure.
7. Recommendations for the future.

**Objectives:**

At the conclusion of the training,

1. Participants will be able to list the primary arguments against the use of the polygraph and identify strategies to minimize or eliminate the negative impact.
2. Participants will understand how the polygraph can be incorporated into and enhance the Comprehensive Approach to Sex Offender Management Model.
3. Participants will be able to identify ways to improve polygraph outcomes while providing a positive and therapeutic milieu.