

BELIZE:

CRIMINAL CODE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

1. Short title.
2. Amendment of section 64.
3. Amendment of section 65.
4. Amendment of section 65A.
5. Insertion of new Part III.

BELIZE:

BILL

for

AN ACT to amend the Criminal Code, Chapter 101 of the Substantive Laws of Belize; to provide for public accessibility to the National Sex Offenders Database; to provide for in camera proceedings for certain offences; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Gazetted2026).

BE IT ENACTED, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and Senate of Belize and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the

CRIMINAL CODE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2026,

CAP. 101.

and shall be read and construed as one with the Criminal Code, which is hereinafter referred to as the principal Act.

Amendment of section 64.

2. The principal Act is amended by repealing section 64(1).

Amendment of section 65.

3. The principal Act is amended in section 65–

(a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the words “and unlawful sexual intercourse”; and

(b) by repealing sub-section (2) and replacing it with the following–

“(2) In this section, “sexual offence” means–

(a) any of the offences under sections 45A, 46, 47, 47A, 47B, 47C, 47D, 47E, 47F, 47G, 49, 50, 51, 62, 63; and

(b) any attempt to commit an offence referred to in paragraph (a).”.

Amendment of section 65A.

4. The principal Act is amended in section 65A–

(a) by inserting after sub-section (1), the following new sub-section—

“(1A) Where a person becomes subject to sex offender notification requirements under subsection (1), the judge presiding over the proceedings shall inform that person, at the time of conviction, finding, or sentencing, of his duty to comply with the notification requirements under this section.”;

(b) in sub-section (2), by deleting paragraph (d) and substituting the following—

“(d) his occupation and the address of his place of work and, where his occupation or place of work changes, the new occupation or address within fourteen days of the change; and”;

(c) in sub-section (6), by deleting paragraphs (c) and (d); and

(d) by repealing sub-section (7) and replacing it with the following—

“(7) Subject to sub-section (7A), the information in the National Sex Offender Database shall made available to the public.

(7A) Information in the National Sex Offender Database in relation to a person below the age of eighteen years shall not be made disclosed to the public.”.

5. The principal Act is amended by inserting after section 332, the following new Part—

Insertion of new Part.

“PART III

In Camera Proceedings

Interpretation of this Part.

333. In this Part—

“child” means a person below the age of eighteen years.

Child testimony to be heard in camera.

334. The testimony of a child in any proceeding shall be heard in camera.

In camera proceedings for specified offences.

335.—(1) In proceedings for sexual offences under sections 45A, 46, 47, 47A, 47B, 47C, 47D, 47E, 47F, 47G, 49, 50, 51, 62 and 63, the Court shall order the exclusion of members of the public, including the media, from the court

room for the duration of the proceedings, unless the Court is of the opinion that such an order is not necessary in the interest of the proper administration of justice to—

- (a) ensure all relevant evidence is heard;
- (b) ensure that the interests of witnesses are safeguarded in all proceedings; or
- (c) ensure the justice system participants who are involved in the proceedings are protected.

(2) An Order under sub-section (1) may include conditions restricting the publication or reporting of any information in relation to the proceedings until the matter is completed.

(3) In making a determination under sub-section (1), the Court shall take into account—

- (a) the nature of the sexual offences and the consequences of public disclosure of the details of such offences on the life of the complainant in the particular case and on society's interest in encouraging the reporting of sexual offences in general;
- (b) the balance between the interests of justices in generally holding criminal proceedings in public, and the potential prejudice to the complainant's personal dignity and right or privacy of doing so in cases of sexual violence;
- (c) the right of the complainant and or every individual to personal security and to the full protection and benefit of the law; and
- (d) any other factor the Court considers relevant.

(4) If the Court orders that the public shall not be excluded from the proceedings, the Court shall state, by reference to the circumstances of the case, the reason for making such an order.

(5) The Court shall, at the first Court appearance, and may at any other stage, ask the complainant if the complainant wishes to give oral or written evidence on the question of whether the public should be excluded from the proceedings.

Criminal Code

(6) The Court shall consider any representations made under sub-section (5) in the absence of the public and, where applicable, the jury.

(7) Where an order is made to exclude the public from the proceedings, the passing of the sentence shall take place in public.”.