

Child rapist moved to apartment near Boone school

State orders review of offenders' homes

By William Croyle
The Cincinnati Enquirer

FLORENCE, Ky. — The state has ordered a review of where all sex offenders live after a parole office mistakenly let a child rapist move into an apartment across from a Boone County school.

Charles Gordon Jr., a regis-

tered sex offender, has been given two weeks to leave the apartment he moved into about three weeks ago, authorities in Northern Kentucky said yesterday.

Neighbors found out that Gordon, 34, lived about 500 feet from Heritage Academy, a school with kindergarten through 12th-grade classes. The law requires that sex offenders live no closer than 1,000 feet to a school.

In the case of Gordon, "a mistake was made," said Lisa Lamb, spokeswoman for the Kentucky

Department of Corrections.

Gordon could not be reached for comment.

The Boone County Division of Probation and Parole approved Gordon's request to live in the apartment because its map didn't show the school, although it has operated for 23 years.

John D. Rees, commissioner for the Kentucky Department of Corrections, which oversees the parole office, yesterday ordered all parole offices to review sex-offender residences to be sure they're complying with the law.

His directive also includes getting up-to-date addresses of

public and private schools and day-care facilities. And parole offices must have a global positioning system or some other way of checking distances from homes to schools.

"We're going to do everything in our power to keep the public safe," Lamb said.

But some people who live in the Heritage neighborhood are skeptical.

"It just doesn't make sense to me that they were not updated on all of this," said Mildred McVay, who has lived there for 44 years.

"This is very scary that this

system is not working."

Gordon pleaded guilty in Campbell County in 2001 to third-degree rape with no force. His victim was under 16.

He served five months of a five-year prison sentence in 2002 and was ordered to register as a sex offender for 10 years from his conviction date. Anytime he wants to move, he must notify the probation and parole board.

Neighbors found Gordon on the Kentucky State Police Sex Offender Registry Web site and realized he was living near the academy and Florence Elemen-

tary School.

The Boone parole and probation office had measured only the distance from Gordon's home to Florence Elementary, which is about two blocks away and was on their map, Lamb said.

Yesterday, Heritage Principal Howard Davis received a call from the Boone County Parole Office that a mistake was made and that Gordon would have to move.

"For us, it's a relief," Davis said.

Enquirer reporter Brenna R. Kelly contributed to this story.