Parole Handbook

Your Guide to Parole Success in Prison and in the Community

pennsylvania
BOARD OF PROBATION AND PAROLE

January 2013

Table of Contents

Overview – Page 1

Parole Process Chart – Page 2

Most Important Points – Page 4

Arrival at the Department of Corrections – Page 5

Parole Consideration – Page 8

Interview Preparation and Expectations – Page 8

Home Plans – Page 12

Understanding Your Board Action – Page 13

Parole Release Process – Page 16

Parole Supervision – Page 19

Violations of Parole – Page 21

District Parole Office Contact Information – Page 24

Home Plan Form – Page 25

Employment Plan Form – Page 26

General Conditions of Parole – Page 27

The Key to Starting Over

As a person who wants to leave your criminal past behind and rebuild your life, it is important that you realize that returning home to your community is a process that begins from the day you enter prison.

Don't wait until the last minute to prepare for your release.

Put your time to good use**.** It is up to **you** to follow the correctional plan that has been developed specifically to meet your needs. DOC will assign you a counselor who will monitor your progress in specific programs or treatment.

It is up to **you** to take advantage of educational and vocational programs that will help you once you are released. Talk to your counselor about a GED or college diploma, vocational training, parenting classes, basic life skills courses, and how you can get involved in other positive programs or activities within the prison.

Returning home successfully requires work, but it will be rewarding.

For you to be successful when you leave prison, it is important that you maintain connections to your family, religious or community organizations that are willing to assist offenders with reentry into the community. They will help you find solutions to problems and help you to live a safe and healthy life.

This network of support may help you find a place to live and a job, two very important parts of the reentry process. Employment will enable you to support yourself and your children, if any, and keep you on the track to a new lifestyle.

Get in touch with those individuals and organizations that you kept in contact with while in prison that can support your positive reentry into society. They can help you once you return home. Find ways to give back to your community. Be involved in local organizations. Avoid individuals and organizations that will encourage you to get re-involved in criminal activity.

Your parole agent can help you and your family once you are released. The Parole Board's goal is to help you be successful. Once you are released on parole, talk to your parole agent about your activities and get his or her support.

Remember - there are many agencies, programs and people waiting to help you succeed!

Highlights of the Parole Process

The parole process is best described as a series of steps for both the parolee and the Board.

Approximately 8 months prior to minimum date

Preparation of Case File
Required documentation is gathered and prepared for the parole interview.

Approximately 5 months prior to minimum date

Institutional Parole Agent
Inmate works with institutional parole agent to develop a reentry plan and prepare for interview.

Approximately 4 months prior to minimum date

Pre-Interview Case Review
Board Members/hearing examiners review file and reentry plan.

Board Interview
Conducted either in person by a Board Member or hearing examiner or by a panel of two decision makers or by video conference. Sex offenses and Murder 2 & 3 require a majority vote of the Board.

Approximately 3 months prior to minimum date

Post Interview
Final Board decision to grant or deny parole. A grant of parole includes conditions and release of parole and starts the home plan investigation and release process.

Supervision
Parolee reports to the district office or community corrections center within 24 hours of release. Conditions of parole are reviewed with the field agent.

The Board of Probation and Parole (Board) recommends you keep this booklet during the entire time you are incarcerated and on parole until you have completed supervision and your maximum sentence.

This book belongs to YOU!

It is provided to help you complete the information as you receive it.

NAME:

PA Inmate #_____ PA Parole #_____

Controlling Offense _____

Sentence ____ years ____ months TO ____ years ____ months

Commitment Date _____

Minimum Sentence (Min) Date _____

Maximum Sentence (Max) Date _____

Expected First Parole Interview Month _____
(Four months prior to Minimum Date)

Next Expected Review Date (If not paroled at minimum)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Release Date _____
(This is **NOT** automatically your Minimum Date)

Parole Supervision End Date _____
(Same as Max or Recomputed Max Date)

PAROLE VIOLATORS – GO TO PAGE 21

Important Points for Success

- Parole preparation is your responsibility.
- You do not have a right to parole under Pennsylvania law.
- Your institutional parole agent and institutional counselor are your best source of information while you are in prison.
- You need to remain misconduct free.
- Developing a home plan that can be approved is your responsibility.
- You do not have a right to be paroled before completing treatment.
- Parole release is not immediate when you receive a decision granting you parole.
- Violent offenders must successfully complete violence prevention programming to be released on parole.
- Sex offenders must successfully complete sex offender treatment to be considered for parole.
- **CALL YOUR PAROLE AGENT FIRST WHENEVER YOU HAVE A QUESTION OR PROBLEM WHILE ON PAROLE.**
- Abide by your parole conditions and you will successfully complete your sentence.
- Your parole agent is your best source of information when you are released to parole.

Employees from the Department of Corrections and the Board of Probation and Parole will work with you throughout your time in prison.

Arrival at the Department of Corrections

Upon arrival at the Department of Corrections (DOC) you will be provided with an orientation, evaluated for physical and mental health needs, and evaluated to determine what factors contribute to you making decisions that lead you to commit crimes. When this is done you will be given a prescribed program list and assigned to a home institution.

You will then be transferred to your home institution. It is very important that you pay attention during this time period so that you understand what you must do to complete your sentence successfully.

What do I need to know when I first arrive at prison?

You were convicted in a court of law. Neither the DOC nor the board can change your conviction. They are required to make decisions based on your conviction. If you are appealing your conviction, as is your right, be aware that the appeal does not affect DOC and board decisions. You must follow DOC's rules, do your prescribed programs, and not get misconducts in order to best prepare for your parole interview.

What are MY responsibilities?

Start planning for your eventual reentry into society. Complete your required programming. Do not receive any misconducts while incarcerated.

What are DOC responsibilities?

DOC's primary responsibility is to ensure public safety by confining you for the duration of your incarceration in a humane manner. In addition, DOC is also responsible for providing opportunities for you to rehabilitate yourself so that you are more likely to become a law abiding, productive member of society upon your release.

Why is DOC asking me so many questions and putting me through tests?

DOC conducts evaluations to determine treatment and programming needs and health needs. DOC needs to know your health needs so they can provide adequate care during your incarceration. DOC needs to know what factors contributed to you making decisions that lead you to commit crimes so that you can be encouraged to take programs that will reduce your risk of committing new crimes after you are released.

Why do I need to do DOC's prescribed programs?

Because completing programming increases your chance to be paroled on your minimum date. Your prescribed program list is based on

DOC's tests to determine your treatment needs. If you do not make an effort to complete your prescribed programs before your minimum date, the Board is less likely to grant you parole at your minimum date.

Sex Offenders: If you are convicted of a sex offense and you are not involved in programming, you will not be seen by the Board until such time as you are in programming according to Act 98 of 2000.

How do I get into programs?

You will be placed on a waiting list at your institution for your prescribed programs. Priority for programs is given to those offenders closest to their minimum sentence date.

Why is remaining misconduct-free important to parole?

The Board uses misconducts as an indicator of whether or not you have successfully adjusted to prison and can abide by rules governing your conduct. Serious misconducts may affect your chances for parole. The Board reviews your misconduct record prior to your interview. Even if your misconducts are several years old, it may lead to the Board imposing stricter conditions of parole on you if they decide to release you.

If I am a victim of sexual assault or rape by another inmate or institutional staff while I'm in prison, how may I report this safely?

You should report the incident to any staff member or use DOC's ***toll-free*** Sexual Assault Hotline ***(1-866-823-6703)*** for the general public and inmates ***(717-703-2702, to be used with the Facility Pin Number)*** to anonymously report a sexual assault to the Duty Officer at SCI-Camp Hill. The federal Prison Rape Elimination Act requires all states to put safeguards and confidential reporting options in place. Remember, if a guard or other staff member has sexual contact with you, he has committed the crime of Institutional Sexual Assault — even if you agreed to the sexual contact.

Why wouldn't I be released on my minimum date?

There is no right to parole in Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, the minimum date represents the minimum amount of time you must be incarcerated under DOC's control. You become *eligible* for parole release when you have served your minimum sentence. It's the Board's job to determine whether you deserve to be on parole for any part of your sentence between your minimum and maximum dates. The Board's main consideration is whether or not you have reduced your risk of committing a new crime and can safely be managed in the community.

If I am aware of a DOC or Parole Board staff member violating the law or abusing their position, how may I report this confidentially?

You may document the incident giving the date, time, and detailed description of what occurred and stating the names of those involved and send it to either the DOC or the Board, depending on which department the person works for.

PA Board of Probation & Parole
Probation and Parole Services
1101 South Front Street
Suite 5400
Harrisburg, PA 17104

PA Dept. of Corrections
Office of Special Investigations and Intelligence
1920 Technology Parkway
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

My original sentence minimum and maximum dates are wrong. Who do I contact?

Submit a request for sentence review to DOC's inmate records office.

I believe I'm innocent. What can I do?

You may talk with your private attorney or public defender and appeal your conviction.

How do I apply for a pardon?

See your DOC counselor for a pardons application. You may write the Board of Pardons to request an application.

PA Board of Pardons | 333 Market Street, 15th Floor | Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Parole Consideration

What are the Parole Board's responsibilities?

The board's primary responsibilities are to ensure public safety by deciding which inmates are ready for release to parole and to provide adequate supervision for those released for the duration of their sentence.

When should I be seen by the Parole Board?

The Parole Board tries to interview every offender approximately 4 months prior to your minimum date or 3 months prior to when you become eligible for re-parole. If you are within 4 months of, or past, your minimum date when you arrive at prison, you will be placed on the next available docket (the Board's schedule of interviews each month).

Will transfers to another prison affect when I get interviewed for parole?

The Board is notified every time you are transferred within DOC and will place you on the next available interview schedule at any state correctional institution. If you are sent to a county prison for court appearances, your interview may be delayed until you return and the court provides new sentencing information.

Parole interview preparation starts approximately 8 months prior to your minimum date. Institutional parole staff will contact you approximately 5 months prior to your minimum date to do a pre-interview. They will ask you questions in order to make sure your parole file is complete prior to the interview with the Board Member or hearing examiner. This pre-interview will require you to provide your written version of the circumstances of your offense – what happened and why.

Interview Preparation and Expectations

Parole interviews are held with one or more members of the parole staff face to face with you in the room. Usually this will consist of one board member or hearing examiner. A second person, usually a Board member, will be video-linked to the interview if you are a violent offender. You are to treat the video-linked person as if they were present in the room with you.

What will the Board look for when they interview me?

The Board is required by law to consider the following factors:

- The nature and circumstances of the crime for which you were convicted, as well as your entire criminal history including any juvenile arrests or adjudications;
- Information regarding your general character and your background;

- Sentencing hearing testimony notes;
- Your physical, mental, and behavioral condition and history;
- History of family violence (if any);
- The recommendation of your sentencing judge and prosecuting attorney;
- Input from the victim and the victim's family (if any); and
- The recommendation from the warden or superintendent of the facility where you are incarcerated.

Some of the specific things they may ask about in relation to these factors are: your involvement in drug and alcohol programs if you have a drug or alcohol conviction; your participation in sex offender programs if you have a sex offense conviction; specifics regarding any misconducts; what you learned from each of your educational programs; and what you have done in your institutional job. You will be asked what you learned in the programs you attended.

If you have done your programming, received no misconducts and are honest, you have an increased probability of being paroled. You will always receive a fair interview. This is your opportunity to explain why you should be paroled.

What is the Board's voting process?

Offenders are divided into three groups depending on your current offense for voting purposes: 1) murderers and sex offenders, 2) other violent offenders, and 3) non-violent offenders.

1. Murderers and sex offenders:
   The majority of the Board must vote 'yes' for an offender to be paroled. These offenders are usually interviewed jointly by two Board members.
2. Other violent offenders:
   At least 2 Board members must vote 'yes' for an offender to be paroled. These offenders are usually interviewed jointly by two Board members.
3. Non-violent offenders:
   RRRI-eligible offenders may be paroled if they receive a 'yes' vote from a hearing examiner. Other non-violent offenders need one 'yes' vote from a hearing examiner and one 'yes' vote from a Board member. These offenders are usually interviewed by a hearing examiner.

What should I say and how should I act at my interview?

You should tell the truth when answering any question by the Board member or hearing examiner interviewing you. You should act respectful and keep your tone of voice calm and polite.

What should be my expectations in my parole interview?

Showing the Board member or hearing examiner that you have reduced your risk of re-offending. You do this by taking responsibility for your crime(s), having completed your prescribed programming, having found a job and place to live upon your release, having adjusted well to prison (shown by no misconducts and receiving DOC's recommendation for parole), and having paid any victim restitution and costs and fines to the greatest extent possible while incarcerated.

I'm past my minimum and have been told I cannot see the Board, why?

You may be ineligible to see the board if you are in RHU status, have not participated in or completed sex offender treatment as required by 42 PA. C.S. § 9718.1(A) (Act 98 of 2000), or your file lacks a needed document such as an official version of your crime, psychological test results, or a DOC recommendation regarding your parole.

Will I be paroled? What are my chances for parole?

Maybe. Your chances for parole depend on several factors. Your institutional parole agent and DOC counselor cannot answer this question. Only Board members and hearing examiners have the authority to vote to grant or deny parole. Your answer will be in your Board Action or "green sheet" that you will receive after your interview.

What should I have completed before my parole interview?

You should have successfully completed as many of your prescribed programs as possible – make sure the institutional parole agent is given documentation to show this. You should have submitted a proposed home plan, employment plan, paid your Crime Victims Compensation Fund fees, secured an official photo identification card, and paid as much victim restitution as possible.

Crime Victims Compensation Fund Payment Date

Amount Paid

Your Crime Victims Compensation Fund payment amount will depend on the date your offense was committed. This payment must be paid or you will not be released.

Official Photo Identification Card Receipt Date

Home Plan Submission Date
(4 months prior to your minimum date or scheduled month of review) See page 25 for a copy of a home plan form.

Employment Plan Submission Date
Start sending letters requesting employment 12 months prior to your minimum date. You should have copies of all letters you sent to employers asking for a job. You should continue sending letters until you receive a job offer. (You will probably need to send 20-50 letters in order to receive one positive response.) See page 26 for a copy of the employment plan form.
Dates and Amounts of Victim Restitution Paid

Date _____ Amount _____
Date _____ Amount _____
Date _____ Amount _____
Date _____ Amount _____

Date _____ Amount _____
Date _____ Amount _____
Date _____ Amount _____
Date _____ Amount _____

How far back does the Parole Board look at misconducts?

The Board looks at all misconducts, but concentrates on those that occurred within the past two years.

I've been requesting to get into programs for over a year and the DOC did not put me in programs. Can I still get paroled?

Yes, if the Board decides that you can be safely supervised on the street and the programming is available at either a CCC or from a private provider, they may parole you and add the programming as a condition of parole.

If my programs are not complete because I was recently transferred here, will this affect my parole?

It depends on your risk and the type of programming needed. If you are currently in the program, the Board may parole you upon completion of the program.

If my programs are not complete because I have been on the waiting list for a long time or not entered programs through no fault of my own will this reduce my chance of being paroled?

It depends on your risk and the type of programming needed. If the Board decides that you can be safely supervised on the street and the programming is available at either a CCC or from a private provider, they may parole you and add the programming as a condition of parole.

How long does it take to receive the green sheet?

It depends. Parole decisions generally take 6 weeks to process from the date of interview.

Is there any place online that an offender's family can check the status of the green sheet?

No. The Board does not have an online inquiry service. Family members, friends and attorneys should check with the offender. **If it has been more than 10 weeks since being interviewed, inmates should check directly with their institutional parole agent.** Family members, friends and attorneys may call (see phone number below) or write to the Board's Inmate Inquiry Unit for information regarding the status of individual cases. Both family and inmates need to be patient – the length of time needed is dependent on the individual circumstances of each case.

717.772.4343

Home Plans

When will my home plan be checked out?

Home plan investigations are not done until after you receive a Board Action granting parole. Investigations are usually done within 3-4 weeks after you receive your Board Action if you submitted a plan prior to your interview. See page 25 for a full copy of a home plan form.

If I am a sex offender will I be able to live with my family?

Maybe. Home plans for sex offenders must comply with the Board's sex offender protocol. As an example, if your sex offense involved a minor victim, your home plan cannot be within close proximity of a daycare, school, playground, or other place that minors gather. Note: Agents may impose additional conditions on a case by case basis.

Can I stay in a home if someone living there is already on parole or probation?

Maybe. It depends on the other person's relationship to you and whether or not their presence would increase your risk of re-offending.

Can a home plan be to a residence with a dog? Can we get a dog after I am living there?

This depends on the type and number of dogs and their personalities. The parole agent's safety is the primary consideration regarding whether a specific dog is allowed. This decision will be made by the parole agent who inspects the home or who supervises you after release. Always ask your parole agent before adding a dog to a residence so that you are not forced to get rid of the dog or move to a new residence in order to comply with your parole supervision.

If I own my own business, do I need to submit an employment plan or job letters?

Yes. You still need to submit an employment plan that states what you will be doing. See page 26 for a copy of an employment plan form.

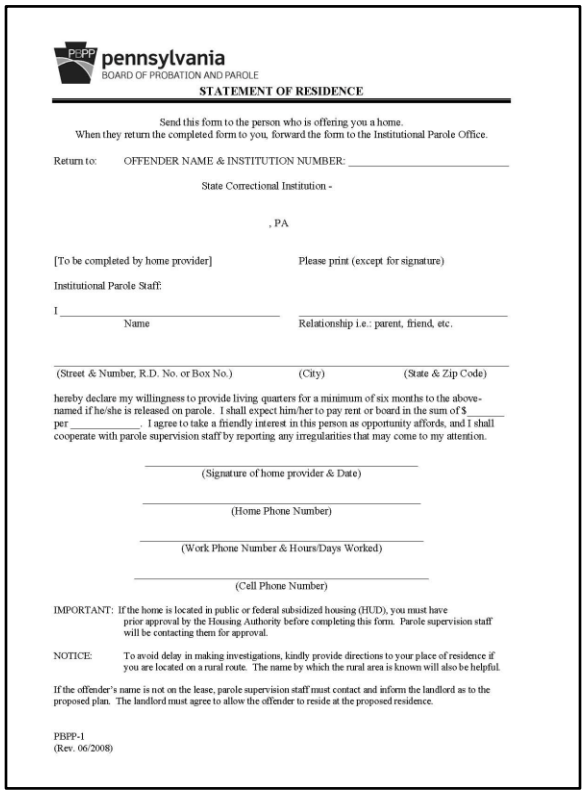
If I expect to collect disability, do I need to submit job letters?

No, but you must provide documentation of your disability status.

How do I apply to live in another state after release?

Interstate home plans must be submitted through your institutional parole agent. Such interstate transfer applications require a non-reimbursable application fee of $100 at the time of application. The person in the other state who will be your home provider will need to submit a

letter of financial responsibility stating they will provide for your food and housing needs until you are able to provide for yourself.



pennsylvania
BOARD OF PROBATION AND PAROLE

STATEMENT OF RESIDENCE

Send this form to the person who is offering you a home.
When they return the completed form to you, forward the form to the Institutional Parole Office.

Return to: OFFENDER NAME & INSTITUTION NUMBER: _____

State Correctional Institution -

, PA

[To be completed by home provider] Please print (except for signature)

Institutional Parole Staff:

I _____ _____
Name Relationship i.e.: parent, friend, etc.

_____
(Street & Number, R.D. No. or Box No.) (City) (State & Zip Code)

hereby declare my willingness to provide living quarters for a minimum of six months to the above-named if he/she is released on parole. I shall expect him/her to pay rent or board in the sum of $_____ per _____. I agree to take a friendly interest in this person as opportunity affords, and I shall cooperate with parole supervision staff by reporting any irregularities that may come to my attention.

_____
(Signature of home provider & Date)

_____
(Home Phone Number)

_____
(Work Phone Number & Hours/Days Worked)

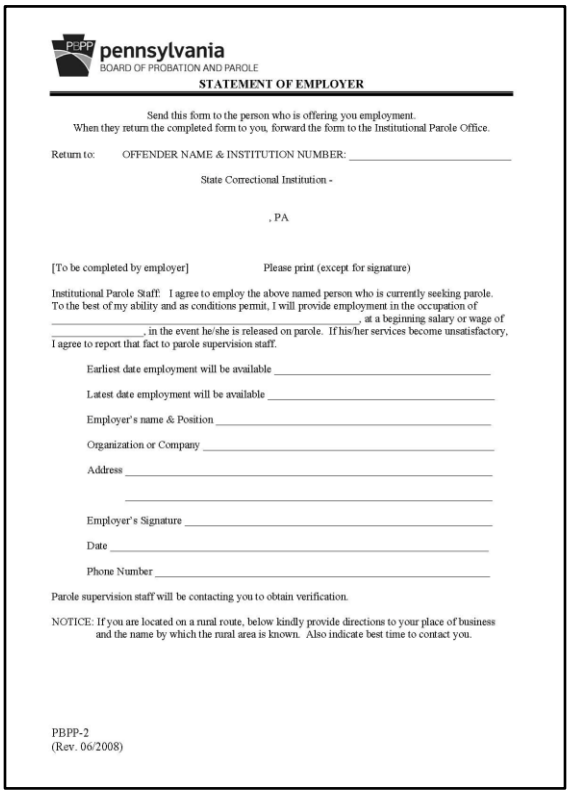
_____
(Cell Phone Number)

IMPORTANT: If the home is located in public or federal subsidized housing (HUD), you must have prior approval by the Housing Authority before completing this form. Parole supervision staff will be contacting them for approval.

NOTICE: To avoid delay in making investigations, kindly provide directions to your place of residence if you are located on a rural route. The name by which the rural area is known will also be helpful.

If the offender's name is not on the lease, parole supervision staff must contact and inform the landlord as to the proposed plan. The landlord must agree to allow the offender to reside at the proposed residence.

PBPP-1
(Rev. 06/2008)



pennsylvania
BOARD OF PROBATION AND PAROLE

STATEMENT OF EMPLOYER

Send this form to the person who is offering you employment.
When they return the completed form to you, forward the form to the Institutional Parole Office.

Return to: OFFENDER NAME & INSTITUTION NUMBER: _____

State Correctional Institution -

, PA

[To be completed by employer] Please print (except for signature)

Institutional Parole Staff: I agree to employ the above named person who is currently seeking parole. To the best of my ability and as conditions permit, I will provide employment in the occupation of _____, at a beginning salary or wage of _____, in the event he/she is released on parole. If his/her services become unsatisfactory, I agree to report that fact to parole supervision staff.

Earliest date employment will be available _____

Latest date employment will be available _____

Employer's name & Position _____

Organization or Company _____

Address _____

_____

Employer's Signature _____

Date _____

Phone Number _____

Parole supervision staff will be contacting you to obtain verification.

NOTICE: If you are located on a rural route, below kindly provide directions to your place of business and the name by which the rural area is known. Also indicate best time to contact you.

PBPP-2
(Rev. 06/2008)

See Pages 25 and 26

Understanding Your Board Action

Your Board Action, also called a Board Decision or green sheet (though most Board Actions are now printed on white paper), will tell you whether you are granted or denied parole and the reasons for the decision. It does not guarantee your release from prison.

If you are granted parole, the Board Action will state the special conditions of parole you must comply with once released. These are in addition to the general conditions of parole all parolees must obey. The general conditions are listed on page 27.

If you are denied parole, the Board Action will state what programming you need to complete or other actions you need to take in order to improve your chances for parole at your next interview.

Can I appeal a Board Action denying parole?
No. Under Pennsylvania law, parole is a privilege not a right. Courts have consistently stated that a denial of parole is not able to be appealed.

What do the general statements for refusal on a Board Action mean?
If your parole denial contains a general statement that you do not demonstrate a motivation for success, it means that neither your completion of programs nor your interview statements show that you want to succeed as a law-abiding citizen.

If your parole denial contains a general statement regarding your risk and needs assessment, it means that you have a high risk of re-offending according to your evaluations.

If your parole denial contains a general statement regarding lack of remorse or not taking responsibility for your crime(s), it means that your statements and actions during your interview give the impression that you do not care about the impact of your actions on other people and society. Blaming others for your offenses and not caring that you harmed other people shows that you are not ready to be a law-abiding citizen.

Why should I accept responsibility for crimes if I'm innocent?
If you believe you are innocent, you need to pursue relief through the court appeals process. The Board must accept your conviction as fact and base its decision on what you have done to rehabilitate yourself so that you will not re-offend in the future. Any claim of innocence could be viewed as a denial of responsibility and a lack of remorse. If you are appealing your conviction, simply state that to the interviewer.

What does parole to detainer mean?
Parole to detainer means you are not being released. It is a grant of parole to a detainer sentence, which is a sentence separate from the one you are currently serving. The detainer ensures that when you have been paroled on your present sentence you will be turned over to the authority imposing the detainer sentence to serve the next sentence, rather than being released from confinement. It means that you are allowed to start serving the other Pennsylvania sentence while on parole or will be sent to the other jurisdiction to start serving their sentence.

What are special conditions of parole?
Conditions of parole are the rules you need to live by the entire time you are under parole supervision. These rules are not the same for every parolee. They are tailored specifically to you and your risks.

Can I appeal a condition of parole or ask for it to be lifted at a later date?
Yes. You may request that the Board reconsider any condition if circumstances change. This appeal process is internal to the Board. You must ask your parole agent to submit a 'Memo to the Board' requesting the change and giving your justification. The decision of the Board is final. You cannot appeal a special condition of parole through the court system. It is more likely that

the Board will consider lifting a condition of parole if you have served at least one year under parole supervision with no violations.

If you are still in prison and you have documentation to prove a condition may not be applicable to you, you may provide a copy to the institutional parole agent and ask them to send the information to the Board for consideration. However, realize that while your request is being considered, all work on your release processing will be delayed until a decision is made by the Board regarding the request.

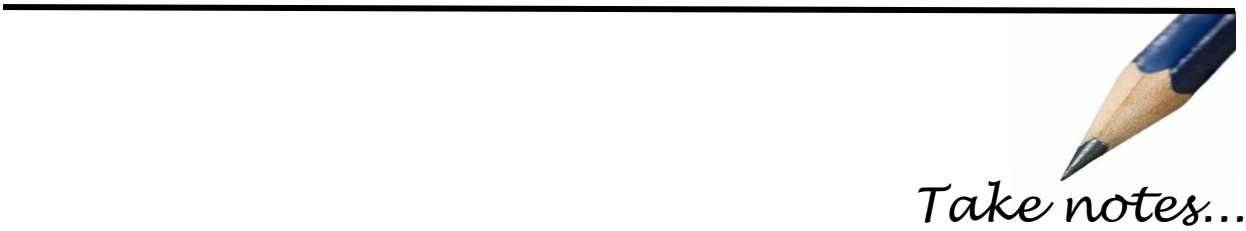
Who determines what programming I have to do once released?

The Board determines what programming you must complete while on parole based on your correctional plan. Your supervising agent may also send you to programming if you would benefit from a specific class.

If you are returned to DOC for a parole violation, the DOC will determine your programming needs.

My Board Action paroles me to a specialized center. Why do I have this condition and what does it mean?

You are required to go to a specialized center because you have been identified as an offender who needs violence prevention programming before going to live in an approved home. A specialized center is a CCC having the staff and ability to provide violence prevention programming. As of January 2011, there are seven (7) such centers statewide.



The Parole Release Process:

What Happens After Parole Is Granted

Parole release is not immediate when you receive your Board Action (green sheet) granting you parole. There may be several things that need to occur before you are released to parole supervision. Your institutional agent will go over what steps apply to your case when you are given your green sheet. You will also be given an estimate of how long the process may take.

When you receive a green sheet granting parole, you must then meet other release requirements which take up additional time – some are listed below. You may have others stated in your green sheet. Ask your institutional parole agent to verify which ones apply to you.

What do I need to know once I have a green sheet granting me parole?

If your green sheet contains conditions that must be fulfilled before you are released, you must complete them before any release processing will begin. You must also remain misconduct free. Any detainers or new charges may delay or invalidate your parole.

Release checklist

- ❑ Crime Victims' Compensation Fund Payment
- ❑ DOC RRRI Certification
- ❑ Victim Awareness Class Completion (if applicable)
- ❑ DNA Sample (if you have a past or present felony conviction)
- ❑ Megan's Law Registration (if required)
- ❑ Completed Programming (if noted)
- ❑ Urinalysis
- ❑ Chairman's Certification (CERT) (if violent crime)
- ❑ CCC Bed Date
- ❑ Approved Home Plan
- ❑ Release Orders from the Board
- ❑ Release Date from DOC

Note: An in-state (Pennsylvania) home plan is valid for 150 days.

An out-of-state home plan is valid for 120 days.

A urine test is good for 45 days.

How long until I get released?

It depends. Legally you cannot be released on parole prior to your minimum sentence date. If you have completed all required programming, are a non-violent offender, have an approved home plan or CCC bed date, and have no detainers, release may occur within a short time frame. The average inmate is released within 130 days of being interviewed. However, offenders with violent convictions will take much longer.

My family needs me out to help now, why aren't my family needs considered?

An inmate may not be released until all legal requirements are met. Release is not allowed to be determined based on outside events, but only when all requirements are met.

What does a "when available" green sheet mean?

"When available" means that the Board cannot consider you for parole because you have outstanding criminal charges or a new conviction that must be disposed of before your current sentence (and parole status) can be finalized. You are determined to "be available" when the Board receives an official version of the disposition of charges (records from the court).

What fees must be paid before I'm released?

It depends on your offense.

Crime Victims Compensation Payment Required ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No** Amount $_____
(Acts 27, 35, 85, 86, or 96)

Crime Victims Compensation Payment Date
(Two months prior to your Minimum Date)

What does being a "Category 3" offender mean to my release?

Category 3 offenders are those offenders who are considered to be most likely to re-offend in a violent manner. If you are designated as a Category 3 offender it will mean you are required to take a violence prevention program, be released to a specialized CCC to take a violence prevention booster program, and that you will be under a higher level of parole supervision when released to a home plan.

How do I find out what category I am?

Ask your DOC counselor or your institutional parole agent. Your category is determined based on three factors:

1) Are you currently serving a conviction for a violent offense?
2) Have you had a conviction (or juvenile adjudication) for a violent offense within the 10 years prior to your current incarceration? and
3) What is your RST level?

Why should I get a photo ID before I am released?

Most employers will require you to have a government-issued photo ID. You also need a government-issued photo ID to access all government programs including social security, medical assistance, and welfare. You can, and should, authorize DOC to allow money to be deducted from your inmate account to obtain a copy of your birth certificate and a photo ID card. Your inmate ID is not acceptable when you walk out the gate.

What is CERT?

CERT stands for 'Chairman's Certification' – the final review of a violent offender's file that must be done to verify that all legal requirements for parole release have been met. Release orders may only be issued after the Chairman of the Board has signed this certification.

How do I get into a half way house?

A community corrections center (CCC), often called a halfway house, is a residency under the jurisdiction of the DOC. To be placed in a CCC, DOC must approve your placement and provide a bed date. This will be requested for you by institutional parole staff if your green sheet states you are paroled to a CCC. The Department of Corrections is responsible for placing offenders at community corrections centers. The Board encourages each offender to work with his institutional parole officer to develop an approved home plan in order to expedite placement.

When will I get a bed date and what CCC will I go to?

The DOC controls the location and times for bed dates. The parole agent only makes a referral to a DOC Corrections Classification Program manager (DOC CCPM). You may check with your corrections counselor or the institutional parole agent if you have not received a bed date within one month of receiving your paroling Board Action.

Sex offenders:

Inmates that have any sexual offense convictions in their history will be placed faster at a CCC if they have an approved home plan.

Take notes…

Parole Supervision

How does supervision work?

Your institutional agent will review your parole conditions with you before you are released. Once you report to your supervising district office, these conditions will be reviewed with you a second time. Each time you must sign a document stating that you understand the conditions. You must abide by the law and follow all of your parole conditions. Supervision will end when your maximum sentence date arrives.

Within 24 hours of release from prison you must appear in person at the district office where your parole agent reports if you are going directly to a home plan. If you are paroled to a CCC, you will be seen by the agent assigned to the CCC and told when to report to the district office.

You will be assigned to the caseload of an individual parole agent. This agent is your first point of contact regarding any problems you encounter while on parole. Your agent is responsible for helping guide you in making decisions which will keep you out of prison. The agent is also responsible for enforcing your conditions of parole. You and your agent need to develop a relationship based on honesty and respect.

You are expected to work and complete all required programs while you are on parole. If you are unemployed, you are expected to actively look for work or be attending school.

If you are arrested for a crime while on parole or you are accused of assaultive behavior against another person, you will most likely be returned to prison. Other violations of your parole may or may not result in re-incarceration depending on what the violation is and if it's a repeat behavior. All violations will result in a sanction ranging from curfew, increased urine testing, or attending programming to being placed in an in-patient treatment or technical parole violator center.

What happens if I stop reporting to my agent?

If you stop meeting with your agent, you are considered a parole absconder. When you are declared an absconder, the Board will issue a nation-wide warrant for your arrest. You may lose all credit or "street time" from the time when you were released from prison until the time you are re-arrested. This time may be added back to your sentence if you are returned to prison. If you are convicted of a new crime while on parole, you will lose all of the time you were on the street.

How do I file an appeal or request to have a condition of supervision changed or removed?

If you are under parole supervision, you submit a request for the change of condition to your parole agent. If your parole agent denies your request, you may appeal it to the agent's

supervisor. If the supervisor denies your request, you may appeal it to the district director, regional director and the deputy executive director. If it is a mandatory condition placed on you by the Board, the appeal request must go to the Board for removal.

How can I report an alleged abuse of power or criminal activity by a parole agent?

Complaints regarding parole agents should be sent to the address given on page 6. Information regarding alleged criminal activity by parole agents should be provided to your local or state police for investigation.

What must I do to successfully complete parole?

You must comply with all of your conditions of parole and not commit a new crime.

Am I allowed to contact my local, state and federal elected officials regarding parole issues?

Yes. You may contact these officials regarding any issue. You do not need to tell your parole agent of this contact nor may the agent retaliate in any way due to such contact.

May I vote while on parole?

Yes. You may register and vote in any local, state, or national election while on parole in Pennsylvania.

I have served my maximum sentence. Why am I being told I will be supervised by a state parole agent?

You are a county "special probation" case. You have a county probation sentence that follows your state prison sentence. Judges are allowed to ask the Board to supervise any county probation or county parole case if certain conditions exist. Offenders serving such sentences must abide by any conditions the judge sets on their case. These will, at a minimum, include the Board's general conditions of parole.

Take notes…

Violations of Parole

What I need to know if I am detained or recommitted for a parole violation?

You have a right to both a first and second level hearing as part of your due process rights. You may waive these rights.

First level hearings:

Preliminary hearings for technical parole violations are held within 14 days of detention on the Board's warrant.

Detention hearings for violators with new criminal charges are held within 30 days of detention on the Board's warrant.

The standard of proof for preliminary and detention hearings is "probable cause" – is it more likely than not that the violation occurred.

Second level hearings:

Revocation hearings for offenders who committed a criminal act while on parole (convicted parole violator) and are convicted in a court of record of a crime punishable by imprisonment are held within 120 days from the date of official verification of the plea of guilty, no contest plea or guilty verdict at the highest trial court level.

Violation hearings for offenders who violated either a general or special condition of parole (technical parole violator) are held within 120 days of the preliminary hearing.

The standard of proof for revocation and violation hearings is "preponderance of the evidence" – does most of the evidence indicate the violation occurred.

What are the possible outcomes?

First level hearings:

Either 'continue on parole' or 'detain pending second level hearing.'

Continuing on parole after first level hearings means the hearing examiner did not find it likely that you violated your parole.

Second level hearings:

Either 'continue on parole' – with or without new conditions or "recommit to prison."

You may be placed in a parole violator center (PVC). In accordance with Act 122 of 2012, all technical parole violators (parolees who violate one or more conditions of their parole) will go to a PVC unless their technical violation was sexual in nature, involved assaultive behavior, involved possession of a weapon, posed an identifiable threat to public safety or the parole violator is an absconder who can not be safely managed in a community corrections center. In that case, the parole violator will be returned to a county jail or prison. Technical parole violators sent to a PVC will usually serve between 60 and 120 days, depending on their satisfactory adjustment while at the center. The length of time will be six months maximum and automatic reparole.

Technical parole violators returned to jail or prison will serve at most six months for the first violation, nine months for the second violation and one year for the third and subsequent violations before being automatically re-paroled. However, if the offender has committed disciplinary infractions involving assaultive behavior, sexual assault, possession of a weapon or controlled substance, spent more than 90 days in segregated housing due to one or more disciplinary actions or refused programming or work assignments, the technical parole violator is not eligible for this automatic re-parole.

Convicted parole violators (parolees convicted of a new crime) will automatically be sent to prison and will stay there until the board determines they are ready to reenter the community. If convicted, the board can recommit them to serve the balance of their sentence with no credit for time on parole. Act 122 of 2012 gives the board discretion in determining whether to award street time to some categories of convicted parole violators. The board may either award all street time served or none.

“Continuing on parole” after a second level hearing means either the hearing examiner did not find enough evidence to suggest you violated your parole OR it could mean there was enough evidence to recommit you to prison but the hearing examiner feels that you could be safely returned to the street with additional sanctions.

“Recommitment to prison” means you were found to violate your parole and the hearing examiner felt public safety requires you to be returned to prison.

What happens if I waive my right to have hearings?

If you are a criminal parole violator, then you will be returned to prison and immediately start to serve the back time ordered by the Board.

If you are a technical parole violator, then you may either be sent to a parole violation center or returned to prison to immediately start serving the back time ordered by the Board.

What is a parole violation center?

A PVC is a secure CCC which you will not be allowed to leave during your time there. You will immediately receive programming at the PVC. You will likely be released to an approved plan in a much shorter time period than if you were re-incarcerated, as long as you successfully

complete all programming and requirements. PVC stays are designed to be anywhere from 60 to 120 days, depending on your program completion and satisfactory adjustment. If you fail the PVC program, you will be unsuccessfully discharged and returned to prison. You may be sent to a PVC directly upon waiving hearings or by the decision from a hearing.

How and when may I appeal violation recommitment decisions?

You may appeal a decision by sending a letter stating the reasons for your appeal to the Board. You must appeal a recommitment decision within 30 days of the date stamped on the decision. The appeal should be sent to:

Board of Probation and Parole
Office of Board Secretary – Appeals
1101 South Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

When and how does a recommitment affect my sentence calculation?

There are two times when recommitment will change your sentence calculation.

First, if you are convicted of a new crime committed while on parole, the remainder of your unserved sentence from the date you signed your release orders to the maximum expiration date of your sentence will be added to the date you become available to the Board (usually either the date on which you complete the sentence for the new crime or the date you are paroled from the new sentence to the old sentence).

Second, if you absconded from parole (quit reporting to your agent), the number of days from the date you were declared an absconder until the date you were detained will be added to your sentence.

When can I be re-paroled?

Your green sheet will state when you are eligible for re-parole. You will be interviewed approximately 3 months prior to this date, or on the next available docket following that date. However, your re-parole interview will be delayed if your file lacks any needed information.

DISTRICT PAROLE OFFICE LOCATIONS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Western Region Office
North Shore Sub-Office
1121 West North Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
Phone: 412.880.0235

Altoona District Office
Cricket Field Plaza
1304 7th Street – Rear
Altoona, PA 16601
Phone: 814.946.7357

Erie District Office
221 East 18th Street
Erie, PA 16503
Phone: 814.871.4201

Mercer District Office
P.O. Box 547
Creekside Office Complex
Suite 102
8362 Sharon-Mercer Road
Mercer, PA 16137
Phone: 724.662.2380

Butler Sub-Office
207 Sunset Drive - Suite 1
Butler, PA 16001
Phone: 724.284.8888

Franklin Sub-Office
50 Gibb Road
Franklin, PA 16323
Phone: 814.437.7531

Pittsburgh District Office
133 Penn Circle West
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412.645.7000

Beaver Falls Sub-Office
600 Sixth Street
Beaver Falls, PA 15010
Phone: 724.847.5575

Greensburg Sub-Office
333 Harvey Avenue
Suite 100
Greensburg, PA 15601
Phone: 724.832.5369

Mon-Valley Sub-Office
335 Fifth Avenue
McKeesport, PA 15132
Phone: 412.664.5320

North Shore Sub-Office
1121 West North Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
Phone: 412.442.5840

Central Region Office
1101 South Front Street
Suite 5950
Harrisburg, PA 17104
Phone: 717.787.5699

Allentown District Office
2040 South 12th Street
Allentown, PA 18103
Phone: 610.791.6157

Reading Sub-Office
State Office Building
633 Cherry Street
Reading, PA 19602
Phone: 610.378.4331

Harrisburg District Office
1130 Herr Street
Harrisburg, PA 17103
Phone: 717.787.2563

Chambersburg Sub-Office
630 Norland Avenue
Chambersburg, PA 17201
Phone: 717.491.1038

Lancaster Sub-Office
635 Union Street
Lancaster, PA 17603
Phone: 717.299.7593

York Sub-Office
785 Vogelsong Road
York, PA 17404
Phone: 717.812.0263

Scranton District Office
430 Penn Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
Phone: 570.963.4326

Williamsport District Office
450 Little League Boulevard
Williamsport, PA 17701
Phone: 570.327.3575

Eastern Region Office
2630 North 13th Street
Suite 100
Philadelphia, PA 19132
Phone: 215.560.6594

Chester District Office
701 Crosby Street – Suite C
Chester, PA 19013
Phone: 610.447.3270

Norristown Sub-Office
1961 New Hope Street
Norristown, PA 19401
Phone: 484.250.7580

Philadelphia District Office
2630 North 13th Street
Suite 100
Philadelphia, PA 19132
Phone: 215.560.6594

Philadelphia Northeast Division
1318-24 W. Clearfield Street
Philadelphia, PA 19132
Phone: 215.965.2700

Philadelphia County Wide Division
2630 North 13th Street
Suite 200
Philadelphia, PA 19132
Phone: 215.560.2082

Philadelphia West Division
5828-38 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
Phone: 215.560.6261

Philadelphia Northwest Division
334 East Chelten Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144-5752
Phone: 215.560.4685

Home Plan Form

pennsylvania
BOARD OF PROBATION AND PAROLE

STATEMENT OF RESIDENCE

Send this form to the person who is offering you a home. When they return the completed form to you, forward the form to the Institutional Parole Office.

Return to: OFFENDER NAME: _____
INSTITUTION NUMBER: _____
State Correctional Institution – _____
_____ PA _____

[To be completed by home provider] Please print (except for signature)

Institutional Parole Staff:

I _____ _____
[Name] *[Relationship i.e.: parent, friend, etc.]*

_____
(Street & Number, R.D. No. or Box No.) (City) (State & Zip Code)

hereby declare my willingness to provide living quarters for a minimum of six months to the above named if he/she is released on parole. I shall expect him/her to pay rent or board in the sum of $_____ per _____. I agree to take a friendly interest in this person as opportunity affords, and I shall cooperate with parole supervision staff by reporting any irregularities that may come to my attention.

_____ _____
(Signature of home provider) (Date)

_____
(Home Phone Number)

_____
(Work Phone Number & Hours/Days Worked)

_____
(Cell Phone Number)

IMPORTANT: If the home is located in public or federal subsidized housing (HUD), you must have prior approval by the Housing Authority before completing this form. Parole supervision staff will be contacting them for approval.

NOTICE: To avoid delay in making investigations, kindly provide directions to your place of residence if you are located on a rural route. The name by which the rural area is known will also be helpful.

If the offender's name is not on the lease, parole supervision staff must contact and inform the landlord as to the proposed plan. The landlord must agree to allow the offender to reside at the proposed residence.

PBPP-1
(Rev. 06/2008)

Employment Plan Form

pennsylvania
BOARD OF PROBATION AND PAROLE

STATEMENT OF EMPLOYER

Send this form to the person who is offering you employment. When they return the completed form to you, forward the form to the Institutional Parole Office.

Return to: OFFENDER NAME: _____
INSTITUTION NUMBER: _____
State Correctional Institution – _____
_____ PA _____

[To be completed by employer] Please print (except for signature)

Institutional Parole Staff:

I agree to employ the above named person who is currently seeking parole. To the best of my ability and as conditions permit, I will provide employment in the occupation of _____ at a beginning salary or wage of _____, in the event he/she is released on parole. If his/her services become unsatisfactory, I agree to report that fact to parole supervision staff.

Earliest date employment will be available _____

Latest date employment will be available _____

Employer's name & Position _____

Organization or Company _____

Address _____

_____

Employer's Signature _____ Date _____
Phone Number _____

Parole supervision staff will be contacting you to obtain verification.

NOTICE: If you are located on a rural route, below kindly provide directions to your place of business and the name by which the rural area is known. Also indicate best time to contact you.

PBPP-2

(Rev. 0612008)

General Conditions of Parole

- Must be under the supervision of a district office or sub-office and not leave that district without prior written permission of the supervising parole agent.
- Must obtain prior written permission of the supervising parole agent in order to change residence.
- Must maintain regular contact with the parole agent by:

  1. Reporting regularly as instructed and following written instructions of agent.

  2. Notifying agent within 72 hours of an arrest, receipt of a summons, citation or offenses punishable by imprisonment.

  3. Notifying agent within 72 hours of a change in status including employment, on-the-job training and education.

- Must comply with state, county, local and federal criminal laws, regulations, ordinances, the vehicle code and the liquor code.
- Must abstain from the unlawful possession or sale of narcotics/drugs and from the use of controlled substances without a valid prescription.
- Must refrain from owning/possessing firearms or other weapons. This includes all firearms whether functional or not and includes facsimiles (reproductions, fake/toy guns), muzzle loaders, archery equipment, etc.
- Must refrain from assaultive behavior, including physical and verbal assault.
- Must make continuing payments on fines, costs and restitution imposed by the sentencing court.

Where can I get more information?

Talk with either your institutional parole agent or your supervising parole agent (if you are on parole). They should always be the first people you turn to with questions regarding parole.

You, your attorney, family and friends may also receive more information by calling the Inmate Inquiry Line at:

717.772.4343

pennsylvania
BOARD OF PROBATION AND PAROLE

www.pbpp.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole
© 2013 All rights reserved