

#### **Colorado State Board of Parole**

**Overview for the Colorado Commission on Criminal & Juvenile Justice** 

> Dr. Anthony P. Young, Chair May 10, 2013

#### Selection

## Appointed by the Governor

- Interviewed by the Senate Judiciary Committee
- Confirmed by the Senate

### Qualifications

- The Board consists of two representatives from law enforcement, one former parole or probation officer and four citizen representatives.
- The members have knowledge of parole, rehabilitation, correctional administration and the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- The members have at least five years education or experience or a combination thereof in their respective fields.

### **Mission Statement**

- The Colorado Board of Parole works to ensure public safety through critical evaluation of inmate potential for reintegration to society.
- The Board sets Conditions of Parole for discretionary and mandatory parole releases in order to assist parolees in successfully transitioning to the community.

## **Members of the Board**

- Dr. Anthony P. Young, Chair
- Brandon Shaffer, Vice Chair
- Denise K. Balazic
- Joe M. Morales
- Rebecca Oakes
- John M. O'Dell
- Alfredo E. Pena

## **Types of Parole**

- Mandatory Parole the release of an inmate required by statute. The Mandatory Release Date (MRD) is a date set in statute on which an inmate must be released to a specified period of parole.
- Discretionary Parole the release of an inmate prior to their MRD.

# **Types of hearings**

- Application: regular inmates will be seen by the board annually, typically.
- Revocation: parole may be revoked if the parolee gets a new sentence or has a significant violation of parole agreement.
- Rescission: granted parole can be rescinded prior to going into effect for a disciplinary action or a new sentence.

#### ...continued

- Each member of the board conducts hearings individually, except in the case of a Life sentence, where 2 members must conduct the hearing together.
- All violent offenders must be presented to the full board.

## **Full Board Review**

• Full Board Review (FBR):

A discretionary parole for a violent crime must receive 4 affirmative votes to be approved by the Parole Board.

## **Victim Input**

- Victims have the right to attend parole board hearings, in person or on the phone.
- Victims may make statements on or off the record.
- Victims are accommodated at the site where the parole board member is conducting the hearing.
- Letters are welcome when the victim or their family cannot attend in person.

## **Family Input**

- Family of the offender may attend parole board hearings.
- One member may speak on behalf of the offender on the record.
- Family may attend parole board hearings at the facility where the offender is housed.
- Letters are welcome if the family cannot attend in person. Letters are sent to the offender's Case manager.

#### Where do we do our work

- At parole offices, county jails, and correctional facilities
- By video conference to facilities
- By phone conference to facilities and jails

# FY 2012 Data

- Conducted 21,763 application hearings and 8,149 parole revocation hearings.
- Approximately 2,492 Parole Board decisions per month.
- Discretionary parole releases increased to 3,607 (39% of 9,191 total FY12 releases to parole) from 2,096 in FY11 (25% of 8,509 FY11 releases to parole).

# FY 2012 continued.....

- 8,148 revocation hearings (a drop of 2,205 from FY 2011).
  - 2,329 revoked (373 less than FY2011)
  - 494 self-revoked (131 less than FY 2011)
  - **1,110** placed in a Community Return to Custody Facility

## **Decision Criteria**

- Victim Input
- Colorado Actuarial Risk Assessment Scale (CARAS)
- Code of Penal Conduct (COPD): Disciplinary violations
- Escape/Abscond or attempt
- Risk mediators: age, medical condition, manageable in community
- Level of community/family support
- Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI) scores
- Program participation progress
- Treatment participation progress
- Parole plan

#### **Evidence-Based Practice**

- Use latest research on what works for reducing recidivism and enhancing public safety
- Education and vocational programming will increase the rate of employment and provide self-esteem.
- Substance abuse treatment works: the longer the treatment, the better the chance of success.

#### **Evidence-Based Practice**

- Therapeutic communities (TC) are effective.
- Aftercare is important.
- Sex offender treatment: cognitive-behavioral therapy and modified therapeutic community achieves modest reduction in sexual offenses and general recidivism.
- Early intervention for mental illness works.
- Crisis intervention teams, assertive community treatment and modified TC works.
- Cognitive-behavioral programs are effective.

What Works: Effective Recidivism Reduction and Risk-Focused Prevention Programs, RKC Group for Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, 2008

## **Motivational Interviewing**

- The Colorado Parole Board Members receive training in motivational interviewing.
- Motivational interviewing is a type of conversation that calls upon the insights of the individual about the changes in his or her life.
- It is a collaborative conversation and is designed to evoke rather than mandate a particular response.

