



**LOUISIANA BOARD OF PARDONS  
AND COMMITTEE ON PAROLE**

**Number: 07-701-POL**  
**Date: September 20, 2024**  
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**BOARD POLICY**

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**SUBJECT:** PAROLE DECISIONS

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines to assist in the selection of suitable candidates for parole release

**AUTHORITY:** LAC Title 22, Part XI, Chapter 9; La. R.S. 15:574.2

**REFERENCE:** ACA Standard 2-1074 and 2-1082, Board Policy 03-301-POL, "Parole Eligibility and Types of Parole," 05-509-POL, "Victim Notification and Participation in Hearings," 07-705-POL, "Application for Rehearing; Request for Reconsideration of Decision," DPS&C Regulation IS-B-7, "Department-Approved Risk/Need Assessment Tool"

**POLICY:**

It shall be the policy of the Board of Pardons, Committee on Parole (Committee), to give every eligible inmate meaningful consideration for parole. The Committee will exercise its discretionary releasing authority based upon consideration of each case's unique factors and variables. The Committee shall determine release suitability of eligible inmates through decisions that promote fairness, objectivity, and public safety and are responsive to the concerns of victims, members of the community, and other persons within the criminal justice system.

**PROCEDURES:**

- A. The Committee shall consider all pertinent information (at a minimum including, but not limited to, a pre-parole investigation and institutional record) six to nine months prior to the inmate's parole eligibility date. The information shall be a part of the inmate's consolidated summary record. No case may be considered for parole release without a pre-parole investigation.
- B. The Committee shall apply the following guidelines as a basis but not as the exclusive criteria upon which parole panels should base parole release decisions.
  1. **Nature and Circumstances of the Crime**
    - a. The Committee will evaluate and consider the circumstances of the crime based upon the official version of the offense, as well as the victim's and inmate's versions of the offense, to determine, if possible, whether the particular conditions that contributed to the commission of the crime are likely to reoccur.

- b. The Committee shall also consider the seriousness of the offense, the inmate's role in the offense and the degree of his involvement, whether the inmate was the instigator of the crime, and whether the crime was premeditated.
- c. Particular consideration will be given to those cases that involved the use of a weapon and/or caused injury to the victim; where the inmate committed one or more violent acts indicating a conscious disregard for the lives, safety, or property of others; or the instant offense has elements of brutality, violence, or conscious selection of victim's vulnerability such that the inmate poses a continuing threat to public safety.

## **2. Prior Criminal Record**

- a. The Committee must evaluate and consider any available prior adult and/or juvenile records and the number and seriousness of previous convictions, including the length of time between any prior convictions and the commitment of the instant offense, to determine the severity of the inmate's prior criminal history.
- b. A pattern of repeated criminal episodes or a pattern of similar offenses may indicate a predisposition to commit criminal acts upon release and the likelihood that the inmate will not succeed on parole.
- c. The Committee may also consider whether the instant offense was committed while the inmate was on probation or parole and the inmate's response to prior community supervision, if any.

## **3. Character, Social Background, and Emotional and Physical Condition**

- a. The Committee will evaluate and consider information pertaining to the inmate's work record, level of education, occupational skills, and evidence of emotional stability.
- b. A history of chronic drug and alcohol abuse may increase the likelihood that the inmate will not succeed on parole.

## **4. Institutional Adjustment**

- a. The Committee will evaluate and consider information concerning the inmate's attitude while incarcerated, including the inmate's participation in available programs and his overall compliance with institutional regulations.
- b. Obedience to institutional rules may be evidence that the inmate will comply with parole conditions, while a disciplinary record consisting of major and/or minor infractions may be viewed negatively.
- c. A decidedly poor disciplinary record will weigh heavily against the inmate.
- d. Inmates with one or more major rule infractions in the 36 months prior to screening for parole eligibility would generally not be considered a good risk for early release and will, therefore, not be given parole consideration until such time as the inmate has been disciplinary report free for 36 consecutive months. Inmates may be removed from a parole docket if they receive a schedule B disciplinary report

during the investigation period prior to the parole hearing. The inmate is responsible for notifying the Board in writing when they are disciplinary report free for 36 consecutive months to be reconsidered for scheduling a parole hearing.

- e. Inmates assigned to cellblock areas for disciplinary reasons/lockdown would generally not be considered a good risk for early release and will, therefore, be ineligible for parole consideration until such time as the inmate has not been in lockdown status for a period of six consecutive months.

#### **5. Police, Judicial, and Community Attitudes toward the Inmate**

- a. The Committee will evaluate and consider information concerning the inmate from the community and public officials who are acquainted with the case.
- b. This factor is given greater weight because the probability that an inmate will succeed on parole is greatly diminished if he will return to a community that has expressed hostility toward him and is lacking support for him.
- c. Victims of any inmate who appears before the Committee on Parole for a parole hearing may provide the panel a re-entry statement to request proximity or contact restrictions if that inmate is granted parole. Victims are asked to submit the re-entry statement to the Committee on Parole at least 30 days prior to the inmate's scheduled parole hearing. The Committee will consider the re-entry statement only for determining the inmate's parole conditions and not for determining whether to order the inmate's release on parole. The re-entry statement is not binding on the Committee on Parole but shall be considered in concert with other information when determining conditions of parole.

#### **6. Parole Plan**

- a. The Committee will evaluate and consider the strength of the inmate's social ties, including whether he has a supportive family, resources available to him in the community, and employment opportunities.
- b. The Committee will place emphasis on the appropriateness of the parole plan; therefore, it is important for the inmate to have secure employment plans and a stable living arrangement available upon parole.
- c. Lack of an acceptable parole plan may decrease the likelihood of parole.

7. **Program Participation** - The Committee will evaluate and consider an inmate's participation in vocational training, adult education, or reading programs, as well as any treatment or rehabilitation program that has been certified by the Department of Public Safety & Corrections (DPS&C). Such participation is considered beneficial.

8. **Risk Assessment** - The Committee will consider the risk assessment instrument provided by the DPS&C. The instrument validated for Louisiana's inmate population is detailed in Department Regulation, IS-B-7, "Department-Approved Risk/Need Assessment Tool."

- C. No inmate may be paroled while there is any pending indictment or information against him for any crime suspected of having been committed by him while incarcerated.

- D. The use of these guidelines does not imply the creation of any parole release formula or a right or expectation by an inmate to parole based upon the guidelines. The guidelines are not to be construed to mandate either a favorable or unfavorable parole decision. The parole guidelines serve as an aid in the parole decision process, and the parole decision shall be at the discretion of the voting parole panel.

**SHERYL M. RANATZA**

*\*Signature of file*

*This policy replaces and supersedes Board Policy 07-701-POL, "Parole Decisions," dated October 26, 2020*