

Vermont Parole Board Code of Ethics and other Policies

Code of Ethics Policy

It is the policy of the Vermont Parole Board to maintain the highest ethical standards in all matters. This Code supplements those ethical standards set forth in Executive Order No 10-03, September 2003 and reflects the guiding precepts of each member on the Vermont Parole Board.

- **Code of Ethics**

- The members and staff of the Vermont Parole Board Shall:
 1. Be professional and respectful to those involved in all matters that come before the Board, including the offender, victims and those who support or oppose an offender's release.
 2. To the best of their ability, be prepared to hear all cases, which come before them and render decisions with integrity and accuracy.
 3. Respect, value and appreciate the views, recommendations and decisions of fellow Board members and those of colleagues in the criminal justice system.
 4. Strive, with fellow Board members and colleagues in the criminal justice system, to enhance the effectiveness of the parole and SCS hearing process.
 5. Recognize that the Parole Board is a symbol of public trust, do their utmost to sustain that trust.

Eligibility for Parole Interview or Review Policy

It is the policy of the Vermont Parole Board to interview and consider all offenders eligible for parole in or before the month of their eligibility date as determined by the Vermont Department of Corrections based upon the applicable statutes. Initial interviews and subsequent interviews and reviews shall be conducted in accordance with applicable statutes and the following procedures. In the event that parole is granted, actual release shall not take place before parole agreements and any other documents required are signed, and the expiration of the inmate's minimum sentence.

Victim Notification and Participation Policy

It is the policy of the Vermont Parole Board to treat victims and survivors with respect and sensitivity, and to ensure that those hurt by crime are informed about and involved in the Board's activities.

Conduct of Proceedings Policy

It is the policy of the Vermont Parole Board to conduct proceedings as appropriate in all matters before it in a full, fair, open and impartial manner and in compliance with all applicable authority. A complete record shall be made of all proceedings conducted by the Board except those that take place in deliberative session.

Parole Policies

The Board deliberates and makes decisions based on information furnished to it by the Department of Corrections, offenders and their families, victims and their families, other interested citizens, and individuals who may have pertinent information for the Board.

- The Board considers the following factors when making decisions concerning offenders eligible for parole:
 - Seriousness of the crime committed
 - Danger to the public
 - The offender's risk of re-offending
 - Any input given by the victim, including, but not limited to, the emotional damage done to the victims and the victim's family

- The offender's parole plan - including housing, employment, need for community treatment and follow-up resources
 - Recommendation of the Department of Corrections
- The Board may according to policy all pertinent information including the following factors:
 - History of prior criminal activity
 - Prior history on probation, parole, or another form of supervised release
 - Abuse of drugs or alcohol
 - Poor institutional adjustment
 - Success or failure of treatment
 - Attitude toward authority - before and during incarceration
 - Comments from the prosecutor's office, the Office of the Attorney's General's, the judiciary or other criminal justice agency
 - Education and job skills
 - Employment history
 - Emotional stability
 - Mental status - capacity and stability
 - History of deviant behavior
 - Official and community attitudes toward accepting an inmate back into the community
 - Other factors involved that relate to public safety or the offender's needs

Parole is granted only to those eligible offenders that the Board determines are capable of fulfilling the obligations of a law abiding citizen, and when there is a reasonable probability that the offender can be released without detriment to the community or to the offender, and the offender is willing and capable of fulfilling all obligations of a law abiding citizen. Parole shall be ordered for the best interest of the community and the offender, and shall not be considered a reduction of sentence or pardon. The decision to parole an offender may be rescinded before the parole agreement is signed by the offender.

All paroles shall be granted subject to general conditions of parole, and any additional special conditions that the Board may require, including restitution if the original sentence order requires restitution and specifies a dollar amount. Offenders convicted of (3) or more DUI offenses shall normally not be granted driving privileges while on parole. Special conditions for driving privileges may be granted to DUI3+ offenders in possession of a "Restricted Driving License" (Ignition Interlock System), or have completed the "Total Abstinence Program", and been reinstated by the Department of Motor Vehicles. Parolees with a valid operator's license may be granted special conditions to permit driving privileges pursuant to the process outlined in Chapter 12, Section IV Modifying Conditions of Parole. The offender shall agree to the general and special conditions in writing prior to the release on parole.

The Vermont Parole Board will provide written notice and direction to all parties affected when a decision is made to parole an offender and to provide a record of the act of the Board and direction as to the terms and conditions of the parole.

A parolee's term of parole supervision shall end when they have completed their predetermined maximum term of parole supervision, if they have not absconded during the term of their parole. The Parole Board may terminate a parolee's period of parole supervision before their predetermined maximum term of parole has expired pursuant to a hearing.

It is the policy of the Vermont Parole Board to provide timely, fair, and impartial hearings that comport with due process to those parolees who are, while on parole, alleged to have violated the terms and conditions of

their parole, while protecting the public and the integrity of the parole system. The Board will accomplish this by making reasoned and rational violation decisions that are based upon good and sufficient information.

Supervised Community Sentences (SCS) Policies

It is the policy of the Vermont Parole Board to consider requests from persons under Supervised Community Supervision (SCS). Consideration will include review of any additions, deletions or modifications made by the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections to the conditions contained in his or her plan for SCS, or to consider all persons on SCS for release to parole at their minimum date. The Board also conducts SCS violation hearings in the event that an offender on SCS status has allegedly violated their conditions of SCS. The Vermont Parole Board will consider these matters in accordance with the procedures set forth elsewhere in this policy manual governing those persons who are sentenced to prison to the extent such procedures are consistent with the applicable law.

The Vermont Parole Board will provide timely, fair and impartial hearings that comport with due process to those SCS offenders who are alleged to have violated the terms and conditions of their SCS and to protect the public and the integrity of the SCS system by making reasoned and rational violation decisions that are based upon good and sufficient information.

For more information on any of the above policies, please visit [The Vermont Parole Board Manual](#).