

Wyoming Board of Parole
Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2012

General Information

Agency Name: Wyoming Board of Parole
Director & Contact Person: Patrick M. Anderson
Agency Address: 3120 Old Faithful Road, Suite 300
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Agency Phone: (307) 777-5444
Agency Fax: (307) 777-5386
Website Address: <http://boardofparole.wy.gov>

Statutory References: W.S. §7-13-401 to 7-13-424 Duties Generally
W.S. §1-40-112 Collection of Victim
Compensation Debts
W.S. §7-13-106 Restoration of Voting Rights

Budget Information: FY 2012 Budget is \$864,011.00 in general funds

Clients Served: General Public Safety, Victims of Felony Crimes,
and Felony Offenders

Reporting: As gubernatorial appointees, the members of the Board
report directly to the Governor. The Executive Director is
appointed by and reports to the members of the Board.

Number of Members: Seven

Meeting Frequency: The Board conducts executive session parole and
revocation hearings at all facilities housing Wyoming
felony inmates, which entails two hearings per month
during most months of the year. The bi-monthly hearings
last for two to four days each. Additionally, the Board
conducts four public business meetings per year, which are
held at the Administrative Offices in Cheyenne or
elsewhere in conjunction with hearings. The Board's
hearing and meeting calendar is posted at its website.

Wyoming Annual Report FY 2012

Agency:

Wyoming Board of Parole

Report Period:

FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012)

Wyoming Quality of Life Result:

Wyoming families & individuals live in a stable, safe, supportive, nurturing, healthy environment.

Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life:

The Wyoming Board of Parole (Board), exercises statutory authority to release incarcerated felony inmates from prison to supervision in the community after they have served their minimum sentences. The Board exercises that authority in a manner intended to promote public safety by ensuring that inmates are appropriately prepared for release through rehabilitative programs in prison and in the community. The Board imposes conditions which are determined to best protect public safety while promoting rehabilitation, and only paroles inmates where, in the Board's estimation, there is a reasonable probability that the inmate is able and willing to fulfill obligations as a law abiding and productive citizen.

The Board continues its involvement in parole cases after release by addressing violations, awards of good time and modifications of conditions as warranted. The end result of the Board's activities is that inmates who go on to successfully complete a parole are only about half as likely to commit a new crime resulting in a return to Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) jurisdiction within three years of sentence completion (15.4 percent) as are inmates who finish their sentences in prison (33.6 percent).

Additionally, some parolees return to families earlier, where they can again provide familial and financial support, return to productive employment and fulfill other obligations of citizens.

Finally, with the parole population ranging from about 600 to 700 individuals in the last year, Wyoming citizens are saving an estimated \$40,000,000 per year in incarceration costs.

Basic Facts:

The Board is a separate operating agency comprising seven members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate for six year terms.

While the members live throughout the State, the Board maintains its office in Cheyenne, where administration and operations are managed by an Executive Director with six staff including a Deputy Director.

Hearings are conducted with staff support by three-member panels which travel to the State's five penal institutions and two of the Adult Community Correction (ACC) programs. Panel members review file materials on each inmate prior to the hearings which are conducted twice a month.

Inmates are seen by the Board in the calendar quarter prior to the quarter in which they will become eligible for parole, except that inmates with longer sentences may see the Board further in advance of eligibility.

After their release, supervision of parolees is provided by WDOC Probation and Parole Agents.

Pursuant to the Victim and Witness Bill of Rights and other statutory requirements, the Board offers victims the opportunity to receive notification of and provide input into various Board decisions and other matters affecting the offender and victim.

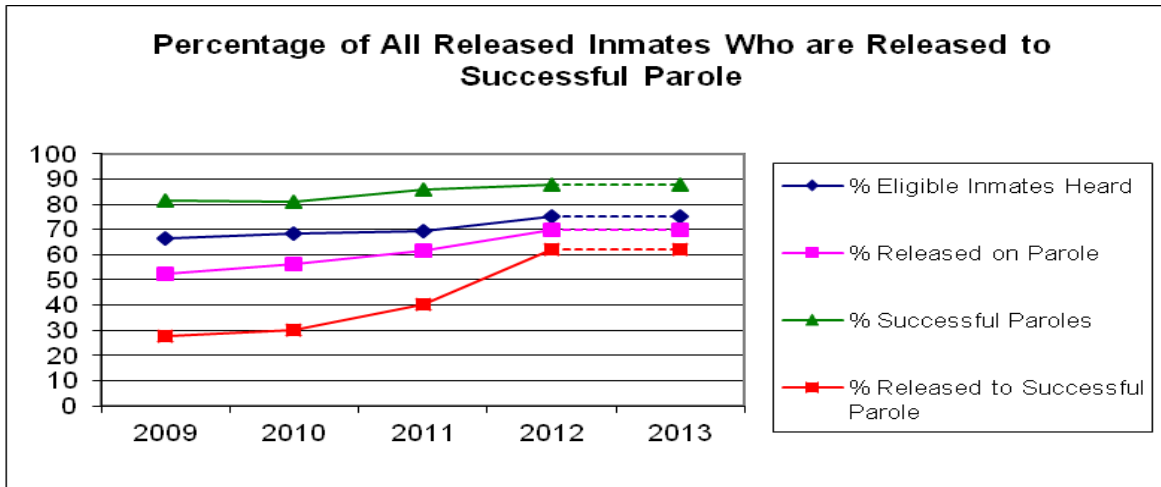
The following figures reflect the levels of Board activities in the last three fiscal years:

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
Hearing Days	55	58	57
Parole Interviews	962	974	1038
Parole Grants	465	551	658
Revocation Hearings	136	115	137
Revocations with Re-incarceration	78	67	61
Special Matters	90	77	153
Victim Interviews	68	66	63
Victim Input Letters Received	114	85	101
Initial Victim Letters Sent	1099	737	1023
Commutation Recommendations	6	10	8
Jail/ACC Sanctions Approved	44	24	35
Parole Good Time Days Awarded	38,234	63,445	68,555

Performance:

The Board reports on three primary performance measures. They are:

#1



$$\text{Percent Eligible Inmates Heard} = \frac{\text{Eligibles Heard}}{\text{Total Eligible}}$$

This measure calculates the percentage of inmates who are eligible for parole who elect to meet the Board to ask for a parole, which is an underlying factor driving the lead performance measure.

$$\text{Percent Released on Parole} = \frac{\text{Released on Parole}}{\text{All releases}}$$

This measure calculates the percentage, for all inmates who leave prison, of those who go on to parole supervision, without reference to whether or not they get revoked, which is an underlying factor driving the lead performance measure.

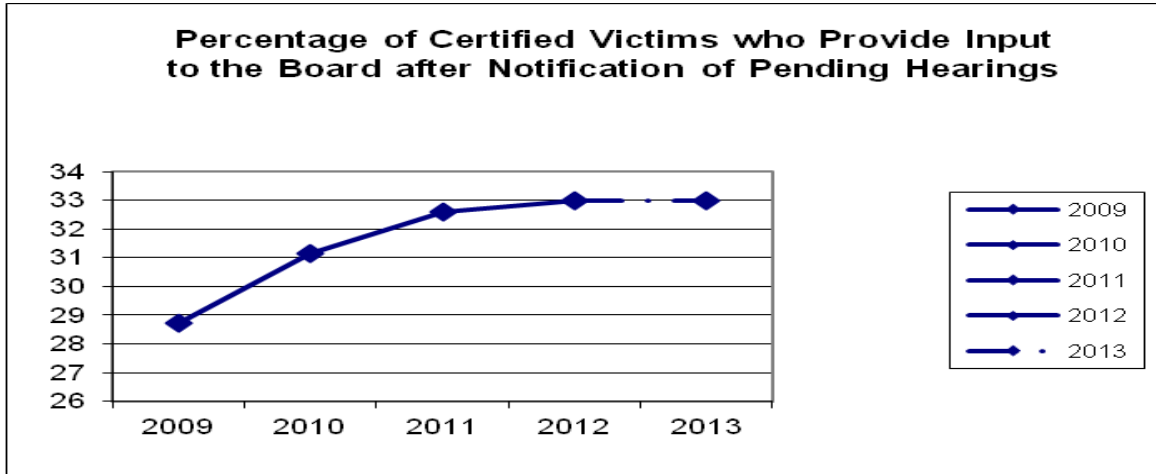
$$\text{Percent Successful Parole} = \frac{\text{Parolee releases} - (\text{revocations} - \text{reparoles})}{\text{All Parole releases}}$$

This measure provides the success rates for all inmates released to parole, which is an underlying factor driving the lead performance measure.

$$\text{Percent Released to Successful Parole} = \frac{\text{Number Released to Parole} - (\text{revocations} - \text{reparoles})}{\text{Inmates finishing sentence in prison plus inmates released on parole}}$$

This lead performance measure demonstrates how effective the Board is in fostering inmate releases to parole without revocations, as opposed to inmates who fail on parole or finish their sentences as an inmate rather than on parole.

#2

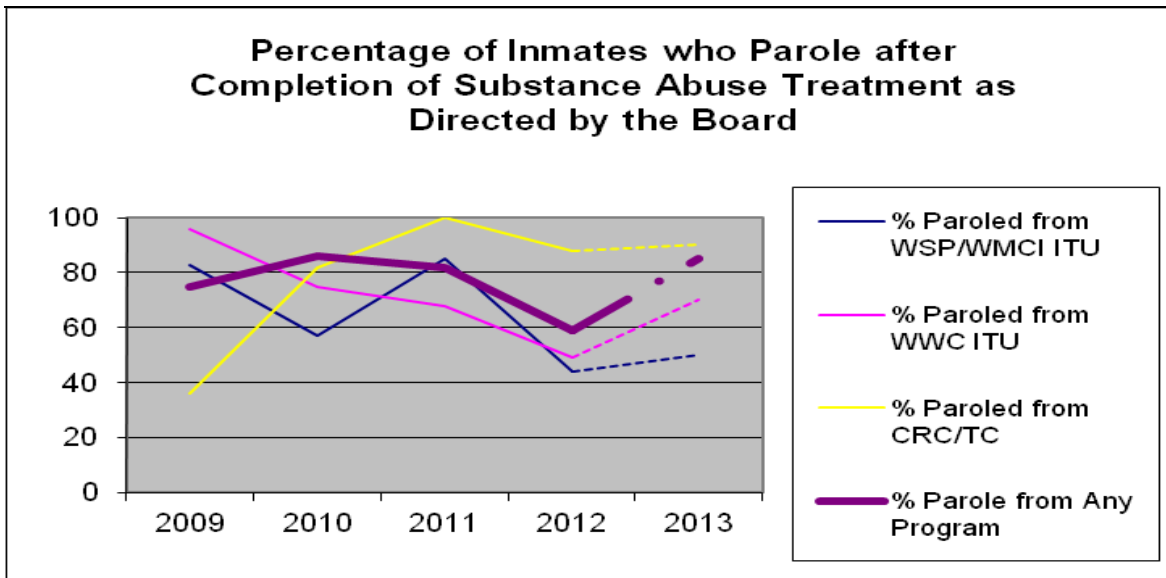


Percent Who Provided Input =

$$\frac{\text{Letters Received from \& Appearances by victims}}{\text{Total letters sent by Board requesting input}}$$

This graph measures the percentage of victims, who after becoming certified and receiving notification of pending Board hearings, provided input to the Board regarding pending decisions.

#3



Percent Paroled from any program =

$$\frac{\text{POAs upon completion that completed}}{\text{POAs upon completion}}$$

These graphs measure the percent of those inmates who are granted paroles to become effective upon successful completion of the specified substance abuse treatment program who completed the program and went to parole. Tracked programs are the men's and women's Intensive Treatment Units and the Therapeutic Community Program.

#1: Story Behind The Performance

Percentage of all released inmates who are released to successful parole.

As previously noted, the Board's paroling decisions promote offender rehabilitation and, hence, public safety. Accordingly, the Board measures its success in terms of the percentage of inmates who are released to successful paroles in each year versus those who are released after completing their maximum sentences in prison.

Performance in Fiscal Year 2012 increased dramatically from 40.16 percent in Fiscal Year 2011 up to 61.66 percent. Improved performance on the underlyers explains this upswing.

First, the Board saw a record number of eligible inmates for parole consideration, at 910, compared to an average of 819 in the previous two fiscal years. This reflects a drop in the percentage of inmates choosing to not ask for parole by "waiving" their hearings, from 32 percent in Fiscal Year 2010 to 25 percent in Fiscal Year 2012. This is the result of a concentrated effort by the Board, in conjunction with WDOC, to encourage inmates to seek paroles when they are eligible through incentives such as parole good time and the supportive services available before and after release to parole.

Consequently, the number of granted paroles increased from 469 in Fiscal Year 2011 to 658 in Fiscal Year 2012. While largely attributable to the larger pool of eligible candidates, this increase is also driven by higher paroling rates, from 67 percent in Fiscal Year 2011 up to a current rate of 72 percent, reflecting a continuing trend over the last several years as the Board continues to seek out and apply best practices in its decision-making.

Finally, the number of parolees who were revoked and remanded to custody decreased slightly from 67 in Fiscal Year 2011 to 61 in Fiscal Year 2012. However, the total number of cases considered for revocations increased from 115 to 137 during that same period, showing an area for improvement.

The net result of these factors was that 500 inmates were released to parole in this reporting period, and 61 parolees are considered to have failed on parole. Given that only 212 inmates finished up their sentences in prison, the number of successful releases to parole is significantly greater, showing significant and continuous improvement in the Board's performance.

What Has Been Accomplished?

The Board has continued to work in collaboration with WDOC and other agencies in the Transition from Prison to the Communities Joint Task Force initiative to adopt and implement practices which will increase offenders' chances of success upon return to the community. As an example of current projects, the Board, WDOC and other human services agencies will be conducting a pilot "Resource Fair" at the Wyoming Honor Farm

in October, where inmates will be able to gather information from representatives of community service providers at the facility.

In June of 2012, the Board signed off approval on paroling sex offender inmates into WDOCs' sex offender management program, which provides standardized assessment-driven conditions and containment-model supervision. This should result in more successful paroles of sex offenders and a consequent drop in reoffending by that population.

Also in June, the Board gave final approval to a jointly-developed decision guidelines instrument, soon to be implemented, which will reduce subjectivity in WDOC recommendations and provide an objective decision-making tool to guide better decisions by the Board.

The Board has also cooperated in development of the Community Reentry Checklist which provides a more proactive approach to institutional preparation of inmates for parole and is designed to strengthen connections to needed community resources prior to, during and after the transition.

More work needs to be done with WDOC and ACCs on reducing rates of return to custody for revocation hearings. Use of jail sanctions in lieu of revocations by WDOC agents remain disappointing, with only 35 sanctions for 31 offenders imposed last fiscal year, yet, as noted, an increase in revocation actions. ACCs, with a right of rejection after acceptance off parolees into their programs, cause a significant number of parole failures by regressing parolees from their programs, and the reasons for that need to be identified and addressed.

#2: Story Behind The Performance

Percentage of certified victims who provide input to the Board after notification of pending hearings.

The Board values input from victims prior to conducting parole interviews because, as the persons most affected by the crime, victims are entitled to have a voice in disposition of the case and may provide important information which will assist the Board on the paroling decision and setting of conditions if parole is granted.

However, the percentage of victims who were invited to provide input who chose to do so in Fiscal Year 2012 dropped slightly from 32.8 percent in Fiscal Year 2011 to 29.6 percent. Out of 554 victims who received notice of hearings, 43 appeared before the Board in person and 23 by telephone, and 101 either wrote letters or sent e-mails for the members' review.

The reasons why the majority of victims do not provide input is not known for certain, but it is believed that continuing improvements to communications soliciting input may

be effective in increasing input rates. This performance measurement is tempered by the Board's belief that providing input is a personal choice for the victim and that it would not be appropriate to pressure victims to participate. Accordingly, the focus is on ensuring that victims are made aware of their rights.

What Has Been Accomplished?

In the past fiscal year, the Board has implemented an Apology Letterbank Program with the cooperation of WDOC. The program allows inmates to write apologies to their victims, subject to established guidelines, and send them to the Board staff. If a letter is approved, the victim is informed and given the option to receive the letter, and may respond if desired. Sixteen letters have been submitted and approved, and four victims chose to receive the letters. The program is premised on the belief that receiving letters may help some victims in the healing process and may aid in inmates' rehabilitation through gaining empathy for victims, and participation is expected to grow in the future. The Board is exploring the idea of developing a "Victim/Offender Dialogue" program which would allow victims and offenders who choose to do so to meet personally to aid in the healing and rehabilitation processes.

A summer student-intern was employed to study restitution repayment rates by parolees and inmates. It was discovered that 57 percent of parolees who owed restitution paid it in full by the completion of their sentences in Fiscal Year 2009. However, such payments only reflected 30 percent of the total obligation owed by all parolees discharging their sentences in that year, indicating that a minority of the population owed a majority of the obligations. In contrast, only 22.7 percent of inmates discharging in that year had paid their obligations in full, obviously reflecting that offenders in the community working real-world jobs are able to earn and pay more than inmates. The research determined that comparative data for probationers is not currently being compiled in the State.

The Board continues and will continue to pursue ways to increase victim participation in the paroling process, and will remain involved in ways to improve payment of restitution to victims.

#3: Story Behind The Performance

Percentage of inmates who parole after completion of substance abuse treatment directed by the Board.

This performance measure, based upon the number of paroles granted upon completion of residential treatment programs and the number of parolees who completed the programs during Fiscal Year 2012, dropped from 82 percent in Fiscal Year 2011 down to 58 percent.

However, rather than reflecting a decrease in performance, this precipitous drop in the curve reveals a defect in this performance measure. Specifically, although there was a

drop in graduation rates to 90 in Fiscal Year 2012, from 95 in Fiscal Year 2011 and 86 in Fiscal Year 2010, that in itself is not enough to create a 24 percent decrease in this measure. Rather, the drop was compounded by a record number of grants in Fiscal Year 2012 (153), versus Fiscal Year 2011 (116) and Fiscal Year 2010 (100).

Accordingly, it has been determined that this performance measure is not a viable way to measure the Board's success on this goal. Furthermore, because all of the programs utilize rolling admissions at different dates during each year, it is not feasible to report success rates on an annual basis utilizing the factors of parole grants in a year and graduations during a year, as years between grants and graduations will vary.

Therefore, the Board will immediately begin work on developing a more meaningful measure for use in future reporting of its success in facilitating identified inmates' completion of needed substance abuse programming.

What Has Been Accomplished?

The raw data behind this measurement, as disclosed above, reveals mixed results. On one hand, the number of inmates with parole grants who graduated the programs dropped from 95 to 90. On the other hand, the number of grants of parole to become effective upon program completion increased dramatically from 116 to 153. This not only reflects the importance which the Board places on attendance to needed rehabilitative programming prior to parole; it should also result in record numbers of graduations to parole in the next reporting period.

The Board's strategic goal will remain unchanged. However, as discussed, a more effective measurement for success in achieving that goal will be reported next year.

Wyoming Board of Parole Organizational Chart

