

## **Board of Pardons and Paroles**

The Board of Pardons and Paroles is committed to utilizing resources more efficiently and effectively, and focusing on establishing results-based, data-driven, policies, practices, and measures of performance and outcomes. Toward this end, the Board, in partnership with the Department of Correction, worked in 2012 with the National Parole Resource Center (NPRC) and the Center for Effective Public Policy (CEPP) to prepare for full implementation of a statewide, evidence-based, risk and needs assessment system, the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS), which, in CT, is called the Statewide Collaborative Offender Risk Evaluation System (SCORES). The Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP) and the Department of Correction (DOC) entered into a contract with the University of Cincinnati for training of DOC and parole staff and development of an automated system to house all SCORES data for analysis and validation. As of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 BOPP staff began full utilization of the Ohio assessment tools for all release hearings. In January 2015, the Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA) became part of the SCORES in an attempt to better address the needs of the of female offender population.

The SCORES complements the structured-decision making framework implemented by the Board in 2012. The Structured Parole Decision-Making (SPDM) framework facilitates a systematic, guided, review of criminogenic risk and need factors assessed by the SCORES and Institutional Parole Officer interviews. The SPDM assists the Board in their focusing of questions during the parole hearing on the most salient factors established through research to be associated with criminal recidivism.

Taken together, the Board's use of the SCORES and Structured Parole Decision Making framework result in more accurate assessment of changes in offender risk and needs, and the determination of which offenders are most suitable for release and under what conditions if released to parole. Use of these evidence-based tools facilitates more efficient identification and use of institutional and community supervision resources, which should also result in reductions in recidivism, as well as costs associated with supervision resources. In summary, the aim is to decrease recidivism and costs by ensuring appropriate offenders are released after completing specific programs with stipulations deemed necessary to manage risk using evidence based assessments.

Lastly, the Board began issuing Certificates of Employability in accordance with P.A. 14-27 effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. The Certificate is meant to provide individuals convicted of crime(s) relief from barriers or forfeitures to employment, or the issuance of licenses. The aim of these Certificates is to help facilitate gainful employment for individuals with criminal histories and reduce recidivism.

## **STATEWIDE COLLABORATIVE OFFENDER RISK EVALUATION SYSTEM (SCORES)**

Over the past decade, the national focus on reentry in correctional practice has been embraced by the criminal justice system in Connecticut. The Department of Correction and Board of Pardons and Paroles, in particular, have invested significant and continuing effort to improve practices around reentry.

Pursuant to Public Act 08-01, both agencies partnered with Judicial's Court Support Services Division to create both the state's first Reentry Strategy and the first Assessment Strategy in an attempt to define a shared policy for recidivism reduction.

As we continued to improve on our reentry model, it became apparent that effective reentry was only accomplished when solid assessment of offender risk and need was completed and then followed through in treatment planning and program assignment. To illustrate how strongly a reliable assessment drives successful reentry, and to streamline our practices, the two statewide strategies were merged into one in 2011.

Our next steps in improving the assessment-reentry process involve merging and streamlining our actual every day processes, to work smarter and to get even better results.

### **WHAT IS SCORES?**

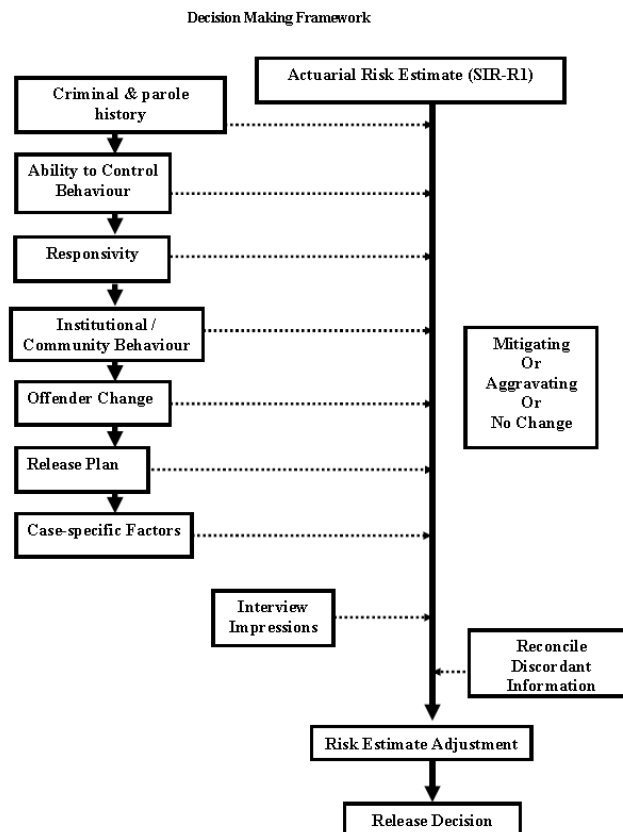
There are many different assessment tools currently in use that help some people some of the time. [ex., TPAI, CARA system at Walker, the LSI-R used in parole and community services, the Criminal Sentiments Scale, the Hostile Interpretations Questionnaire, etc]

Ideally, a full assessment system would inform everyone, with specific assessment tools administered at identified stages of the offender's journey through the criminal justice system. An ideal system would house all assessment information in one electronic system, that would facilitate data collection, program evaluation, and evidence based practice.

Researched in depth by the Board or Pardons and Paroles, the Ohio Risk Assessment System, originated at the University of Cincinnati and in use by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, offers all of these elements. The system has the capacity to inform decision making from judicial sentence to prison program assignment to release decisions by the Board and Wardens alike, to community supervision levels. The system was renamed with the SCORES acronym to individualize it to Connecticut's criminal justice systems.

**The SCORES is a series of risk assessment tools which can be used as standalone assessments or integrated into a continuum of assessments that assists in sharing information across settings. To begin, only the DOC and Board will utilize the system, which has several assessment tools to be completed at certain points in the system. There are additional tools for use in the judicial branch, by the courts and by the probation offices, but those will not be implemented at this time.**

The Structured Decision Making Framework (The Framework; SDMF) is currently used by eleven states, and by the U.K. and Canada, to assist paroling authorities make sound, evidence-based decisions. The Framework was developed and is maintained utilizing ongoing research conducted across disciplines within the criminal justice field. Researchers conduct ongoing validation studies, and paroling authorities (including the CT Board of Pardons & Paroles), engage in ongoing training with The Framework. The SDMF uses a statistical risk estimate as a starting point (e.g. SCORES, WRNA) in the process of making release decisions. All additional information is considered in the context of this initial risk estimate. Cases that are determined higher risk in terms of public safety concerns typically warrant compelling reasons (e.g., evidence of increased motivation, strong release plan, and strong program performance) prior to granting release. Factors that appear to increase the risk of recidivism are viewed to be aggravating, while those that appear to reduce the risk of recidivism are viewed to be mitigating. Upon reviewing the aggravating and mitigating factors for each of 10 Risk and Policy-related Domains, the Board member is in a stronger position to provide a clear and defensible rationale for their decision to grant or deny release on Parole. The seven risk-related domains include Criminal History, Ability to Control Behavior, Institutional Behavior, Responsivity (programming), Offender (Personal) Change, Release Plan, and Case-Specific Factors. The policy-related domains include Victim Considerations, Statutory Considerations (e.g. P.A. 15-84, P.A. 23-169), and Community Considerations. Each Board member reads the background information, pursues questions during their interviews with individuals, and makes their individual decisions in consideration of these ten domains of the SDMF in mind.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES



**POLICY NUMBER: II.04**

**TITLE: Early Termination of Supervision**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: March 4, 2024**

**SUPERCEDES: Policy II.04 dated November 1, 2022**

**AUTHORITY & REFERENCES:** Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 54-124a, 54-125, 54-125a, 54-125e, 54-129, 54-130a.

1. **Policy.** The Board may, in its sole discretion, upon request and by unanimous decision of a panel, terminate supervision prior to expiration of a sentence to provide a positive incentive for persons under supervision.
2. **Limitation of Rights.** This policy is intended as internal guidance for employees of the Board of Pardons and Paroles. It is not intended to, and should not be construed as, granting, controlling or limiting any rights of any offender or parolee as the rights may be embodied in the Connecticut General Statutes, the Constitution of Connecticut or the Constitution of the United States of America. No parolee has any right to early termination of supervision, further, participation may be limited or eliminated altogether at the discretion of the Board.
3. **Definitions.**
  - a. **Board.** Board means the Board of Pardons and Paroles.
  - b. **Early Termination of Supervision.** Early Termination of Supervision means the discharge of a person on parole from the custody of the Commissioner of Correction prior to the expiration of his or her sentence and the termination of a person's sentence to a period of special parole, without court order, before the person completes the period.
  - c. **Parolee.** Parolee means a person on parole or special parole.
  - d. **Victim.** Victim means victim as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 54-126a.
  - e. **Violent Offender.** Violent Offender means an inmate determined by the Board, in accordance with Regs., Conn. State. Agencies §§ 54-125a-1 - 54-125a-6, to be ineligible for parole until the inmate has served not less than eighty-five per cent (85%) of the inmate's definite sentence or sentences.
  - f. **Year.** Year means 365.25 calendar days.

4. **Eligibility.** A person authorized under section five (5) of this policy may request early termination of supervision for any parolee who meets all of the following criteria:

a. The parolee:

- 1) has served a period of parole from an indeterminate sentence, including life terms, for a minimum of five (5) years;
- 2) has served a period of parole from a definite sentence for a minimum of one (1) year, or two (2) years if designated a violent offender or released to parole pursuant to subsection (f) of section 54-125a of the Connecticut General Statutes; or
- 3) has served a period of special parole for a minimum of one (1) year or two (2) years, if during the sentence to a term of imprisonment immediately preceding discharge to that period of special parole was designated a violent offender;

b. The parolee is not serving a period of parole from a sentence with a period of special parole to follow;

c. The parolee has not been found to have violated the conditions of parole or special parole by the Board within the last year;

d. The parolee has no unresolved pending charges of violation of the conditions of parole or special parole;

e. The parolee has not been convicted within the last year;

f. The parolee has no unresolved pending criminal charges; and

g. The parolee has no outstanding warrants.

5. **Request for Early Termination Report.**

a. **Persons Authorized to Request.** The following persons may request early termination of supervision:

- 1) The Commissioner of Correction;
- 2) The Director of the Parole and Community Services Division of the Department of Correction;
- 3) A Deputy Director of the Parole and Community Services Division of the Department of Correction;

- 4) A Parole and Community Services Supervisor employed by the Department of Correction;
- 5) The Parole Officer assigned to supervise the parolee;
- 6) The Chairperson of the Board;
- 7) The Executive Director of the Board; and
- 8) The Deputy Director of the Board.

**b. Report.** The Board may not consider a request for early termination of supervision unless the Board receives a written report from the parole officer assigned to supervise the parolee or other authorized employee of the Department of Correction containing a chronological description of the parolee's behavior and adjustment under supervision. The report must:

- 1) identify the parolee's criminogenic risks and needs;
- 2) identify all programs referred to, describe the reason(s) for each referral, and describe the outcomes of the referrals;
- 3) identify all returns to custody for admission to the Time Out Program, describe the reason(s) for each return, and describe the outcomes of the returns;
- 4) identify the parolee's current supervision level and reporting schedule and describe any changes made to the parolee's supervision level or reporting schedule while under supervision;
- 5) describe the parolee's current family and social support systems, if any;
- 6) identify the parolee's current residence and sponsor and identify any past residences, sponsors, or proposed sponsors;
- 7) describe the parolee's current employment, if any, and describe the parolee's employment history while under supervision;
- 8) include the recommendation, if any, of the parole officer assigned to supervise the parolee or other authorized employee of the Department of Correction as to whether supervision should be terminated early; and
- 9) include any documentation from the parolee.

## **6. Review and Verification.**

### **a. Hearings Division Responsibilities.** The Hearings Division is responsible for:

- 1) administering this policy;
- 2) ensuring that cases are properly reviewed and approved;
- 3) ensuring that no case is referred to a panel unless an employee has verified that all relevant information has been obtained and that the case complies with the requirements of this policy; and
- 4) ensuring that cases are processed in a timely manner.

### **b. Supervisor's Responsibilities.** The supervisor is responsible for:

- 1) receiving requests and reports;
- 2) assigning cases to employees;
- 3) informing the parolee, in writing, of the request and pending review;
- 4) reviewing cases assigned to an employee for compliance with the requirements of this policy;
- 5) approving verified cases for referral to a panel;
- 6) docketing approved cases for administrative review by a panel; and
- 7) requesting and obtaining information from the Parole and Community Services Division of the Department of Correction, when necessary.

### **c. Employee's Responsibilities.** The employee assigned to the case is responsible for:

- 1) determining whether the case meets the eligibility criteria set forth in section four (4) of this policy;
- 2) determining whether the report submitted by the parole officer assigned to supervise the parolee or other authorized employee of the Department of Correction contains all information required by section five (5) of this policy;
- 3) determining whether the requestor is authorized by section five (5) of this policy to submit a request;



- 4) confirming that:
  - A. the case has been referred to the Office of Victim Services;
  - B. the Office of Victim Services has notified any registered victim(s) of the Board's intent to consider early termination of supervision; and
  - C. any statements or information submitted by the victim(s) are available to the panel.
- 5) obtaining and compiling any relevant information deemed necessary for the panel to review the case;
- 6) documenting actions and dispositions appropriately;
- 7) verifying that all relevant information has been obtained and that the case complies with the requirements established by this policy; and
- 8) after approval by a supervisor, presenting the verified and approved case to a panel for administrative review.

**7. Administrative Review.**

- a. **Panel Composition.** The Chairperson will assign Board Members to panels to consider requests for early termination of supervision. The Chairperson must assign three Board Members to each panel, one of whom must be the Chairperson or a full-time Board Member designated by the Chairperson.
- b. **Administrative Review.** The panel must meet to consider all cases referred to it by the Hearings Division. During the meeting, the panel must take one of the following actions:
  - 1) By unanimous vote, grant the request and order early termination of supervision;
  - 2) Deny the request and continue the parolee's supervision; or
  - 3) Defer a vote in order to request and receive further information.
- c. **Written Decision.** Following administrative review, a Board Member assigned to the panel must prepare a written decision on behalf of the panel.

**8. Suitability.**

- a. **Orderly Life.** A panel may not grant a request for early termination of supervision unless it appears to all Board Members assigned to that panel that the parolee will lead an orderly life.

**b. Guidelines.** When determining whether it appears that a parolee will lead an orderly life, the panel should consider the following:

- 1) Rehabilitation;
- 2) Risk of recidivism;
- 3) Community and social supports (including employment, housing, and family support);
- 4) Recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs which causes clinically significant impairment;
- 5) Any imminent risk to the safety of any identifiable victim; and
- 6) Any Board ordered mental health treatment.

**9. Order of Early Termination.**

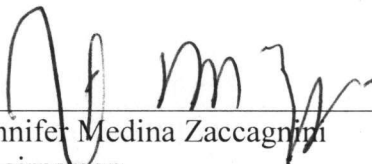
- a. Effective.** Early termination of supervision is effective three (3) business days after the panel's decision.
- b. Rescission.** The Chairperson of the Board may rescind the order for good cause, without further hearing, any time before 11:59 PM on the third business day after the panel's decision.
- c. Certificate.** The Board's Records Unit must issue a certificate, under seal, signed by the Chairperson on or after the effective date.
- d. Records.** The Board's Records Unit is responsible for notifying the following of any order for early termination of supervision: the parolee; the Department of Correction Central Records Unit; the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch, if necessary; and any other individual, agency, or entity specified by the Chairperson of the Board.

**10. Denial of Early Termination.** If a panel of the Board votes to deny a request for Early Termination, a request to rehear the case may be submitted annually, unless otherwise specified by the panel.

**11. Forms & Attachments.** The following forms and attachments are applicable to this policy and will be used for their intended function:

- a.** Attachment A: Early Discharge from Parole Certificate; and
- b.** Attachment B: Early Termination of Special Parole Certificate.

12. **Exceptions**. Any exceptions to this policy must be in writing signed by the Chairperson.

  
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Jennifer Medina Zaccagnini  
Chairperson

3/4/24  
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Date