

**Discussion Points**

**STATE PAROLE BOARD**

1. P.L.2017, c.93 established a compensation program for law enforcement officers and certain other employees, including parole officers, injured while performing official duties, effective as of October 1, 2017. Under the law, injured parole officers are entitled to their salary until their workmen’s compensation payments begin. Once their workmen’s compensation payments begin, the injured officers are entitled to regular supplemental payments from their employer. The amount of these payments is to be sufficient, when added to the injured officer’s workmen’s compensation, to equal his or her net wages at the time of the injury. These supplemental payments are to continue as long as the officer remains a parole officer and continues to receive workmen’s compensation for the injury.

- **Question:** How many parole officers have suffered bodily injury as the result of an assault by an individual under the officers’ custody and care during each of the past five years?

Year	# of Parole Officers Injured	Total # of Days Out of Work
2017	6	14
2016	3	0
2015	5	2
2014	15	227
2013	9	3
Total	38	246

- **Question:** For how many employees has the State Parole Board paid salary continuation and supplemental payment benefits under P.L.2017, c.93? Please provide the total amount of salary continuation benefits paid to date and the total amount of supplemental payments made to date. Please provide an estimate of the average annual cost of P.L.2017, c.93 to the board.

The State Parole Board has not had to pay any salary continuation and supplemental payment benefits under P.L.2017, c.93. Based on the chart above the Board would pay out an average of 40 – 45 days per year or about \$18,000 to \$20,000 per year on average.

2. The Department of Corrections offers treatment programs to inmates who are suffering from substance use disorders. When an inmate transitions into the parole system the parolee completes the appropriate risk and needs assessments. A parole officer then develops a case plan agreement with the parolee that sets short- and long-term goals, which may include goals related to substance use disorder treatment.

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The State Parole Board operates two contracted residential community programs for parolees with substance use disorders. The Governor's FY 2019 Budget indicates that the Re-Entry Substance Abuse Program (RESAP) will have an estimated 1,300 participants in each of FY 2018 and FY 2019 with an appropriation of \$11.4 million in FY 2018 and \$11.7 million in FY 2019. In addition, the State Parole Board anticipates placing 3,300 parolees in the Mutual Agreement Program (MAP) in each of FY 2018 and FY 2019 with a Parole Board appropriation of \$4.6 million in FY 2018 and \$4.8 million in FY 2019. However, the MAP appropriation does not reflect the full cost of the program, given that contracted treatment providers bill Medicaid for the provision of outpatient substance use treatment services to Medicaid-enrolled individuals.

The MAP places substance abusing inmates and parolees in licensed, secure, residential, community-based substance use disorder treatment programs. For parolees, the funding supports a network offering the full continuum of care including long-term and short-term residential care, halfway house, partial care, detoxification, intensive outpatient, and outpatient treatment.

- ***Question:*** Please provide a complete overview of the process the State Parole Board follows to assure the continuity of substance use disorder treatment once an inmate is released from Department of Corrections supervision. Does the failure to receive agreed-upon substance use disorder treatment result in an automatic return to prison?

The State Parole Board has a number of processes in place to ensure a supervised offender receives required substance use disorder treatment while in the community. A thorough assessment of each case is conducted by State Parole Board staff based upon an individual's documented substance use disorder history and resulting treatment requirements. This assessment includes, but is not limited to: prior treatment participation, both in the community and while in DOC custody; screening assessments such as the Addiction Severity Index and/or Texas Christian University V Drug Screen to determine the severity of prior substance use disorder; presence of a diagnosed mental illness requiring co-occurring substance abuse and mental health treatment and the imposition of a special condition of parole requiring substance abuse and/or mental health treatment. These factors, as well as the criminal history of each offender, are taken into consideration by State Parole Board staff when determining the most appropriate program placement. The State Parole Board has a multitude of program placement options, including contracted residential Reentry Substance Abuse Programs to provide intensive substance use disorder programming in addition to a multitude of services including cognitive behavioral therapy, employment preparation and placement and anger and aggression reduction programming; Mutual Agreement Program providers under contract with the NJ Department of Health offering 170 licensed outpatient, intensive outpatient and residential treatment program providers throughout the State. Lastly, a supervised offender that is prescribed Medication Assisted Treatment (Vivitrol, Suboxone or Methadone) by a licensed physician at the Department of Corrections may continue with this treatment while under State Parole Board supervision. If a supervised offender fails to participate in agreed-upon substance use disorder treatment, it does not result in an automatic return to prison. The State Parole Board, Division of Parole, reviews each case on an individual basis to determine

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the supervised offender's willingness to comply with required treatment in the community and whether it is appropriate to maintain the supervised offender in the community with the requirement that they participate in outpatient or residential substance treatment.

On September 21, 2017, the State Parole Board was awarded a grant in the amount of \$600,000.00 under the auspices of the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance Swift, Certain and Fair (SCF) Supervision Program. The State Parole Board's SCF Supervision Program shall provide up to 75 opioid-involved supervised offenders living in Ocean County with appropriate targeted services to divert them from a return to prison. This will be accomplished by managing their underlying addictions with a combination of behavioral therapy, substance abuse treatment, Certified Peer Recovery Specialists and medication assisted treatment. The State Parole Board will work closely with a Program Coordinator employed by the NJ Reentry Corporation to support the successful community reintegration of supervised offenders enrolled in the grant program during their recovery process.

3. P.L.2018, c.6 permits any State agency that currently collects documents that would provide proof of voter eligibility, including age, citizenship, and residence address, to establish, upon approval by the Secretary of State, a procedure for automatic voter registration. Parolees are not eligible to vote while they are on parole.

- **Question: Does the State Parole Board anticipate implementing automatic voter registration for parolees upon discharge from parole? If so, what is the projected cost of this action? How many parolees does the State Parole Board expect to enroll each year?**

Since April of 2004 the Division of Parole has included a voter registration application with the parole termination certificate that is provided to every individual completing parole supervision. A parolee only becomes eligible to register to vote once the State Parole Board no longer has supervisory authority and the Board no longer sees that individual. There are approximately 3,000 parolees that successfully complete supervision each year.

4. In his March 13, 2018 Budget Message, the Governor advocated gradually raising the Statewide minimum wage from \$8.60 per hour to \$15 per hour. If enacted, this could potentially affect State Parole Board staff, third parties that provide services to the board, and parolee wages. According to the Office of Management and Budget, the Governor's FY 2019 Budget includes an additional \$1.4 million to cover higher State Parole Board community program costs in FY 2019 on account of an increased minimum wage rate.

- **Question: All other things being equal, by what amount would the board's operating expenses increase if a Statewide \$15 minimum wage were in effect in FY 2019? Please differentiate between the salaries and wages expenditures for board employees and expenditures for services provided by third parties. How many board employees would receive higher wages with a \$15 minimum wage? What would be the impact on board operating expenses in FY 2019 of, and the**

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**number of board employees affected by, raising the minimum wage to \$11 per hour, \$12 per hour, \$13 per hour, and \$14 per hour?**

There will be no significant impact to the State Parole Board staff if the statewide \$15 minimum wage rate were in effect in FY 2019. The only anticipated increases in the Parole's operating expenses are in the third party contract providers. Increases in the third party contract providers are indeterminate at this time.

- ***Question:* Please explain the link between a \$1.4 million budget addition from the effect of a minimum wage increase and the State Parole Board's community program placements. How many of the 7,400 parolees in community placement receive wages from employers? What are their current wages? How are those wages determined? How many employers are involved, and what percentage of them is public and private, respectively? Please identify the jobs that are available to parolees through the community programs.**

The full \$1.4 million is associated with third party services. This wage increase will have no impact on Board staff. Parolees are not employed by and do not receive wages from SPB nor do they receive jobs through community programs. Community program placements will not be affected. Currently 6,794 parolees are employed. The Board does not track their wages, the number of employers, or the type of employer.