2014 ANNUAL REPORT

(Fiscal Year 2014 - July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014)
February 11, 2015

The Honorable Chris Christie
Governor, State of New Jersey
The State House
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Christie:

I am pleased to submit the New Jersey State Parole Board’s FY 2014 Annual Report. This report highlights the Agency’s activities in the vital areas of parole hearings, supervision and community-based programs. The State Parole Board has taken our responsibility for public safety very seriously, and we have continued to administer an effective parole system for both adult and juvenile offenders.

In the year ahead, we look forward to expanding or strengthening existing projects and policy initiatives as well as building new partnerships, and creating new endeavors; all of which focuses on public safety and offender reentry.

The FY 2014 Annual Report reflects the hard work demonstrated by each of the Associate Board Members, sworn parole officers and the civilian staff who perform their duties and responsibilities with the highest level of professionalism and dedication.

Respectfully submitted,

James T. Plousis
Chairman
NEW JERSEY STATE PAROLE BOARD
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Chairman: James T. Plousis
Vice-Chairman: Samuel J. Plumeri, Jr.
Executive Director: David W. Thomas
Deputy Executive Director: Lawrence J. Gregorio

Associate Board Members:
Brian T. Butch
Allen DelVento
Reni Erdos
Carmen M. Garcia
Thomas Haaf
Lloyd D. Henderson
Mary Hunt
James B. Jefferson
Charlie Jones
Julio Marenco
Robert Riccardella
Norman Robertson
Yolette C. Ross

Alternate Board Members:
Hope L. Cooper
Laurie Fuchs

In memory of:
Alternate Board Member Oscar Doyle (1927-2014)
Associate Board Member Mary Hunt (1955-2015)

VISION

To improve the safety of the public and the quality of life in New Jersey by administering an innovative parole system that addresses the needs of the community, victims, and offenders through a responsible decision-making process that provides every available opportunity for successful offender reintegration.

MISSION

The New Jersey State Parole Board is committed to promoting public safety and fostering rehabilitation of offenders by implementing policies that result in effective parole case management.
DIVISION OF RELEASE

The New Jersey Parole Act of 1979 (N.J.S.A. 30:4-123.45, et seq.) places with the State Parole Board the authority and responsibility of deciding which state and county inmates shall be granted release on parole and the special conditions of parole that will be imposed.

The Division of Release, operating out of Central Office, has offices in each state correctional facility. The primary function of the Division of Release is to evaluate and assess incarcerated adult offenders and determine their eligibility and appropriateness for parole release. The Division of Release prepares each case for consideration for the members of the Board by securing professional reports concerning an inmate's criminal history, including his/her current offense; their social, physical, educational, psychological progress to date; and their objective social and psychological risk and needs assessment. An assigned hearing officer conducts the initial parole consideration hearing and a Board Panel renders the final decision.

VICTIM INPUT

The Victim Input Unit is committed to the privacy, safety and well-being of all victims of crime and encourages their participation in the parole process. Effective July 11, 1984, when an adult is convicted of a first or second degree crime, the County Prosecutor must notify the victim of that crime - or nearest relative of a murder victim - of their right to provide information to the State Parole Board before the offender's parole consideration. This notification is in writing and includes a form, which the victim should use to register their interest in providing information to the Board. Regardless of the degree of the crime, all victims have the right to participate in the parole process.

When a victim registers with the State Parole Board’s Victim Input Unit, staff will confirm the victim’s registration and monitor the offender’s parole eligibility. This process aides us in contacting the victim in advance of the offender’s parole eligibility. Prior to the time of eligibility, the victim
will be contacted and invited to either submit a written statement, videotaped statement, or appear personally to provide a statement.

If the victim chooses to provide a statement in person, a hearing will be scheduled, and every effort will be made to accommodate the victim in scheduling. Most victim input hearings will take place at the State Parole Board’s Central Office in Trenton, but in special situations - such as the victim is physically disabled - it may be possible to conduct the hearing elsewhere or via video teleconferencing.

**REVOCATION**

The Revocation Unit is responsible for conducting probable cause and final parole revocation hearings to determine if an offender has violated the terms and conditions of his or her parole. The Revocation Unit hearing officers make formal recommendations to members of the Board concerning parole violations. These recommendations include whether or not an offender should have their parole status revoked and be returned to prison or if the terms and conditions of their parole should be modified in some fashion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVOCATION UNIT STATISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult and Young Adult Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revocation Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued on Parole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revoked Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revoked Re-Paroled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revoked Serving MAX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revoked Serving MSV</td>
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<td>Revoked Other</td>
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**APPEALS**

An inmate or offender may appeal any action of a Board Member, hearing officer, unit, or division of the State Parole Board. The Appeals Unit processes administrative appeals and insures that the appeal submitted by an inmate or offender is presented to and reviewed by a Board Panel or the Board.

**LEGAL SUPPORT**

The Legal Support Unit provides assistance to Board Members and agency staff thereby assuring that they function in accordance with statutory provisions and administrative regulations. The Legal Support Unit also assists the Board in the development and implementation of policies; the development and promulgation of amendments to the agency's administrative code; the pursuing of clarification of sentencing matters that have an impact on the Board's functions; the review and processing of complex cases; the review of the imposition of special conditions in the cases of certain offenders and the presentation of said cases to Board Members for review; and providing assistance to counsel assigned by the Division of Law to represent the State Parole Board in any legal matter involving the Board or agency staff.

An offender may be eligible to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct and/or a Certificate Suspending Certain Employment, Occupational Disabilities or Forfeitures to assist in obtaining public employment or employment involving licensure. The Legal Support Unit processes such applications for presentation and consideration by the full Board. In addition, this Unit investigates and processes applications for medical parole for consideration by an Adult Panel.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEGAL SUPPORT UNIT STATISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types of Cases Processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Supervision for Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuffews</td>
</tr>
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JUVENILE

The Juvenile Unit operates within the Division of Release. The Unit is assigned two Panel Members who function as the Board's Juvenile Panel. The Juvenile Panel performs quarterly reviews for the juveniles incarcerated in secure and residential facilities managed by the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission.

For each juvenile entering a secure or residential facility, the Juvenile Panel conducts an initial review, establishes time goals, monitor and assess the juvenile’s overall progress and community suitability during routine follow-up review sessions. Based on these reviews, the Juvenile Panel may render one of the following decisions: continue confinement, defer release for review at a future date, refer the juvenile to the Adult Panel, have the juvenile serve the maximum sentence, or grant the juvenile a release to parole supervision or Post Incarceration supervision. The Juvenile Unit is responsible for processing all revocation and rescission hearings for the juvenile offenders.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The Community Programs Division provides oversight to State Parole Board contracted community partners who, under existing contract agreements, provide residential and non-residential transitional rehabilitative programs to offenders under parole supervision. These programs include: Stages to Enhance Parolee Success (STEPS) Program, Reentry Substance Abuse Program (RESAP), Community Resource Centers (CRC), the Mutual Agreement Program (MAP) and a number of programs for specialized populations. The programs are designed to promote public safety, sustainable reintegration of parolees into society and reduce recidivism.

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<th>PROGRAM PARTICIPATION STATISTICS</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Contracted Residential Community Program FY 2011 FY 2012 FY 2013 FY 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual Agreement Programs (MAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stages to Enhance Parolee Success (STEPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reentry Substance Abuse Programs (RESAP)</td>
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<td>Regional Assessment Centers (RAC)</td>
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<td>Total Residential Placements</td>
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<td>Non-residential Community Programs FY 2011 FY 2012 FY 2013 FY 2014</td>
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<td>Community Resource Centers (CRC)</td>
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*Regional Assessment Centers (RAC) program was closed during FY 2014.

PROCUREMENT OF RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

In Fiscal Year 2013, the State Parole Board enlisted the assistance of the NJ Department of the Treasury, Division of Purchase and Property, for the procurement of residential and Community Resource Center programs and services for contracts that were approaching their expiration dates. During Fiscal Year 2014, residential contracts were awarded by the Division of Purchase and Property with an effective date of July 1, 2014 to the following program providers: Volunteers of America – Delaware Valley, Education and Health Centers of America, The Kintock Group and The GEO Group.

EXPANSION OF PAROLEE EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT PROGRAM (PEPP)

In 2011, the State Parole Board and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWJD) partnered to leverage resources to maximize the potential for parolees to successfully transition to employment. The Parolee Employment Placement Program (PEPP) was
created in an effort to reduce parolee recidivism, improve the level of employment services and placements provided to parolees, and provide reimbursement to employment providers only upon the securing of employment and maintenance of established employment retention benchmarks of 30, 60 and 90 days.

Given the demonstrated success of the PEPP, in Fiscal Year 2014 the program was expanded with NJLWD issuing a Notice of Grant Opportunity and awarding contracts to four employment agencies, expanding the program to a total of 14 New Jersey counties. It is anticipated that in Fiscal Year 2015, NJLWD will issue a Notice of Grant Opportunity, with the goal of expanding the program to all 21 counties.

**AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

Recognizing the potential impact of the provision of quality healthcare on the reduction of parolee recidivism, the Community Programs Division is working closely with the Department of Human Services and State Parole Board contracted residential and Community Resource Center Programs to assist parolees in accessing healthcare benefits under the provisions of the Affordable Care Act. In addition, several contracted program providers have hosted agencies designated as health benefits navigators to assist parolees in accessing either low-cost health insurance or Medicaid benefits.

**DIVISION OF PAROLE**

The Division of Parole is managed by a command staff consisting of a Director, Captains (Supervising Parole Officers-SPO), Lieutenants (District Parole Supervisors-DPS) and Sergeants (Assistant District Parole Supervisors-ADPS). The community supervision of offenders is the responsibility of sworn parole officers.

The Division of Parole is one of New Jersey's largest police agencies and consists of fifteen operational units statewide, of which ten are District Parole Offices (DPO). The remaining operational units include: the Electronic Monitoring Unit (EMU), the Office of Interstate Services (OIS), the Special Operations Group (SOG), the Training Unit, the Sex Offender Management Units (SOMU) and the Investigations Management Office (IMO).

The IMO is responsible for processing all new criminal charges filed by the State Parole Board's law enforcement staff. The processing includes maintaining and forwarding as discovery the official investigation reports. In addition to processing all new charges, IMO handles all evidence control functions for any and all criminal related evidence. This includes, but is not limited to, transporting evidence to the State Police lab and conducting forensic searches of computers and other electronic data storage/transmittal devices. Lastly, IMO staff act as the coordinator of all State Parole Board fingerprint live scan machines.

In addition to their supervision duties, a number of the parole officers serve as members of the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force and/or the U.S. Marshals Service New York/New Jersey Regional
Fugitive Task Force. All parole officers partner with local and state investigations as needed.

At the end of FY 2014, there were 15,324 offenders supervised by the Division of Parole. The offenders supervised include:

* Offenders released at the discretion of a Board Panel;
* Offenders released to serve a period of mandatory supervision under the No Early Release Act;
* Sex offenders sentenced to community life time supervision under Megan's Law;
* Court ordered conditional discharge cases released from the Special Treatment Unit; and
* Tier III sex offenders subject to mandatory GPS monitoring.

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<tr>
<th>DIVISION OF PAROLE STATISTICS</th>
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<td>Offender Supervision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parole and Community 5,087</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Supervision for Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPS Monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Parole 10,280</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic Monitoring 256</td>
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<td>Total Number Supervised 16,285</td>
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DCJ TRAINING ACADEMY BASIC COURSE FOR INVESTIGATORS

At the end of 2011 the State Parole Board Executive Staff made the decision to initiate a new comprehensive hiring process for all new parole officer recruits. A major factor in this new process was to have all future recruit classes attend the DCJ Training Academy's Basic Course for Investigators in Sea Girt. The first recruit class attended in 2012, and during Fiscal Year 2014, 15 parole recruits graduated from 2 separate academy classes.

Three former police officers were also hired from the Rice Act list which permits rehiring of certain law enforcement officers who were terminated for reasons of the economy. This is a cost-saving measure for the agency as these officers are not required to repeat their academy training.

The six-month Basic Course for Investigators covers general topics such as investigative procedures essential to the successful investigation, apprehension and prosecution of criminals. Basic firearms training and physical conditioning training are also conducted during this rigorous training academy course.

The DCJ Academy is a Police Training Commission certified academy that conducts a wide range of in-service and pre-service training programs for the state's law enforcement and criminal justice communities, including state and county investigators, deputy attorney generals, assistant prosecutors, municipal and county police, police executives, arson investigators, parole, and corrections personnel.

GLOCK SERVICE PISTOL TRANSITION

In the fall of 2013 the Division of Parole successfully transitioned from the Heckler and Koch USP 40 caliber to the Glock Model 19 9mm caliber. The H&K 40 caliber handgun was eleven years old and due for replacement. A transition committee made up of command staff and line officers chose the reliable and much easier to shoot Glock 9mm handgun. 65% of law enforce-
ment agencies in America carry Glock handguns. The failure rate during in-service re-qualifications dropped to approximately 3% for the 350 officers at the time of the transition with all officers successfully passing both the day and night qualifications course.

**VETERAN OFFENDER REENTRY INITIATIVE**

The Veteran Offender Reentry Initiative, launched in 2011 by Chairman James Plousis, is an effort to recognize that veterans who have served our country are entitled to our respect and support.

The identified area for Veterans Initiative efforts in Fiscal Year 2014 was to assist veteran offenders who have mental health, substance abuse, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and Traumatic Brain Injuries. Additional veteran treatment services utilized in 2014 were the Lyons USVA PTSD Treatment Unit, the East Orange Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Program (SARRTTP), the USVA Vet Center Readjustment Centers in NJ, the USVA Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and USVA Wilmington and USVA Philadelphia PTSD treatment Programs.

In furtherance of veteran offender resource identification, the State Parole Board Veterans Initiative joined forces with the American Legion-Department of NJ Economics and Employment Committee to co-sponsor a series of Regional Veterans Resource and Opportunity Fairs. Resource Fairs were held at Richard Stockton College in Pomona, the Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum in Cape May County, and Rowan College of Gloucester County. The events were held to bring available resources and employment opportunities to veterans for homeless assistance, PTSD, mental health, education, veteran’s benefits, and employment to the veterans in the South Jersey region.

Veterans Initiative Co-Coordinator John Marolt (Left) and Lt. Greg Baker (Center) provide information to a female veteran at the Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum event.

The agency’s partnership with the American Legion resulted in Chairman Plousis receiving the American Legion Department of NJ Overall Economics and Employment Award at the NJ American Legion Convention in Wildwood in May, 2014.

The State Parole Board Veterans Initiative continued to focus on making more veteran housing opportunities available to NJ veterans who are released from incarceration. A “Housing our Heroes” forum was held at American Legion Post #471 in Middlesex County. The goal of the forum was to bring together veteran housing service providers, whether federal, state, county, or non-profit, and the agencies that utilize those same providers. State Parole Board also participated in “Stand Down” events in Cherry Hill and Morristown to assist homeless veterans with medical, legal, employment, and housing services. Veterans Haven (South) and Veterans Haven (North), operated by the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs assist homeless veterans under Parole Board supervision with up to two years of transitional housing assistance. USVA Service to Veterans and Families (SSVF) services were used in all NJ counties in 2014 to assist in providing support and preventing veterans from becoming homeless.
The State Parole Board partnered with the NJ Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve in holding Law Enforcement “Show of Strength” events hosted by Sheriff Frank Provenzano in Somerset County and Sheriff Charles Miller in Salem County. The events honored law enforcement officers who also serve as members of the NJ National Guard. The partnership with NJ ESGR resulted in Chairman Plousis receiving the NJ Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve “Chairman’s Award” in March, 2014.

The State Parole Board Veterans Initiative joined with the Gloucester County Prosecutor’s Office and the Gloucester County Police Chiefs Association resulting in a pilot project initiated in 2014 to assist veterans arrested by Gloucester County law enforcement. The goal of the pilot project is to intervene with veteran offenders after their initial arrest by providing veteran services and support, thereby reducing future recidivism with respect to the veteran offender population. In addition, the program assists veterans who have contact with the criminal justice system in Gloucester County with identification and referral to veteran services resource providers.

The Veteran Offender Reentry Initiative continues to operate a statewide veteran offender hotline service (609-777-0181) offering referral and assistance to any veteran involved in the criminal justice system. In addition to services provided to parolees, over two hundred probationers, pretrial offenders, county, state, and federal inmates have received services via the Veteran Offender Reentry Hotline. Requests for assistance were received for housing, legal assistance, USVA access, probation and parole supervision issues, and veterans benefit questions.

Additional efforts to improve coordination of veteran services for offenders on a statewide basis took place with the Citizens Veterans Advisory Committee of Cape May County (CVAC), NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA), NJ Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NJESGR), Reentry Task Forces in Cumberland, Monmouth, and Ocean Counties, Jewish Family Services Justice Program in Atlantic County, Volunteers of America – Delaware Valley, Federal Correction Centers in Fairton and Fort Dix, and NJ County Jail Wardens Association.

POLICY and PLANNING UNIT

FEDERAL GRANT INITIATIVES

The Policy and Planning Unit provides ongoing research on evidence-based practices in parole supervision, and conducts program evaluations and recidivism outcomes studies. The PPU also manages grants writing and application processes as well as provide program management and coordination of grant funded programs.

GRANTS

In FY2014, the agency was awarded funds by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to implement a program in Union County, NJ, which
is currently operational, supporting medium- to high-risk parolees returning to Union County with intensive case management, housing and employment assistance and mental health services. A one year extension of the program was granted by BJA and the closing date will now be September 2015. The grant award was for $354,231.50.

The Policy and Planning Unit supported the Information Technology (IT) Unit in developing and submitting a proposal for the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) grant submitted to the NJ Committee on Justice Information Systems (CJIS). This grant will assist the agency in linking its database more effectively to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) that provides access to over 21 files in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) database.

The Unit worked closely with the Division of Parole to develop and submit an application for a Smart Supervision federal grant application to request funding for a Sex Offender Supervision Program enhancement of parole officers’ case management strategies within the Sex Offender Management Unit (SOMU).

STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
The State Parole Board Internship Program (IP) seeks to provide meaningful work-learning experiences to qualified individuals currently attending area colleges and universities as well as graduates entering the job market that will benefit both the individuals and the agency. The IP provides approved interns with the opportunity to put theory into practice while gaining an understanding of the State Parole Board and exploring potential career options. The IP benefits the agency by providing talented, enthusiastic individuals who bring new knowledge and skills to the workforce.

In 2014, over 160 applications were received and 58 interns were placed in the program at various locations throughout the State Parole Board. Internship locations included Division of Parole district offices, with both regular supervision and Sex Offender Management Unit caseloads, Division of Release offices located within the institutions, contracted community programs and central office headquarters, including the Information Technology Unit, Legal Support Unit and Research Unit.

LOOKING FORWARD
Looking forward to FY 2015, the State Parole Board will continue to promote public safety and improve the quality of all programs and services that help foster positive changes and aid in the reintegration of offenders back into the community as law-abiding citizens.

The State Parole Board is committed to updating the agency’s policies and strategic plan; seeking more federal grant opportunities; collaborating with partnering agencies; and maximizing technologies to implement evidence-based and emerging best practices in the field of community supervision.