

Discussion Points

State Parole Board

1. P.L. 2009 c.330 provides that inmates who are within 6 months of “maxing out” of prison be paroled to the jurisdiction of the Parole Board six months prior to their release date.

Question: What effect has this law had on the Parole Board’s caseloads and operating procedures?

The State Parole Board, in conjunction with our partners at the Department of Corrections, worked to identify eligible Statutory Early Release (SER) candidates for months in anticipation of the program which began in January, 2011. Once the candidate was identified as eligible for SER, parole staff meet with each offender to determine if they are interested in pursuing SER. If the offender chooses to pursue SER, a case assessment is performed to determine if the offender requires placement in a residential facility prior to release to general supervision or is placed on general supervision upon release from the DOC institution.

Parole officer caseloads have increased as a result of P.L. 2009 c.330. Incorporating the six months of supervision, parole caseloads are expected to increase by approximately 540 annually once the program is fully implemented.

2. Recent news articles reported that a parolee released early under the provisions of P.L.2009, c.330 has been apprehended for murder. These reports indicate that this individual never reported to his parole officer, and the officer had difficulty in locating him for parole meetings.

Question: What is the procedure undertaken by the Parole Board in locating parolees who miss meetings with their parole officers? What are the penalties for neglecting to show up at these meetings? How often does this happen?

A missed meeting is reviewed first by the assigned officer to determine course of action and may require further review by supervisory personnel. Non-compliance of conditions are reviewed at different levels, utilizing a totality of circumstance approach. Parole personnel review a variety of factors including criminal history, risk level of parolee and progress and compliance with other conditions of supervision to determine course of action. Immediate response to a missed meeting includes a home visit to the address of residence, and/or telephonic contact with the parolee and family members to determine the parolee's location. Responses to violations of conditions, including missed meetings include a range of graduated sanctions from increased reporting, imposition of conditions

of supervision including curfew, placement in community residential programs to initiation of revocation proceedings by the issuance of a warrant.

Parolees may miss meetings for a variety of reasons including a mandate to work overtime at their place of employment, family emergencies, overlooked appointments and to avoid supervision.