



The Parole Hearing Process 2026

KENTUCKY PAROLE BOARD
LADEIDRA N. JONES
CHAIRPERSON

Objectives

Who is the Parole Board and what does it do?

How does the Parole Board make decisions?

Victims' rights and roles in the Parole Process

Mission Statement

The Kentucky Parole Board will make decisions that maintain a delicate balance between public safety, victim rights, reintegration of the offender and recidivism. We will achieve this important balance by application of our core values:

Knowledge

Experience

Integrity

Historical Tidbits

- ▶ 1880: KY legislature authorized parole and set up a board of directors to hear cases
- ▶ State statute on parole is passed
- ▶ 1986: Parole Board expanded from five to seven members
- ▶ 2008: Board expands to nine members

- ▶ KRS 439.320

Governor shall appoint a Parole Board consisting of 9 full-time members to be confirmed by the Senate in accordance with KRS 11.160

KRS 439.320(1)

Member Qualifications

- ▶ Each member must have at least five years of actual experience in the field of penology, correction work, law enforcement, sociology, law, education, social work, medicine or a combination thereof
- ▶ Or have served at least five years previously on the Parole Board
- ▶ No more than six board members shall be of the same political party
- ▶ The Governor shall designate one member as the chairperson of the board.
- ▶ Members are appointed to serve in four-year terms

Current Members

- **Ladeidra N. Jones, Chairperson:** Corrections, Community supervision, Clinical Treatment (SA) and Alternative Sentencing Programs (2018, 2022) (Chair, 2021)
- **Michael A. James, Member:** Law Enforcement, Corrections (2021)
- **Sherri Lathan, Member:** Corrections, Probation & Parole, Education (2021)
- **Shawn Helbig, Member:** Law Enforcement (2022)
- **Cyndi Heddleston, Member:** Probation & Parole, Corrections (2023)
- **Leigh Wiggins, Member:** Substance Abuse (2023)
- **Chris Deglow, Member:** Federal Probation (2023)
- **Krissie Coe Fields, Member:** Sociology, Courts (2024)
- **Gregory Leist, Member:** Probation & Parole (2025)

THE PROCESS.....

HOW DOES THE PAROLE
BOARD MAKE DECISIONS?

Parole Statutes

KRS 439

Administrative Regulations

501 KAR1:030,040,050,080

KYPB Policy & Procedures

10-00 thru 22-00

HEARING TYPES

Face-to-Face

- ▶ Board members interview the offender either in-person or via teleconference (video)

File Review

- ▶ Board members review all available information regarding the offender from institutional and Department of Corrections Central Office files

The Hearing

- ▶ Offenders are reviewed for Parole up to 60 days prior to their parole eligibility date
- ▶ 45-day notification of hearing shall be provided to CWA, Victim/Next of Kin,
- ▶ “Notified” persons may submit comments to be reviewed by the Board not less than 7 days prior to the date of the hearing

~KRS 439.340(4),(5),(6)

- ▶ Offenders must be notified at least 14 days prior to the date of the hearing

The Hearing

- ▶ Board Members are assigned in panels of two for each hearing
- ▶ A two-member panel, requires a **unanimous** decision
- ▶ Should the two members be unable to reach a decision, the case returns to the full board for a decision (2/3rd of full board)
- ▶ Parole Hearings are open. Deliberations are closed.

Factors Considered

- ▶ Current Offense-seriousness, violence involved, firearm used, life taken, etc.
- ▶ Prior record
- ▶ Institutional Adjustment/conduct
- ▶ Attitude toward authority
- ▶ History of Substance Abuse
- ▶ History of Prior Supervision
- ▶ Parole Plan
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Employment History
- ▶ History of assault/violence
- ▶ Mental status
- ▶ Health
- ▶ History of Deviant behavior
- ▶ Community attitude
- ▶ Victim Impact statement/hearing

Decisions

Parole

Deferment

Serve-out

VICTIMS' RIGHTS IN THE PAROLE PROCESS

- 1986: the Commonwealth of Kentucky enacted legislation designed to recognize the importance of involving victims of crime in the criminal justice system
- Victim Services serves as a bridge between the Kentucky Parole Board and victims of crime who want to participate in the parole process.

▶ REGISTRATION OF VICTIMS

- ▶ **Per KRS 421.500 the following may register with our office:**
 - The person the crime was committed against
 - The legal guardian of a minor victim
 - The immediate family of a deceased victim

VICTIM INPUT

- Victim Impact Statement^{-WRITTEN}
- Victim Hearing- Registered victims have the right to request a face-to-face meeting (Zoom) with Parole Board members. The request must be in writing and received not less than seven days prior to the date set for a face-to-face parole hearing. For parole hearings that are completed by file review, the request must be received at least one week prior to the eligibility month

Hearing Outcome

All registered victims who have submitted either a written or verbal request to be informed of the outcome of a Parole Hearing will receive a letter informing them of the Parole Board decision.

Victims who have attended a Victim Hearing via Zoom or phone will also be notified by a telephone call on the day the decision is rendered/entered.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS?



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**The below data covers July 1, 2025- June 24, 2026*

Statistics (retrieved from DOC SQL Reports)

Face to Face Hearings

	Recommend	Deferred	Serve Out	TOTAL
Deferred	330	332	61	723
Initial	197	277	88	562
				1,285

File Review

	Recommend	Deferred	Serve Out	TOTAL
Deferred	1611	1473	638	3722
Initial	1207	3873	2343	7423
Other	64	33	21	118
				11,263

Total Parole Eligibility Cases

	Recommend	Deferred	Serve Out	TOTAL
Total Cases	3409	5988	3151	12,548
Total Parole Decision Rates	27%	48%	25%	100%

Break Out Rates

	Recommend	Deferred	Serve Out	TOTAL CASES
Deferred	44%	40%	16%	4,445
Initial	18%	52%	30%	7,985
Hearings	41%	47%	12%	1,288
Reviews	25%	48%	27%	11,263
				13,330

Final Revocation

	Parole Recommendations	Defer	Serve Out	TOTAL
MRS Violator	1	0	764	765
Parole Violator	25	881	868	1776
PS Violator	0	0	3	3
SOCD/SOPS Violator	0	0	122	123
TOTAL	26	881	1757	2667
Total Revocation Decision Rates	1%	33%	66%	100%

All Hearings Total

Recommend	Deferred	Serve Out	Total
3,441	6,872	4,910	15,228

Parole Board Event Totals

Event	Total
Probable Cause Hearings Held	997
Waived Probable Cause Hearings	1,906
Waived Final Hearing	1,814
Warrants Issued	3069
Warrants Rescinded	621
Victim's Hearings	287

Comparison Chart

<u>State</u>	<u>Parole System</u>	<u>Hearings</u>	<u>File Reviews</u>	<u>Grant Rate</u>	<u>Key Notes</u>
Kentucky	_ Presumptive <u>XX</u> Discretionary	<u>1285</u>	<u>11,263</u>	<u>27%</u>	_____
Ohio	_ Presumptive <u>XX</u> Discretionary	<u>1019</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>20%</u>	_____
Georgia	_ Presumptive <u>XX</u> Discretionary	<u>300</u>	<u>20,453</u>	<u>77%</u>	_____
Alabama	<u>X</u> Presumptive ___ Discretionary	<u>2086</u>	<u>3144</u>	<u>20%</u>	_____
Washington	<u>X</u> Presumptive ___ Discretionary	<u>507</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>51-55%</u>	<u>S.O; 80%-juvenile</u>