

CHAPTER 232**(HB 142)**

AN ACT relating to the parole of prisoners.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. KRS 439.340 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) The board may release on parole persons confined in any adult state penal or correctional institution of Kentucky or sentenced felons incarcerated in county jails eligible for parole. All paroles shall issue upon order of the board duly adopted. As soon as practicable after his admission to an adult state penal or correctional institution or county jail if he is a sentenced felon, and at such intervals thereafter as it may determine, the Department of Corrections shall obtain all pertinent information regarding each prisoner, except those not eligible for parole. The information shall include his criminal record, his conduct, employment, and attitude in prison, and the reports of physical and mental examinations that have been made. The Department of Corrections shall furnish the circumstances of his offense and his previous social history to the institution and the board. The Department of Corrections shall prepare a report on any information it obtains. It shall be the duty of the Department of Corrections to supplement this report with any material the board may request and submit the report to the board.
- (2) Before granting the parole of any prisoner, the board shall consider the pertinent information regarding the prisoner and shall have him appear before it for interview and hearing. The board in its discretion may hold interviews and hearings for prisoners convicted of Class D felonies. The board in its discretion may request the parole board of another state confining prisoners pursuant to KRS 196.610 to interview eligible prisoners and make a parole recommendation to the board. A parole shall be ordered only for the best interest of society and not as an award of clemency, and it shall not be considered a reduction of sentence or pardon. A prisoner shall be placed on parole only when arrangements have been made for his proper employment or for his maintenance and care, and when the board believes he is able and willing to fulfill the obligations of a law abiding citizen.
- (3) The board shall adopt administrative regulations with respect to the eligibility of prisoners for parole, the conduct of parole and parole revocation hearings, or conditions to be imposed upon parolees. Regulations governing the eligibility of prisoners for parole shall be in accordance with professionally accepted ideas of correction and reform and may utilize in part objective, performance-based criteria; however, nothing herein contained shall preclude the board from utilizing its present regulations in conjunction with other factors involved that would relate to the inmate's needs and the safety of the public.
- (4) The board shall insure that sentenced felons confined in county jails are considered for parole within thirty (30) days of their parole eligibility date and the Department of Corrections shall provide the necessary assistance and information to the board in order for it to conduct timely parole reviews.
- (5) In addition to or in conjunction with each hearing conducted under subsection (2) of this section for any prisoner convicted of a Class A, B, or C felony and prior to the granting of a parole to any such prisoner, the parole board shall conduct a hearing of which the following persons shall receive not less than forty-five (45) nor more than ninety (90) days' notice: the Commonwealth's attorney who shall notify the sheriff of every county and the chief of

police of every city and county in which the prisoner committed any Class A, B, or C felony for which he is imprisoned, and all identified victims of the crimes or the next of kin of any victim who is deceased. Notice to the Commonwealth's attorney shall be by mail to his business office. Notices received by chiefs of police and sheriffs shall be posted in a conspicuous location where police employed by the department may see it. Notices shall be posted in a manner and at a time that will allow officers to make comment thereon to the Parole Board. Notice to victims or their next of kin shall be made, for prisoners incarcerated prior to July 15, 1986, by mail to the Commonwealth's attorney who shall forward the notice promptly to the victims or their next of kin at their last known address. For prisoners incarcerated on or after July 15, 1986, notice to the victims or their next of kin shall be by mail from the Parole Board to their last known address as provided by the Commonwealth's attorney to the Parole Board at the time of incarceration of the prisoner. ***Notice to the victim or the next of kin of subsequent considerations for parole after the initial consideration shall not be sent if the victim or the next of kin gives notice to the board that he or she no longer wants to receive such notices.*** The notice shall include the time, date, and place of the hearing provided for in this subsection, and the name and address of a person to write if the recipient of the notice desires to attend the hearing or to submit written comments.

- (6) Persons receiving notice as provided for in subsection (5) of this section may submit comments, in person or in writing, to the board upon all issues relating to the parole of the prisoner. The board shall read and consider all comments prior to making its parole decision, if they are received by the board not less than seven (7) days before the date for the hearing. The board shall retain all comments in the prisoner's permanent Parole Board file, and shall consider them in conjunction with any subsequent parole decisions affecting the prisoner. In addition to officers listed in subsection (5) of this section, the crime victims or the next of kin of any victim who is deceased or who is disabled and cannot attend the hearing or the parent or legal guardian of any victim who is a minor may attend the hearing provided for in subsection (5) of this section and present oral and written comments upon all issues relating to the parole of the prisoner, if they have advised the board, in writing received by the board not less than seven (7) days prior to the date set for the hearing, of their intention to attend the hearing. The board shall receive and consider all comments, shall make a record of them which it shall retain in the prisoner's permanent Parole Board file, and shall consider them in conjunction with any subsequent parole decision affecting the prisoner. Persons appearing before the Parole Board pursuant to this subsection may elect to make their presentations outside of the presence of the prisoner.
- (7) Victims of Class D felonies may submit comments in person or in writing to the board upon all issues relating to the parole of a prisoner.
- (8) Any hearing provided for in subsections (5), (6), and (7) of this section shall be open to the public unless the persons having a right to appear before the board as specified in those subsections request closure of hearing for reasons of personal safety, in which event the hearing shall be closed. The time, date, and location of closed hearings shall not be disclosed to the public.
- (9) Except as specifically set forth in this section, nothing in this section shall be deemed to expand or abridge any existing rights of persons to contact and communicate with the Parole Board or any of its members, agents, or employees.
- (10) The unintentional failure by the Parole Board, sheriff, chief of police, or any of its members, agents, or employees or by a Commonwealth's attorney or any of his agents or employees to

comply with any of the provisions of subsections (5), (6), and (8) of this section shall not affect the validity of any parole decision or give rise to any right or cause of action by the crime victim, the prisoner, or any other person.

- (11) No eligible sexual offender within the meaning of KRS 197.400 to 197.440 shall be granted parole unless he has successfully completed the Sexual Offender Treatment Program.
- (12) Any prisoner who is granted parole after completion of the Sexual Offender Treatment Program shall be required, as a condition of his parole, to participate in regular treatment in a mental health program approved or operated by the Department of Corrections.
- (13) When an order for parole is issued, it shall recite the conditions thereof.

Approved April 8, 2002