

1 AN ACT relating to the Parole Board.

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

3 ➔Section 1. KRS 439.320 is amended to read as follows:

4 (1) (a) The Governor shall appoint a Parole Board consisting of nine (9) full-time
5 members to be confirmed by the Senate in accordance with KRS 11.160.

6 (b) The Governor shall make each appointment from a list of three (3) names
7 given to him or her by the Kentucky State Corrections Commission.

8 (c) Each member appointed to the board shall have had at least five (5) years of
9 actual experience in the field of penology, correction work, law enforcement,
10 sociology, law, education, social work, medicine, or a combination of those
11 fields[thereof], or have served at least five (5) years previously on the Parole
12 Board.

13 (d) No more than six (6) board members shall be of the same political party.

14 (e) The board shall be attached to the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet for
15 administrative purposes only. The department[~~of Corrections~~] shall provide
16 any clerical, stenographic, administrative, and expert staff assistance the board
17 deems necessary to carry out its duties.

18 (2) The Governor shall designate one (1) member as chairperson of the board. The
19 member designated as chairperson shall serve in that capacity at the pleasure of the
20 Governor or until his or her term expires.

21 (3) (a) The members of the board shall give full time to the duties of their office and
22 shall receive necessary traveling expenses and a salary to be determined
23 pursuant to KRS 64.640(2), except the chairperson of the board shall receive
24 additional compensation of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per year for his or
25 her services.

26 (b) *The members of the board shall serve for a term of four (4) years and until*
27 *their successors are appointed and have qualified. The Governor may*

1 extend a term not more than one (1) year if the expiration of the term
2 causes more than two (2) terms to expire in the same calendar year[The
3 members of the board shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor, but for no
4 more than four (4) years without reappointment]. Their successors shall then
5 be appointed[thereafter] as provided in this section. A vacancy occurring
6 before expiration of the term of office shall be similarly filled for the
7 unexpired term.

8 (4) The organization of the board shall be determined by the chairperson and shall be
9 consistent with administrative regulations promulgated pursuant to KRS 439.340.
10 For policy and procedural matters, five (5) members shall constitute a quorum.

11 (5) Parole and final parole revocation hearings may be done by panels of the board,
12 subject to the following requirements:

13 (a) If a two (2) member panel is utilized, both members of the panel shall agree
14 on a decision;[A panel shall consist of not less than three (3) and not more
15 than six (6) members; and]

16 (b) If a three (3) member panel is utilized, two (2) of the three (3) members of
17 the panel shall agree on a decision; and

18 (c) If a panel of four (4) or more members is utilized, a majority of the panel
19 shall agree on a decision;

20 In all cases in which the required number of panel members are not in agreement
21 on a decision,[All members of the panel shall agree on a decision or] the matter
22 shall be referred to the full board.

23 (6) The Governor may not remove any member of the board except for disability,
24 inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office. Before removal, the
25 Governor[he or she] shall give the member a written copy of the charges against
26 him or her and shall fix the time when he or she can be heard in his or her defense,
27 which shall not be less than ten (10) days after receiving the written copy of the

1 charges against him or her[thereafter]. Upon removal, the Governor shall file in
2 the office of the Secretary of State a complete statement of all charges made against
3 the member and the findings upon the charges[thereupon] with a record of the
4 proceedings.

5 ➔Section 2. KRS 439.340 is amended to read as follows:

6 (1) The board may release on parole persons confined in any adult state penal or
7 correctional institution of Kentucky or sentenced felons incarcerated in county jails
8 eligible for parole. All paroles shall issue upon order of the board duly adopted. As
9 soon as practicable after his or her admission to an adult state penal or correctional
10 institution or county jail if he or she is a sentenced felon, and at such intervals
11 thereafter as it may determine, the department[~~of Corrections~~] shall obtain all
12 pertinent information regarding each prisoner, except those not eligible for parole.
13 The information shall include the results of his or her most recent risk and needs
14 assessment, his or her criminal record, his or her conduct, employment, and the
15 reports of physical and mental examinations that have been made. The department[
16 ~~of Corrections~~] shall furnish the circumstances of his or her offense, the results of
17 his or her most recent risk and needs assessment, and his or her previous social
18 history to the board. The department[~~of Corrections~~] shall prepare a report on any
19 information it obtains.~~[It shall be the duty of The department of Corrections to]~~
20 supplement this report with any material the board may request,~~and~~ and submit the
21 report to the board.

22 (2) (a) Before granting the parole of any prisoner, the board shall consider the
23 pertinent information regarding the prisoner, including the results of his or her
24 most recent risk and needs assessment, and shall have him or her appear
25 before it for interview and hearing. The board in its discretion may hold
26 interviews and hearings for prisoners convicted of Class C felonies not
27 included within the definition of "violent offender" in KRS 439.3401 and

1 Class D felonies not included within the definition of "sex crime" in KRS
2 17.500. The board in its discretion may request the parole board of another
3 state confining prisoners pursuant to KRS 196.610 to interview eligible
4 prisoners and make a parole recommendation to the board. A parole shall be
5 ordered only for the best interest of society and not as an award of clemency,
6 and it shall not be considered a reduction of sentence or pardon. A prisoner
7 shall be placed on parole only when arrangements have been made for his or
8 her proper employment or for his or her maintenance and care, and when the
9 board believes he or she is able and willing to fulfill the obligations of a law-
10 abiding~~law abiding~~ citizen.

11 (b) Notwithstanding any statute to the contrary, including KRS 440.330, when a
12 prisoner is otherwise eligible for parole and the board has recommended
13 parole for that prisoner for the reasons set forth in this subsection, the board
14 may grant parole to any prisoner wanted as a fugitive by any other
15 jurisdiction, and the prisoner shall be released to the detainer from that
16 jurisdiction.~~Such~~ Parole under this paragraph shall not constitute a
17 relinquishment of jurisdiction over the prisoner, and the board in all cases
18 expressly reserves the right to return the prisoner to confinement in a
19 correctional institution of the Commonwealth if the prisoner violates the terms
20 of his or her parole.

21 (3) (a) A nonviolent offender convicted of a Class D felony with an aggregate
22 sentence of one (1) to five (5) years who is confined to a state penal institution
23 or county jail shall have his or her case reviewed by the~~Parole~~ board after
24 serving fifteen percent (15%) or two (2) months of the original sentence,
25 whichever is longer.

26 (b) Except as provided in this section, the board shall promulgate~~adopt~~
27 administrative regulations in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A with respect

1 to the eligibility of prisoners for parole, the conduct of parole and parole
2 revocation hearings and all other matters that come before it, or conditions to
3 be imposed upon parolees. Administrative regulations governing the
4 eligibility of prisoners for parole shall be in accordance with professionally
5 accepted ideas of correction and reform and may utilize in part objective,
6 performance-based criteria and risk and needs assessment information.~~;~~
7 ~~however, nothing herein contained~~ This paragraph shall not preclude the
8 board from utilizing its present administrative regulations in conjunction with
9 other factors involved that would relate to the inmate's needs and the safety of
10 the public.

11 (4) The board shall ensure that all sentenced felons who have one hundred eighty
12 (180) or more~~longer than ninety (90)~~ days remaining to serve in state penal
13 institutions, halfway houses, reentry centers, and county jails are considered for
14 parole not less than sixty (60) days prior to their parole eligibility date, and the
15 department~~of Corrections~~ shall provide the necessary assistance and information
16 to the board in order for it to conduct timely parole reviews.

17 (5) (a) In addition to or in conjunction with each hearing conducted under subsection
18 (2) of this section for any prisoner convicted of a Class A, B, or C felony or a
19 Class D felony included within the definition of "sex crime" in KRS 17.500
20 and prior to the granting of a parole to any such prisoner, the~~Parole~~ board
21 shall conduct a hearing of which the following persons shall receive not less
22 than forty-five (45) nor more than ninety (90) days' notice: the
23 Commonwealth's attorney who shall notify the sheriff of every county and the
24 chief of police of every city and county in which the prisoner committed any
25 Class A, B, or C felony or a Class D felony included within the definition of
26 "sex crime" in KRS 17.500 for which he or she is imprisoned, and all
27 identified victims of the crimes or the next of kin of any victim who is

1 deceased.

2 (b) Notice to the Commonwealth's attorney shall be by mail, fax, or electronic
3 means at the discretion of the board, and shall be in a manner that ensures
4 receipt at the Commonwealth's attorney's business office. Notices received by
5 chiefs of police and sheriffs shall be posted in a conspicuous location where
6 police employed by the department may see it. Notices shall be posted in a
7 manner and at a time that will allow officers to make comment thereon to the [§ 87(2)(b)] board.

9 (c) 1. Notice to victims or their next of kin shall be made, for prisoners
10 incarcerated prior to July 15, 1986, by mail, fax, or electronic means at
11 the discretion of the board, and shall be in a manner that ensures receipt
12 by the Commonwealth's attorney, who shall forward the notice promptly
13 to the victims or their next of kin at their last known address.

23 4. For prisoners incarcerated on or after April 1, 2021, for a Class D felony
24 included within the definition of "sex crime" in KRS 17.500, notice to
25 the victims or their next of kin shall be by mail from the Parole Board to
26 their last known address as provided by the Commonwealth's attorney to
27 the ~~Parole~~ board at the time of incarceration of the prisoner.

1 elect to make their presentations outside of the presence of the prisoner.

2 (7) Victims of Class D felonies not included within the definition of "sex crime" in
3 KRS 17.500 may submit comments in person or in writing to the board upon all
4 issues relating to the parole of a prisoner.

5 (8) Any hearing provided for in subsections (5), (6), and (7) of this section shall be
6 open to the public unless the persons having a right to appear before the board as
7 specified in those subsections request closure of hearing for reasons of personal
8 safety, in which event the hearing shall be closed. The time, date, and location of
9 closed hearings shall not be disclosed to the public.

10 (9) {Except as specifically set forth in this section, nothing in }This section shall not be
11 deemed to expand or abridge any existing rights of persons to contact and
12 communicate with the{Parole} board or any of its members, agents, or employees,
13 *except as specifically set forth in this section.*

14 (10) The unintentional failure by the [Parole] board, sheriff, chief of police, or any of its
15 members, agents, or employees or by a Commonwealth's attorney or any of his or
16 her agents or employees to comply with any of the provisions of subsections (5),
17 (6), and (8) of this section shall not affect the validity of any parole decision or give
18 rise to any right or cause of action by the crime victim, the prisoner, or any other
19 person.

20 (11) An~~No~~ eligible sexual offender within the meaning of KRS 197.400 to 197.440

21 shall not be granted parole unless he or she has successfully completed the Sexual

22 Offender Treatment Program.

23 (12) Any prisoner who is granted parole after completion of the Sexual Offender
24 Treatment Program shall be required, as a condition of his or her parole, to
25 participate in regular treatment in a mental health program approved or operated by
26 the department[of Corrections].

27 (13) When the board grants parole contingent upon completion of a program, the

1 commissioner, or his or her designee, shall determine the most appropriate
2 placement in a program operated by the department or a residential or
3 nonresidential program within the community approved by the department. If the
4 department releases a parolee to a nonresidential program, the department shall
5 release the parolee only if he or she will have appropriate community housing
6 pursuant to KRS 439.3408.

7 (14) If the~~Parole~~ board does not grant parole to a prisoner, the maximum deferment
8 for a prisoner convicted of a non-violent, non-sexual Class C or Class D felony
9 shall be twenty-four (24) months. For all other prisoners who are eligible for parole:

10 (a) ~~A~~~~Ne~~ parole deferment greater than five (5) years shall not be ordered unless
11 approved by a majority vote of the full board; and

12 (b) ~~A~~~~Ne~~ deferment shall not exceed ten (10) years, except for life sentences.

13 (15) When an order for parole is issued, it shall recite the conditions of the
14 order~~thereof~~, which may include requiring the person to participate in a specific
15 evidence-based program designed to reduce violence.

16 ➔Section 3. Whereas the terms of four members of the Parole Board will expire
17 this year in rapid succession, and the continuity of operations of the Parole Board must be
18 maintained, an emergency is declared to exist, and Section 1 of this Act takes effect upon
19 its passage and approval by the Governor or upon its otherwise becoming a law.