

Tennessee Board of Parole

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2012-13



*Safe Communities,
Fewer Victims,
Successful Reentry*



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Tennessee Board of Parole

Our mission is to minimize public risk and maximize lawful behavior by the prudent, orderly release of adult offenders.



STATE OF TENNESSEE
BOARD OF PAROLE
404 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY, SUITE 1300
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0850 (615) 741-1673

October 1, 2013

The Honorable Bill Haslam, Governor
General Assembly, State of Tennessee
State Capitol Building
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Governor Haslam and Members of the General Assembly:

It is my pleasure to present to you the Board of Parole's Annual Report for fiscal year 2012-13.

To fulfill the agency's mission to minimize public risk and promote lawful behavior by the prudent, orderly release of adult offenders, Board Members must determine whether to parole eligible felony offenders for community supervision, or to continue incarceration in Department of Correction (TDOC) or county facilities for complete sentence terms. Toward that mission, the Board conducted 18,136 parole hearings in FY 2012-13. In addition, the Board reviews all clemency requests and submits non-binding recommendations to the Governor for his consideration. Although the Board of Parole no longer supervises offenders in the community, it still plays a major role in community safety, in keeping with its motto: *"Safe communities, fewer victims, successful reentry."*

The Board of Parole also provides cost avoidance for state government. For example, offenders placed on parole are supervised in the community at a cost far lower than that of incarceration. In addition, the Board of Parole continues to invest in new technology including, but not limited to, video conferencing and web cameras. More hearings are being conducted via live video conferencing. The result is that travel to state prisons or local jails for hearings is reduced, decreasing travel costs and increasing productive work hours. The agency is also nearing the rollout of a paperless parole file system that will end the need to ship paper files between offices. Paperless parole will also reduce the time it takes to finalize parole decisions.

The Board of Parole had 83 staff positions in FY 2012-13 with a budget of \$7,173,746. Despite challenging financial conditions statewide, the Board has achieved significant accomplishments in the past fiscal year, as mentioned on page 4 and throughout the rest of this report. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to the members of Tennessee's Executive and Legislative branches for effectively overseeing our work and providing leadership. We are also indebted to the BOP staff who devoted time, energy and skills to carrying out our mission, and we give them our sincere gratitude.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Montgomery".

Richard Montgomery, Chairman

About the Parole Board

The Parole Board is an independent body appointed by the Governor and charged with the responsibility of determining which eligible offenders are suitable candidates for parole.

What is the Parole Board?

The Parole Board is an independent, seven-member Board whose members are appointed by the Governor.

What are the Board's responsibilities?

The Parole Board makes decisions on which eligible offenders will be granted parole and placed on community supervision for the remainder of their sentences. The Board also has the power to revoke the parole of those offenders who do not abide by the conditions of their supervision. In addition, the Board reviews applications for executive clemency and makes non-binding recommendations to the Governor.

What is the Tennessee Board of Parole?

This is the agency that includes the Parole Board and its support staff. The staff is managed by an Executive Director, who oversees the day-to-day operations of the agency. Support staff include the Hearing Officers, Board Operations Division, Victim Services Division, a General Counsel and a Communications Director. It also includes staff who maintain business functions, such as the Fiscal Division, Human Resources Division, the Information Systems Division, the Research, Policy and Planning Division and the Training Division.

What is parole?

Parole is community supervision granted to an offender after he/she has served a percentage of his/her sentence, as determined by statute. Many offenders serve their sentences to expiration without ever receiving parole. If released to parole, offenders are supervised by officers employed by the Tennessee Department of Correction.

The Board may order a parolee who does not comply with the supervision rules to be revoked and returned to prison.

What factors does the Board consider in making parole decisions?

The Board considers many factors, including seriousness of the offense, time served, the offender's institutional record, victim input, and the statements of the offender and other interested parties, in determining whether to grant parole to an eligible offender. The complete list of criteria is part of BOP Rule 1100-01-01-.07 located online at: <http://www.tn.gov/sos/rules/1100/1100-01.20090928.pdf>

How does someone in prison get a parole hearing?

An offender's initial parole eligibility is calculated by the Tennessee Department of Correction, the official timekeeper for all offenders in state custody. TDOC then notifies the Board, and the Board schedules a hearing. If the offender does not receive parole, the Board may set the date for the next hearing, not to exceed six years. More details are included in the chart on page 3.

What is probation?

Probation is granted by the courts, normally in lieu of jail or prison time. The court of record may revoke the probation of any offender who does not comply with the rules of supervision. **The Board of Parole has no role in probation cases.** However, if an offender violates probation conditions, the judge may revoke probation and send the offender to prison. He or she might then become eligible for parole consideration at a future date.

What is Community Supervision for Life (CSL)?

An offender on Community Supervision for Life has completely served his/her sentence, but due to the nature of the crime, is required to remain under supervision of TDOC officers after the sentence expires. **The offender is not released by the Parole Board.**

The Parole Process in Tennessee

The eligibility of an offender for parole consideration is based on the statute under which he/she was convicted. The statute dictates what percentage of the sentence must be served before the offender is eligible for parole. The chart below details the process.

The Department of Correction, the official timekeeper for all offenders in state custody, certifies an offender as eligible for parole consideration and notifies the Board of Parole.

Board of Parole staff schedule a hearing for the offender. Notification of the hearing date and time are sent to the offender and to registered interested parties in the case. The hearing takes place at the institution where the offender is incarcerated. Either a Board Member or a BOP Hearing Officer conducts the hearing.

At the hearing, the hearing official reviews the case and other documents pertinent to it, asks questions of the offender and interested parties in attendance and gives the offender an opportunity to speak. If a Hearing Officer is conducting the hearing, he/she will conclude the proceeding by making a non-binding recommendation to the Board. If the hearing official is a Board Member, he/she will cast the first vote in the case.

The file then goes to other Board Members, who review it and cast their votes in the case. The Board's enabling statute provides for the requisite number of votes required for a decision in a particular case.

Once a decision is reached, the offender and interested parties are notified. There are two possible outcomes:

Parole Granted:

The offender completes any programs ordered by the Board prior to release and submits a release plan for approval. Once the release plan is approved, the parole certificate is issued and the offender is released to supervision by Department of Correction officers in the community.

Parole Denied:

When parole is denied, it is for a period not to exceed six years. During this time, the Board may ask the offender to complete programs that may contribute to his/her success once the offender returns to the community. The Board may also deny parole for the balance of the offender's sentence, should it be less than six years.

BOP Accomplishments

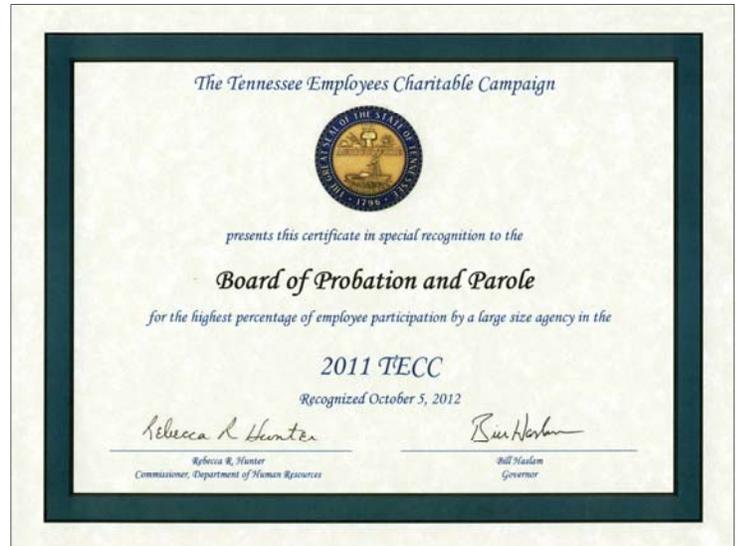
FY 2012-13 was a year of accomplishments for the Board of Parole.

During Fiscal Year 2012-13, the Board of Parole:

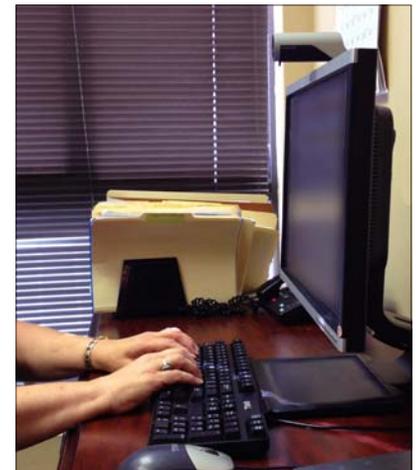
- Completed a new Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which was approved by the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency in March of 2013. All Central Office staff have been trained on the plan, and training will take place in the new fiscal year for staff who work away from Central Office.
- Began creating a paperless parole process that, when completed, will greatly reduce the number of days it takes to reach a parole decision.
- To support Gov. Haslam's Customer Focused Government initiative, the Board of Parole launched its own customer service survey online.



- Increased the use of video conferencing and web cams in conducting parole hearings, thereby reducing staff and Board travel time and associated expenses.
- Planted eight trees in cities across the state to honor victims of crime, and honored victim advocates for their work. Over the past five years, BOP has planted almost four dozen trees honoring victims of crime in communities statewide.



- On behalf of the former Board of Probation and Parole, the Board of Parole accepted the award for highest percentage of staff participation by a large size agency in the 2011 Tennessee Employees Charitable Campaign.
- Planned the 10th annual *Tennessee Season to Remember* event honoring homicide victims in cooperation with other state criminal justice agencies.
- Honored 13 staff with awards for reaching milestones in state service.



Significant Events

In FY 2012-13, the Board of Parole experienced several major changes.

Changing Chairmen

In June of 2013, longtime Board Chairman Charles Traughber retired after 42 years of state service. Gov. Haslam appointed Board Member Richard Montgomery, a former state legislator from Sevierville, to replace Mr. Traughber. Montgomery and Traughber, friends as well as colleagues, worked together to effect a smooth transition.

Right: Former Board of Parole Chairman Charles Traughber and new Chairman Richard Montgomery.



New Agency, New Name

On July 1, 2012, the new Board of Parole was created, and the old Board of Probation and Parole ended. With passage of the new state public safety bill, supervision of offenders in the community transferred from the Board to the Department of Correction. The change has allowed the Board to place more focus on new technology and streamlining parole functions.

New Executive Director

In November 2012, the Board of Parole named David C. Liner as its new Executive Director. Liner, a native of Chattanooga, began his career as personal assistant to former U. S. Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee. He later moved to the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and then served as Chief of Staff at the Peace Corps.

As BOP's Executive Director, Liner has responsibility for the day-to-day functions of the agency. He also oversees recruitment and supervision of staff, and assists the Board in the development and the implementation of policies, procedures, strategic plans, budgets and reports.



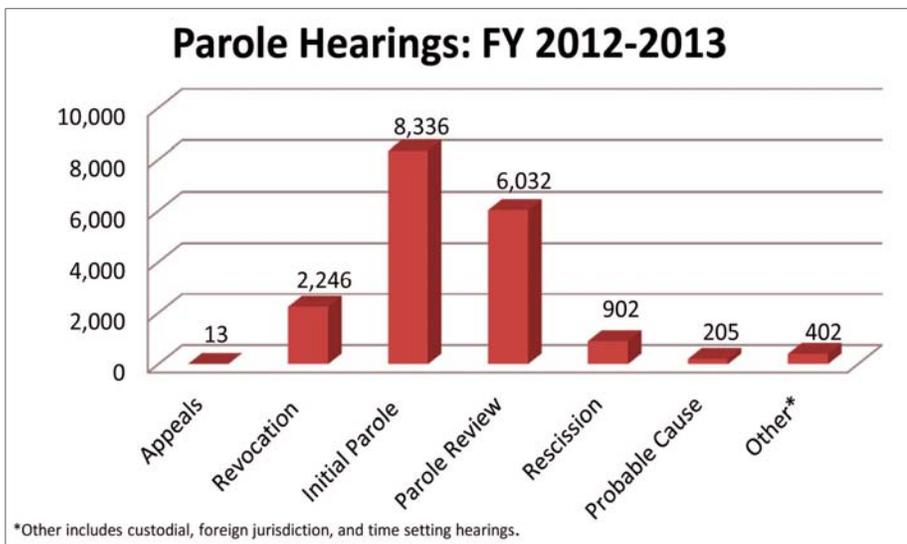
18,136

The Board of Parole
conducted 18,136
hearings in FY 2012-13.



Parole Hearing officers and support staff are pictured together at their annual training.

Board Members and Parole Hearing Officers conduct parole hearings almost every business day. The most serious cases, including all involving loss of life, are heard by Board Members. Cases involving offenders convicted of other offenses are heard by the agency's 18 Hearing Officers, who conduct hearings and make non-binding recommendations to the Board. In FY 2012-13, these officers traveled a collective 160,000 miles to hear cases at prisons and county jails, but the addition of web camera technology to conduct hearings is expected to significantly reduce travel time and costs in the future. Each officer hears an average of 875 cases per year.



The Parole Hearings Division functions as a support element to the Board in carrying out its statutory mandate to conduct parole hearings. Hearing Officers are vital to the Board's prudent and orderly release of adult felons. In their capacity as fact finders, Hearing Officers function as an extension of the Board in accordance with TCA 40-28-105. Parole Hearing Officers are appointed by the Chair of the Board of Parole, and are empowered to conduct parole

Each Hearing Officer employed by the Board of Parole hears an average of 875 cases per year.

hearings in local jails, state prisons and other detention facilities throughout the state for all eligible offenders, and to provide Board Members with non-binding recommendations.

Parole Hearing Officers conduct hearings in the following categories:

- Grant hearings
- Final revocation hearings
- Pre-parole rescission hearings
- Time setting hearings
- Post-parole rescission hearings
- Appeal hearings
- Preliminary parole revocation hearings

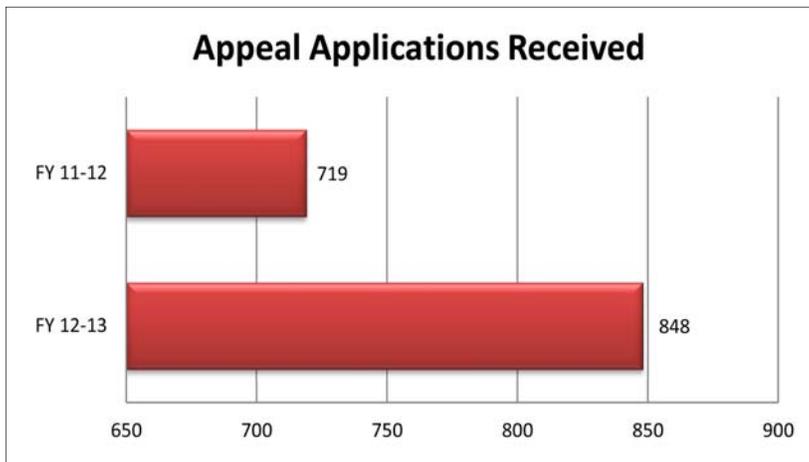
By statute, only Board Members may cast binding votes in parole cases. However, the work of the Parole Hearing Officers helps the Board manage the large volume of cases that come before it each year.

Appeals:

The Parole Hearings Division processes all appeal applications for the Board. Every appeal application filed is reviewed and a determination is made on whether a new hearing is granted, according to statute. Recently, this agency added another step in notifying offenders of their rights to appeal and as a result, has seen an increase in appeal requests, as shown in the chart below:

TCA 40-28-105 (d)(11) mandates an appeal review process for offenders whose parole has been denied, revoked or rescinded, and establishes criteria for appellate reviews. The reviews may be granted for any of the following reasons:

- Significant new information not available at the time of the hearing
- Misconduct by the hearing official
- Significant procedural error(s) by the hearing official



The Parole Hearings Division's central office staff employs a three-tier review process to review appeals. Appeals that meet the above criteria are forwarded to Board Members for review and final instructions specific to the appeal. Appeal requests must be submitted no later than 45 days after the offender receives notification of the Board's final parole decision. If the Board directs that an appeal hearing should be granted, the hearing will be scheduled on the next available docket and the decision from that hearing is final.

7

By statute, the Parole Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor.



The Board, 2013.

First row: Lisa Jones, Chairman Richard Montgomery and Patsy Bruce. Second row: Ronnie Cole, Joe Hill and Tim Gobble.

Chairman Richard Montgomery

Richard Montgomery, a native of east Tennessee, was appointed to the Board of Parole in January of 2013. He was appointed Chairman of the Board in July of that year. He is a former state representative from Sevier County, serving in the General Assembly for 14 years (1998-2012). He served as Chairman of the House Education Committee from 2011-2012, and worked on other key committees, such as the House Commerce Committee and the Calendar and Rules Committee, during his term in office. He also served on several joint committees, including the Select Committee on Corrections Oversight, Joint Lottery Scholarship Committee, Joint Education Oversight Committee, the Joint Workers Compensation Committee and the Select Committee on Children and Youth.

Montgomery, a graduate of Hiwassee Junior College and the University of Tennessee, is retired from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where he was Operations Manager for UT-Battelle for 27 years. He has also served on the Sevier County Board of Education and other local boards. He was recognized in 2012 with the Gordon Fee Leadership in Education Award, presented by the Tennessee Business Roundtable. The Tennessee Hospitality Association named him Legislator of the Year in 2010, and the Tennessee County Officials Association named him Legislator of the Year in 2002.

Patsy Bruce

Patsy Bruce, a native of Nashville, was appointed to the state Parole Board on March 26, 2004. Before that, she operated a number of entertainment and event management and marketing companies, including Patsy Bruce Productions, Inc., a film and television production company, and Events Unlimited, an award-winning event management company. In addition to her business endeavors, she is heavily involved in neighborhood advocacy work, and organized the West Nashville Presidents Council, a Nashville consortium of neighborhood presidents. Ms. Bruce was reappointed to the Board for a second term in 2010.

Parole Board Members serve staggered six-year terms, and may be reappointed.

Ronnie Cole

Ronnie Cole was appointed to the Parole Board on January 22, 2004, and was reappointed to a second term in 2010. He is a retired Vice President of the Ford Construction Company, a Dyersburg paving and bridge building contractor, where he worked for 34 years. He also served in the Tennessee House of Representatives in the 98th through 102nd General Assemblies. Mr. Cole earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Memphis State University. He is a past President of both the Tennessee Road Builders Association and the Contractor's Division of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association. He is also a former member of the Tennessee Board for Licensing Contractors.

Tim Gobble

Tim Gobble was appointed to the Board of Parole by Governor Bill Haslam in July of 2013. He started his career as a police officer in Cleveland, Tennessee, in 1988. In 1989, he joined the United States Secret Service, where he worked as a special agent and supervisor from 1989-2004. His work with that organization took him to cities including Nashville, Houston, Washington, D.C. and Chattanooga. From 2004-2006, he served as director of the Cleveland/Bradley County Emergency Management Agency. He was elected sheriff of Bradley County in 2006, and served in that post until 2010. He was Deputy Chief of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office from 2010-2011; then served as City Manager of East Ridge, Tennessee from April 2011 until February of 2013. He rejoined the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office as Interim Deputy Chief in February of 2013, and served in that capacity until his appointment to the Board of Parole. Gobble earned a bachelor's degree in Government and Public Administration from David Lipscomb College (now Lipscomb University) in 1986.

Joe Hill

Union City's Joe Hill was appointed to the Parole Board in April of 2008. He is a native of Henry County, Tennessee. Mr. Hill is a 1964 graduate of Henry High School and earned his bachelor's degree from Bethel University in McKenzie in 1968. He served four years as Project Director of the Northwest Tennessee Development District. He was twice elected to the Henry County Commission. In 1973, Mr. Hill joined the staff of the late U.S. Representative Ed Jones as Field Assistant, and later served as District Director until Jones' retirement. In 1989, Mr. Hill joined the staff of newly-elected Congressman John Tanner as District Director, where he served for almost two decades. He is an avid outdoorsman, a member of the Free and Accepted Masons, the Goodwill Shrine Club, the Elks Club, the Tennessee Wildlife Federation and the United Methodist Church.

Lisa Jones

Lisa Jones was appointed to the state Parole Board in March 2008. An educator, her previous professional experience includes 12 years of teaching at Savannah High School. She also taught for two years at Jackson State University's Savannah campus and served a term as a member of the Unemployment Security Board of Review. Ms. Jones is a graduate of the University of North Alabama, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in education.

3,030

BOP's Victim Services Division processed more than 3,000 pieces of victim correspondence in FY 12-13.

The Victim Services Division is committed to assisting crime victims in Tennessee and is dedicated to helping them navigate, understand and participate in the parole hearings process. Becoming a victim of crime thrusts a person into an abrupt and chaotic atmosphere for which he or she is unprepared. Victims may experience intense fear, helplessness or horror, and can even develop post-traumatic stress disorder. Efforts are made to ensure the voices of victims and survivors of crime are heard, valued and included in a collective effort to hold offenders accountable, prevent future harm and enhance community safety.

The primary goals of BOP'S Victim Services Division are:

- To lessen victim concerns by providing direct and indirect assistance, education and support throughout the parole process;
- To fulfill the laws that protect victims' rights and;
- To address immediate public safety concerns.

Parole hearings are held in prisons and county jails throughout the state, and it is not uncommon for an inmate to be housed in a prison some distance from the county where the crime occurred. Victims may be called upon to testify at parole hearings, as detailed in TCA 40-35-501. If they are, video-conferencing equipment is accessible at seven parole offices across the state.



Among the Victim Services Provided by BOP in FY 2012-13:



- A total of 2,250 hearings involving crime victims were held in the state via video conferencing.
- A total of 1,608 victims received services from BOP via a telephone call.
- A total of 413 victims attended parole hearings at a site with video conferencing equipment or attended a hearing at a county jail with support from BOP's Victim Services Director or a TDOC Victim Coordinator.

In the past five years, the Board of Parole has planted 47 trees statewide during National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week

In 2013, for the fifth consecutive year, the Tennessee Board of Parole observed National Crime Victims' Rights Week with a series of tree plantings in cities across the state. The trees honor victims of crime for their strength and resiliency. This year, the Board added the Department of Correction as a partner in these events.

Victim advocates in local communities were honored at each event for their work with victims of crime. The statewide honoree for 2013 is Dave Brown, chief meteorologist at WMC-TV in Memphis. In 1997, he lost three family members to a traffic crash involving a drunken driver. Since then, he has presented hundreds of programs to encourage sober driving. Brown's work is indicative of the efforts of crime victim advocates honored this year and in past years.



Above: Planting the tree at Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park in Nashville: Davidson County honorees Pat Postiglione and Diane Sprow Lance, statewide honoree Dave Brown, former Board Chairman Charles Traugher and TDOC Commissioner Derrick Schofield.



Tennessee Season to Remember

Left: Former First Lady Andrea Conte, state Senator Charlotte Burks, First Lady Crissy Haslam and Gov. Bill Haslam await the start of the 2012 Season to Remember program.

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and First Lady Crissy Haslam hosted the 10th annual *Tennessee Season to Remember* event on December 6, 2012 to honor victims of homicide. Approximately 300 families from across Tennessee came to Nashville to place ornaments on memorial wreaths in honor of their loved ones. The event was organized by the Tennessee Board of Parole in cooperation with other state public safety agencies.



Above: Victim families at one of the memorial wreaths at the conclusion of the event.

43,000

BOP's Board Operations Division

inventoried over 43,000 files, with a paper reduction of over 19,000 files.

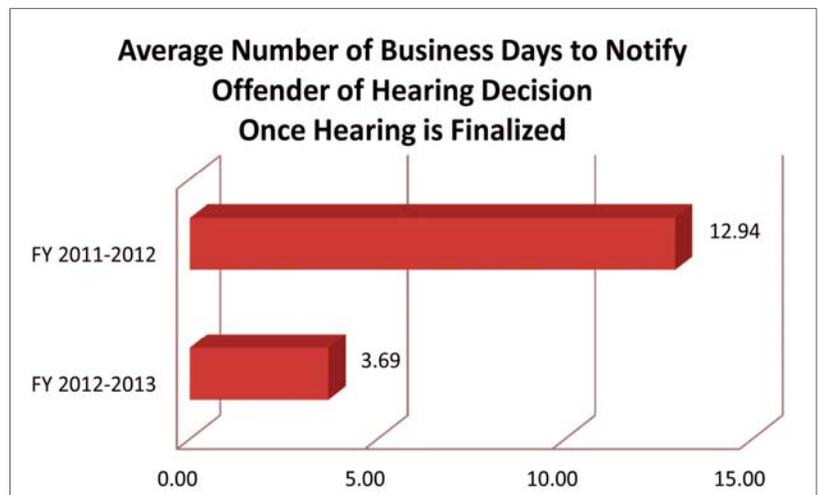
The Board Operations Division is at the heart of the agency's endeavor to function more efficiently with the conversion from paper files to electronic files. Much time has been spent in the design, development and testing of the paperless parole hearing system. Electronic files will eliminate the expense of shipping files for the parole hearing process. The division has many other important responsibilities as well, including:

- Scheduling hearings for offenders who have been certified eligible for parole consideration;
- Creating, maintaining and tracking offender parole files;
- Preparing cases for parole hearings;
- Sending notifications of parole hearings and decisions as required by statute;
- Issuing release certificates;
- Requesting, tracking and receiving psychological evaluations of offenders and
- Receiving executive clemency applications, providing them to the Board for review and forwarding the recommendations to the Governor for consideration.

Several units within the Board Operations Division perform jobs that support the Board's work.

Dockets:

The Docket Unit prepares cases for parole hearings after the Department of Correction certifies offenders eligible for parole consideration. During FY 2012-13, 15,973 parole hearings were scheduled by the docket staff. The unit is also responsible for sending notifications of parole hearings, decisions and release to supervision notices as specified by statute. Notifications are sent to victims, interested parties and officials. Specific reports ordered by the Board or required by law are requested, tracked and placed in the offender's file for review at the parole hearing.



In the past year, the Board Operations Division has converted 100% of hearing decision notifications to offenders and interested parties to automatic notification. These notifications are generated within 24 hours of the Board's final decision. Time is saved by using email instead of postal mail for these notifications, as shown in the chart above.

15,973

In the past year, the Board Operations Division has prepared more than 15,900 cases for parole hearings.

File Room:

Staff members in the File Room are responsible for creating, maintaining and tracking parole files used by the Board in the parole hearing process. In the 2012-13 fiscal year, the division has implemented a File Tracking System that allows all agency staff to identify the location of files (i.e., those in the shipping process, stored in the file room or checked out by an individual staff person). The staff received 1,312 files from the TDOC Warrant Division, and is now responsible for preparing and shipping files for revocation hearings. The Board maintains approximately 32,133 paper files. In the last year, Board Operations completed a file room inventory with a total of 10,495 expiration files scanned to an electronic archive. Another 8,810 expired files were pulled for archive.

This unit is also responsible for placing audio hearings into the electronic file. Staff members also fulfill public and legal requests for copies of files and audio recordings of parole hearings. Video recordings are stored in the same manner.

Certificates:

Release Certificates are issued when the Board grants parole to an offender. Upon the approval of release plans, the certificate section notifies interested parties and officials as directed by statute prior to issuing the certificate. During Fiscal Year 2012-13, 5,362 parole certificates were issued.

Executive Clemency:

Executive Clemency includes commutation, pardon and exoneration, which only the Governor has the power to grant. The Board of Parole reviews applications for the Governor. When the Board conducts an executive clemency hearing, a summary of the hearing and a non-binding recommendation are submitted to the Governor.

\$7,173,546

**BOP operated in Fiscal Year
2012-13 on a budget of just
over \$7,173,000.**

The Board of Parole is conscious of the value of taxpayer dollars, and works diligently to use the taxpayers' money wisely. The agency's Budget Division oversees and maintains the budget.

BOP Budget, Fiscal Year 2012-13

Salaries	\$3,681,418
Longevity	131,200
Benefits	1,528,749
Personnel Services & Benefits Total:	<u>5,341,367</u>
Travel	\$106,162
Printing	573
Communications	48,363
Maintenance	1,311
Professional Services	77,122
Supplies	22,218
Rentals & Leases (Equipment)	11,897
Awards	787
Training	34,619
Computers & Related Items	46,772
Intergovernmental Services	979,003
Other Expenditures Total	<u>1,328,827</u>
Total Personnel & Expenses:	<u>6,670,194</u>
State Appropriations	\$7,255,900
Current Services Revenue	746
Interdepartmental Services	17,100
Total Revenues	<u>7,273,746</u>
Required Reversion FY 12-13	<u>100,000</u>
Total Revenue Less Reversion	<u>7,173,746</u>

Grant:

In FY 2012-13, BOP applied for and received a grant from the Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) in the amount of \$6,000, to include a 25% funds match. The funds were used to offset costs for a Hearing Officers training conference, which was held in conjunction with Board Member training. Conference topics included basic parole hearing requirements, a report on the development of the paperless parole system, and legal issues and updates. Training sessions were held jointly and separately with the Board and the Parole Hearings Division. Staff from the Tennessee Department of Correction also made a presentation on offender programming during the conference.

Nine other divisions and offices provide support services for the agency.

Fiscal Services: The work of the Fiscal Services Division is governed by outside sources, as well as the policies and procedures of BOP. Compliance with rules of the Department of Finance and Administration, the Comptroller of the Treasury and the Department of General Services is critical. Governmental accounting standards must also be considered in many of Fiscal Services' operations. The responsibilities of the Fiscal Services Division include general accounting (including payables), purchasing, contract management, leasing and asset management.

Human Resources: This division is responsible for overseeing compliance with Department of Human Resources' policies and procedures, attendance and leave rules, Affirmative Action guidelines, performance management processes, Department of Finance and Administration payroll policies and procedures, Insurance Administration rules and other programs mandated by federal law. It administers, monitors and processes employee programs including the sick leave bank, donated leave, FMLA, workers compensation, the Employee Assistance Program and retirement. The Human Resources Division is also responsible for employee relations, conducting job analysis studies, evaluating position classification and compensation, coordinating disciplinary actions, processing grievance actions and, in conjunction with the Legal Division, responding to EEOC and human rights issues.

Information Systems: The information technology strategy for the Board of Parole is to increase the effective use of technology in a cost-effective manner by providing the necessary applications, infrastructure, office automation tools, systems and technical support to meet the agency's business goals, consistent with the statewide information technology strategy.

Legal: The General Counsel's duties include providing legal support to the Board to revise policies, procedures and regulations to ensure they are consistent with court decisions, statutes and state rules; reviewing parole hearing decisions for legal sufficiency and working with the Office of the Attorney General for defense of the Board in litigation. The General Counsel provides real-time assistance to hearing officials as legal issues arise in hearings and advises them on compliance with court orders regarding inmate hearings. The General Counsel assists in training hearing officials in the conduct of parole hearings and provides legal updates as necessary. Duties also include review of all proposed legislation and preparation of fiscal notes, and responding on the Board's behalf to communications from inmates, victims, victims' advocates, attorneys, district attorneys, legislators and other stakeholders.

Research, Policy and Planning: This division provides information and data analysis to support the Board of Parole. RPP ensures accurate and timely data is available to Board Members, Hearing Officers and senior staff in order to promote data-driven decision making and the Board's strategic planning process. RPP responds to requests for information from stakeholders outside of BOP, including the state Attorney General's office, legislators, the media and the general public. In addition, RPP is responsible for policy development, monitoring current criminal justice trends, form development and maintenance, conducting any research requested by the Board and reviewing outside research proposals.

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Nine other divisions and offices provide support services for the agency.

Training: The Board of Parole provides each employee with training that supports and improves job performance. It is the responsibility of the Training Division and management to develop and implement training that will ensure compliance with agency policies and allow employees to gain knowledge and techniques to effectively perform their assigned job tasks. Training is used to promote learning opportunities in a diverse work environment. Training is provided in person, through Outlook Web Application, DVD Webinars and through videoconferencing.

Communications Office: The Communications Office serves as the agency's primary media contact. Staff of this office respond to media requests and issue positive communications about agency work through traditional media, as well as the Board's social media sites. Communications Office staff also work to develop newsletters, presentations and reports, plan and develop special events and support materials, process public records requests and respond to consumer inquiries through the agency's webmail account.

Internal Auditor: BOP's Internal Auditor prepares an annual internal audit plan/schedule, performs audits and reviews of agency operations to determine compliance with statute, state guidelines and Board policy; prepares and issues written reports and performs follow-up to determine whether any recommended corrective action has been implemented.

Legislative Liaison: Staff of this office attend legislative meetings, respond to government and constituent requests, monitor bills that may affect the agency's operations and advise the General Counsel of any relevant matters.



Tennessee Board of Parole. Authorization number 324009. 200 copies. September 2013. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$2.61 per copy.