



Annual Report — 2013-14

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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
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October 1, 2014

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 2013-14.

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 17,179 parole hearings in FY 2013-14. In addition, the Board reviews all clemency requests and submits non-binding recommendations to the Governor for his consideration. The Board of Parole 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 has also begun implementation of a paperless parole file system that will end the need to ship paper files between offices. Paperless parole is also reducing the time it takes to finalize parole decisions.

The Board of Parole had 83 staff positions in FY 2013-14 with a budget of \$7,328,325. 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,

Richard Montgomery, Chairman

Facts About the Parole Board

The Tennessee Board of Parole 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 Hearings Officers, Board Operations Division, Victim Services Division, a General Counsel, a Communications Director and a Legislative Liaison. 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.htm>

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?

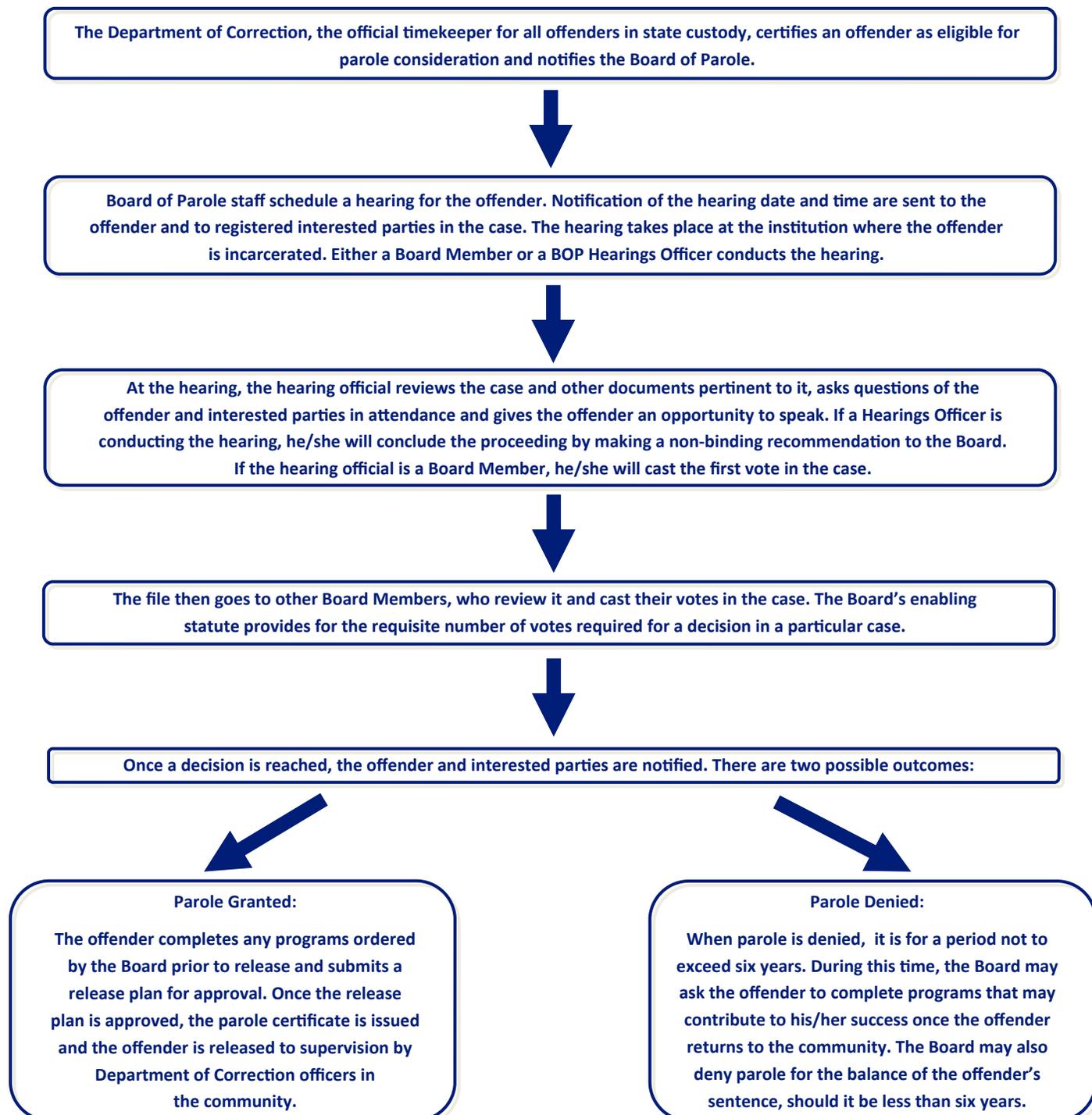
Probation is granted by the courts, normally in lieu of jail or prison time. The court of record may revoke the probation of any offender who does not comply with the rules of supervision. **The Board of Parole has no role in probation cases.** However, if an offender violates probation conditions, the 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 upon statute that dictates what percentage of the sentence must be served before the offender is eligible for parole. The chart below details Tennessee's parole process.



BOP Accomplishments

FY 2013-14 was a year that included several notable accomplishments by the Board of Parole.

During Fiscal Year 2013-14, the Board of Parole:

- Conducted the first Board level hearings in the paperless parole process.
- Decreased to one day the time it takes to send notifications to offenders once a parole decision is reached.
- Planned the 11th annual *Tennessee Season to Remember* event honoring homicide victims, in cooperation with other state criminal justice agencies.



First Board-Level paperless parole hearing — January, 2014



Tennessee Season to Remember — December, 2013

- Honored 15 members of the BOP staff with awards for reaching milestones in state service. Collectively, these staff members have given 285 years in service to the People of Tennessee.
- Continued to increase the use of video conferencing and webcams 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 six years, BOP has planted almost five dozen trees in communities statewide. Each tree honors the strength and resiliency of victims of crime.



National Crime Victims' Rights Week — April, 2014

Significant Events

A number of significant events marked the year and showed the professionalism and caring of staff.



Faulcon



Gregson



Gobble

New Board Members

Gary Faulcon of Nashville, Gay Gregson of Jackson and Tim Gobble of Cleveland were appointed to the Board of Parole by Governor Haslam.

Staff Accomplishments

Information Systems Manager Doug Willis was accepted into the Tennessee Government Management Institute, a high-level training program for middle managers. Willis was also named to the Board of the state's Information Technology Management Association. Victim Services Director Tina Fox was honored with the *Champion of Victims Award* during the annual *Remember Me* ceremony in Jackson. Fox was also named to the Tennessee Association to End Domestic and Sexual Violence's Coordinating Council. Parole Hearings Director Beth Williams was elected Secretary of the Tennessee Correctional Association.



Willis



Fox



Williams

Purple with a Purpose Day

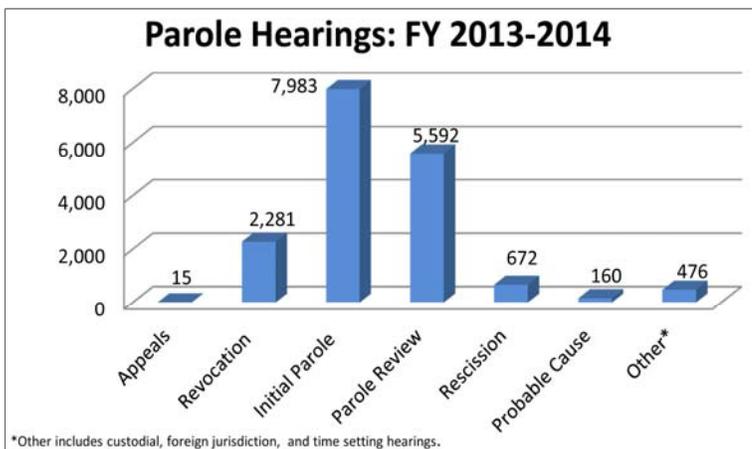
Many staff at BOP's Central Office wore purple on October 9, 2013 to show their support for the battle against domestic violence.



17,179

The Board of Parole conducted 17,179 hearings in FY 2013-14.

Board Members and Parole Hearings Officers conduct parole hearings in Tennessee. Board Members hear the most serious cases, such as those involving loss of life, while Hearings Officers conduct hearings for other offenses and make non-binding recommendations to the Board. During the past fiscal year, officers conducted 16,298 hearings. Board Members conducted 881 hearings. However, the Board Members must also review each file and cast votes to reach a final decision in every case.



The Hearings Officers function as an extension of the Board in the parole hearing process. In accordance with TCA 40-28-105(d)(2), the officers are appointed by the Chair of the Board of Parole to conduct parole hearings. Hearings take place in local jails, detention facilities and in Tennessee Department of Correction institutions within the state for all eligible offenders who come under the purview of the Board.

Offenders, public officials and interested parties receive advance notification of the date, time and location of the parole hearing. Hearings are open to

the public, subject to security restrictions at the facility or institution. Interested parties in support or opposition of the offender who are unable to attend may submit written statements in advance. These documents are included in the offender's file.

To reach a parole hearing decision, essential information is reviewed. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Testimony of interested parties who are in support or opposition
- Recommendations and statements from institutional staff, family members and members of the community in support or opposition
- Proposed release plan and information provided by the offender or by institutional staff
- Social and criminal history; prior supervision history in the criminal justice system
- Circumstances of the current offense(s)
- Institutional record and program participation
- Evidence and testimony pertaining to parole revocation
- Other information deemed relevant to the hearing

Several advisory instruments are used in the hearing process. The Risk Needs and Guidelines Assessment instrument is one means of assessing the risk level of offenders being considered for release. The LS/CMI (Level of Service/Case Management Inventory) is another. Other advisory instruments are the Grant Prediction Scale and Guidelines and Revocation Guidelines.

151,068

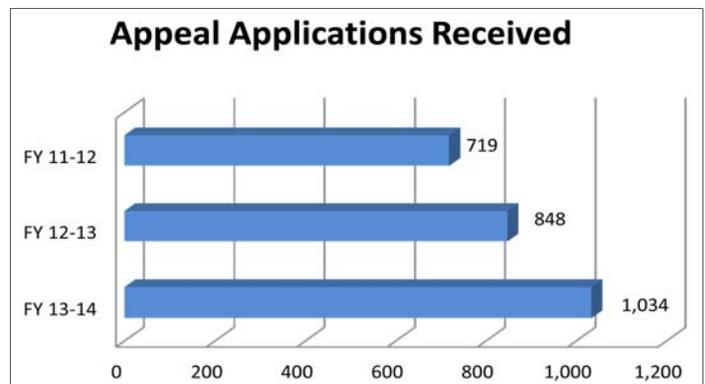
In FY 2013-14, Parole Hearings staff traveled approximately 151,068 miles to conduct hearings at prisons and local jails.



At right is a photo of the Board's Parole Hearings Officers Division taken at the group's annual training in the spring of 2014.

Board Members review all non-binding recommendations made by the Hearings Officers and may adopt, modify or reject the recommendation. Pursuant to statute, three concurring votes by Board Members constitute a final parole decision for some offense convictions. Four concurring votes are required for the most violent offense convictions. Two concurring votes are required to revoke/rescind parole.

The Parole Hearings Division processes all appeal applications for the Board. Every appeal application filed is reviewed, and a determination is made as to whether the appeal meets the criteria for filing or whether a new hearing will be granted, according to statute. An increase was seen again this year in appeal requests as shown in chart at right.



Accomplishments

- Training for 100% of division staff was conducted on the new paperless parole process. All grant and pre-parole rescission hearings have been converted to this format. This change has resulted in a cost savings to the agency and the state due to reduced shipping costs.
- BOP has also increased the use of webcams in conducting parole hearings, to reduce staff travel time and associated expenses. Staff traveled more than 151,068 miles to conduct hearings in FY 2013-14.
- The division coordinated with the agency's Information Systems Division to explore and improve connectivity issues with county jails. As these issues are resolved, more hearings can be conducted by webcam.
- All division staff met annual training requirements.

7

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

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 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, the Joint Lottery Scholarship Committee, the Joint Education Oversight Committee, the Joint Workers Compensation Committee and the Select Committee on Children and Youth.



The Board, 2014. First row: Gary Faulcon, Richard Montgomery and Patsy Bruce. Second row: Tim Gobble, Ronnie Cole and Joe Hill. Not pictured: Gay Gregson.

Montgomery, a graduate of Hiwassee Junior College and the University of Tennessee, is retired from 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.

Ronnie Cole

Ronnie Cole was appointed to the Parole Board on January 22, 2004, and reappointed to a second term in 2010. He is a retired Vice President of Ford Construction Company, a Dyersburg paving and bridge building firm, 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 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.

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

Gary Faulcon

Gary M. Faulcon, a native of Tennessee, was appointed to the Board of Parole in October of 2013 after serving on the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department for 25 years. As a member of MNPDP, he was assigned to numerous divisions, including Background and Recruitment, Criminal Investigations Division, Vice Division, and the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (S.W.A.T). Immediately prior to his appointment, Faulcon was Metro's Bomb Squad Commander. Mr. Faulcon received a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Tennessee State University and a Master's Degree in Public Service Management from Cumberland University.

Tim Gobble

Tim Gobble was appointed to the Board of Parole in July of 2013. He started his career as a police officer in Cleveland, Tennessee, in 1988. In 1989, he joined the U. S. Secret Service as a special agent and supervisor, serving in Nashville, Houston, Washington, D.C. and Chattanooga. In 2004, he became director of the Cleveland/Bradley County Emergency Management Agency. He was elected sheriff of Bradley County in 2006, and served until 2010. He was Deputy Chief of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office from 2010-2011; then worked as City Manager of East Ridge 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 there until his appointment to BOP. Gobble earned a bachelor's degree in Government and Public Administration from David Lipscomb College (now Lipscomb University) in 1986.

Gay Gregson

A career educator, Gay Gregson spent more than 22 years in the field of Special Education. She worked with school aged children with moderate to severe cognitive/physical challenges, provided speech therapy and communication to deaf children and traveled the state as a Career Ladder Evaluator for the Department of Education. Gregson's volunteer work has been recognized with numerous awards. She is a past recipient of the Sterling Award, which honors the 20 most influential women in west Tennessee outside Shelby County. She was recognized with a Jefferson Award for community service, and has served on the boards of several non-profit organizations. Gregson earned a Bachelor of Science in Special Education from Memphis State University (now the University of Memphis) and a Bachelor of Science in Speech Therapy at the University of Tennessee Speech and Hearing Center in Memphis. She also earned a Master of Science in Educational Administration and Supervision from Memphis State.

Joe Hill

Union City's Joe Hill was appointed to the Parole Board in April of 2008. He is a native of Henry County and a 1964 graduate of Henry High School. Hill 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, and was twice elected to the Henry County Commission. In 1973, he 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, and served 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.

2,293

Victim Services staff coordinated 2,293 parole hearings held in the state via video conferencing in FY 2013-14.

BOP's Victim Services Division is proud to assist crime victims in Tennessee, and is dedicated to helping crime victims navigate, understand and participate in the parole hearing 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.

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.
- To address immediate public safety concerns.

Efforts are made to ensure the voices of victims and survivors of crime are heard, valued and included in a collective effort to prevent future harm and enhance community safety.



Parole hearings are held in various TDOC prisons, CCA facilities 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. To help victims take part in the parole process, video-conferencing equipment, which has been available since 2005, is accessible at seven probation/parole offices across the state, to ease the travel burden on victims.

Victims and their families have a right to voice opposition to an offender's release. They may participate in the parole hearing by attending in person (or video-conferencing), or by submitting a victim impact statement, letter of opposition, confidential testimony or videotaped testimony.

Services Provided to Crime Victims by BOP in FY 2013-14:



- Victim Services staff assisted victims by coordinating a total of 2,293 hearings held in the state via video conferencing.
- The Victim Services Director and/or district Victim Coordinators attended parole hearings with a total of 483 victims.
- Victim Services staff received and processed a total of 2,844 pieces of correspondence.
- Victim Services staff received 1,648 victim-related telephone calls.

Since 2008, the Board of Parole has planted 56 trees statewide during National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Tennessee Season to Remember

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and House Speaker Beth Harwell hosted the 11th annual *Tennessee Season to Remember* event on December 5, to honor victims of homicide. They joined approximately 350 families from across the state who placed ornaments on memorial wreaths in honor of their loved ones. The state's District Attorneys General Conference, the Chiefs of Police and the Sheriffs Association also placed ornaments on the wreaths in honor of fallen officers, and the victims and survivors they assisted throughout the year.

Tennessee Season to Remember was organized by the Board of Parole in cooperation with the Secretary of State's Office, the Department of Correction, the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Finance and Administration's Office of Criminal Justice Programs, the Office of Attorney General and Reporter, the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference and the Tennessee Rehabilitative Initiative in Correction (TRICOR).



Above: TBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Margie Quin (center) was 2014's statewide Voice for Victims honoree. Pictured with her are TDOC Victim Services Director Shenette Cheatham, TDOC Commissioner Derrick Schofield, TBI Director Mark Gwyn, Quin, BOP Victim Services Director Tina Fox, TRICOR Chief Executive Officer Patricia Weiland and BOP Chairman Richard Montgomery.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week

For the sixth consecutive year, the Tennessee Board of Parole observed National Crime Victims' Rights Week (April 7th – 11th, 2014) with a series of eight tree plantings in cities across the state. The events were attended by more than 700 persons. The Board partnered with TDOC and TRICOR for these events. Victim advocates in local communities were honored at each ceremony for their work with victims of crime.

The statewide Voice for Victims honoree for 2014 is Margie Quin, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge. Quin's work on behalf of crime victims includes oversight of the AMBER Alert program, Gang Intelligence, the Top Ten Most Wanted program and the Missing Children's Clearinghouse. She currently oversees the Tennessee Sex Offender Registry and TBI's work to combat Human Sex Trafficking.

148,000

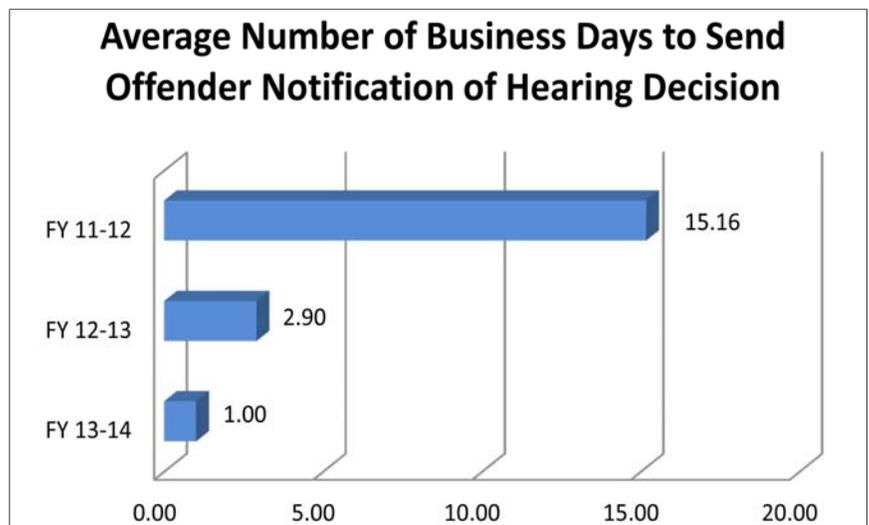
BOP's Board Operations Division has scanned more than 148,000 documents for paperless parole hearings.

The Board of Parole is transitioning to electronic case files, and the Board Operations Division plays a vital role in this process. This division has the sole responsibility of the preparation, scanning and verification of historical paper files for paperless parole hearings to be conducted. A partial roll out of the system began in February of 2014 and continued by institution until the full roll out of specific paperless hearing types was completed in April. The Paperless Project design, development, testing and implementation continue into the next fiscal year, and Board Operations continues to support the work of the agency as it also completes its many other responsibilities. The development of the paperless parole hearing process is ongoing, and the detailed preparation, scanning and verification of hard copy files is a process that has become part of the division's regular duties. The task of having to handle each piece of paper in every hard copy file to get documents into the paperless system ensures they are entered into the proper category and that all pages appear in a readable format.

Major Responsibilities of the Board Operations Division:

- An average of 650 to 700 historical files per month are prepared, scanned and verified by 16 staff members of Board Operations, who perform these new tasks in addition to their regular job responsibilities.
- Board Operations staff schedule parole hearings for offenders certified eligible by TDOC.
- Board Operations staff review and verify that all required case information is current for all parole grant hearings.
- Board Operations staff identify and complete post parole hearing requests which, in FY 2013-14, consisted of 827 Facts of Offense reports in order to provide additional information to assist the Board in decision making.
- Board Operations staff ensure hearing, decision and release notifications are made to offenders, interested parties and public officials per state statute.
- Board Operations staff request, track and verify receipt of psychological evaluations of offenders. In FY 2013-14, 53 evaluations were requested and received.

NOTE: This chart reflects only the time it takes the Board of Parole to send the notification to the offender at the institution where he or she resides. It does not address delivery time to offenders by staff at local jails or correctional facilities.



4,968

**Board Operations staff have issued
4,968 release certificates in FY 2013-14
based on the Board's parole decisions.**



Above is a photo of the Board Operations staff at its annual training, held in May of 2014.

- Board Operations staff fulfill the public requests for copies of BOP hearing records (both paper file and audio of hearings).
- Time in reaching parole decisions has decreased because fewer files are being shipped. Cases in the paperless system finalize sooner, because Board Members do not have to wait for files to arrive in order to review cases.
- A total of 4,968 release certificates have been issued based on the Board's final decision to grant parole. Release notifications are made to the registered interested parties, public officials and the legislature.
- Paper and electronic files, as well as Offense Reports, are tracked by the File Room staff. Revocation files are shipped for paper hearings, and expired paper files totaling about 3,000 per year are continuously pulled, prepared and scanned.
- In processing 188 Executive Clemency applications received during FY 2013-14, there were nine requesting Exoneration, 107 requesting Commutations and 50 requesting Pardons. Of those, 157 met the initial screening requirements.
- Board Operations staff participated in a day-long professional development seminar that included presentations on sentence management/parole eligibility, parole hearings preparation, stress management and the agency's paperless parole process. It was an extremely good use of staff time, and another training day is being planned for 2015.

\$7,328,325

**BOP operated in Fiscal Year
2013-14 on a budget of just
over \$7,328,325.**

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 2013-14

Salaries & Benefits

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Salaries | 4,096,818 |
| Overtime | 115 |
| Benefits | <u>1,642,193</u> |
| Personnel Services & Benefits Total: | <u><u>\$5,739,126</u></u> |

Other Expenditures

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Travel | \$117,717 |
| Printing | 282 |
| Other Utilities & Fuel | 0 |
| Communications | 40,042 |
| Maintenance | 0 |
| Professional Services | 56,242 |
| Supplies | 26,896 |
| Rentals & Leases (Equipment) | 10,146 |
| Awards | 93 |
| Grants & Subsidies | 0 |
| Equipment Purchases | 0 |
| Training | 3,774 |
| Computers & Related Items | 73,023 |
| Intergovernmental Services | <u>1,028,468</u> |
| Other Expenditures Total | <u>\$1,356,683</u> |
| Total Personnel & Expenses: | <u><u>\$7,095,809</u></u> |

Funding

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| State Appropriations | \$7,476,900 |
| Current Services Revenue | 1,425 |
| Interdepartmental Revenue | <u>0</u> |
| Total Funding: | <u><u>\$7,478,325</u></u> |
| Required Reversion FY 13-14 | 150,000 |
| Total Funding Less Reversion | \$7,328,325 |

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. This division is largely responsible for the creation and development of the paperless parole system.

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 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, Hearings 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 unit 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, DVDs, webinars, Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro and through videoconferencing.

Communications Office: The Communications Office serves as the agency's primary media contact. Staff of this office respond to media requests for information 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.



**Safe Communities,
Fewer Victims,
Successful Reentry.**



Tennessee Board of Parole

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