

**COMMUNITY SUPPORTS: (Who will help me succeed?)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER THOUGHTS**

**Past employment experience?**

**Longest time without drugs or alcohol?**

**Longest time in the community without committing an offense?**

# Guide to Parole Applications:

*Planning for Success*

---

*Guide to Parole: Planning for Success*  
was produced in collaboration between:



**THE JOHN  
HOWARD  
SOCIETY OF  
THE LOWER  
MAINLAND**



**United Way**  
of the Lower Mainland



**Board of Parole  
for the Province  
of British Columbia**

*Guide to Parole Applications:  
Planning for Success* is designed as a  
general guide for inmates applying  
for provincial parole in B.C. It is not  
intended to give you legal advice on  
particular problems. Instead it is  
designed to provide you with infor-  
mation about parole and to help you  
prepare a good plan that will assist  
you under community supervision.

If you have more questions about  
parole talk to your Case Manager or  
Conditional Release Coordinator.

The booklet reflects information from  
the Parole Board and from conversa-  
tions with the various stake-holders  
of parole: inmates, parolees, institu-  
tion staff, Parole Supervisors, Board  
members, John Howard Society staff,  
Elizabeth Fry Society staff and other  
community members.

**Acknowledgements:**

Research, writing and design:  
Paul Parker

Editor:  
Tracey Thompson, Chair, BCBP

Thanks to the Law Foundation of British  
Columbia for their generous support.

2008 - 3rd Edition

## RECOVERY / TREATMENT

Program Name/Type \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Location (if different from address) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Program \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed and can follow the house rules of the treatment or recovery centre

Letter of acceptance?  Yes  No Is the funding confirmed?  Yes  No

## EDUCATION

School \_\_\_\_\_

Program / Course \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Student No. \_\_\_\_\_ Is this plan confirmed?  Yes  No

Start Date / Length \_\_\_\_\_

How will I pay for this? \_\_\_\_\_

Use this space to start to fill in the details of your release plan as you confirm them. Later you can transfer this information to your parole application.

**RESIDENCE (Where can I live?)**

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Who lives in the house?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any children under 16 living there?  Yes  No

If yes, who/what age? \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYMENT (Where can I work?)**

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Work Location \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Hour per Day or Week \_\_\_\_\_ \$ / Hour \_\_\_\_\_

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

What is Parole? . . . . . 1

What is the NPB? . . . . . 2

Day Parole / EM . . . . . 3

Full Parole . . . . . 4

The Hearing . . . . . 5

Parole Decisions . . . . . 6

Thinking Ahead . . . . . 7

The Big Picture . . . . . 9

Making a Plan . . . . . 11

Choosing a Residence . . . . . 12

Treatment for Addictions . . . . . 13

Employment. . . . . 15

Education . . . . . 16

Are you ready for Parole? . . . . . 17

More questions about Parole? . . . 18

Confirming Your Plan . . . . . 19

**WHAT IS PAROLE?**

**Parole is an opportunity to serve the remainder of your sentence in the community under certain conditions and agreements.**

Being on parole does not mean having complete freedom. You must remember that parole is a privilege. You will be expected to live by certain conditions, set out by the National Parole Board (NPB) and your Parole Supervisor in the community.

**You must abide by these conditions all the way to your warrant expiry date.**

Just because you are eligible for parole does not mean you will get it. Eligibility for parole is based on: your community risk assessment, your institutional reports, your previous history in the community and the support network you have there, your criminal history and the impact your offences have had on victims and the community.

The most important information for the NPB is your parole plan. The plan consists of four main parts and the more you have confirmed the more likely it is that you will qualify for parole.

If you are interested in parole, you need to start thinking now about how you will spend your time in the community. Your success while on parole will be determined by how much time and thought you put into developing a solid parole plan for yourself.

**How can I prepare for a hearing?**

Think about how you will spend your time in the community while on parole. Take your time to put together a plan that addresses your specific needs. If your plan is weak the NPB may deny you parole and ask you to come back after you have added to your parole plan.

**What should I do if I can't follow a condition of parole?**

Call your Parole Supervisor to discuss the possibility of amending or changing conditions.

**What if my circumstances change when I am on parole?**

The NPB releases you on parole based on a specific plan that you submit. If your plan changes in any way, you must tell your Parole Supervisor right away. For minor changes, the NPB may make changes to your Parole Certificate. If your changes are more serious you will need to make a new plan for the Parole Supervisor to check out and the NPB to approve.

**What if I break a condition of my parole?**

Tell your Parole Supervisor right away, even if you think it is unimportant. The NPB will look more favourably on you if you own up to your mistakes, take responsibility instead of running and avoiding your problems. Your Parole Supervisor has access to resources, is experienced and knowledgeable, and does not want to see you fail. A good relationship that is founded on trust and openness will go a long way to helping you work through the mistakes and eventually helping you to succeed.

**What are the most common reasons for suspension of parole?**

Failing to go to treatment or use supports, missing appointments, changing your address without permission, not attending counselling, relapsing by using drugs or alcohol, breaching the contract you made with the NPB or getting new criminal charges while on parole.

**ARE YOU READY FOR PAROLE?**

Changing your lifestyle or a pattern of behaviour is going to be difficult and will take a lot of effort from you.

The NPB realizes change does not happen over night and you may run into difficulties. *How you handle difficulty or problems is important to determine whether you will stay in the community or return to jail.*

Taking responsibility for your decisions is the first step towards being successful while on parole:

**Be open and honest. If you don't understand something about parole be sure to ask.**

**Think about your mistakes and how you will do things differently.**

**Have a backup plan in case a part of your plan does not work.**

If you are on parole and something goes wrong, your parole may be suspended. The Board Member issuing the warrant can review the circumstances and withdraw the warrant within 14 days if you were doing well and this was a small slip.

If the warrant stays in place, you will be scheduled for a post-suspension hearing within 30 days from the day you were brought back to jail. During the post-suspension hearing you will be expected to explain what happened. The NPB will decide if you should go back to the community or stay in jail to complete your sentence.

**THE NATIONAL PAROLE BOARD (NPB)**

Board Members are persons from the community with knowledge and expertise in decision making. They have been selected for their leadership abilities, sensitivity, diversity of background and experience. The NPB is independent and does not answer to a correctional centre, the court system, the police or the Corrections Branch.

The NPB's role is to make an independent decision of whether you should be released into the community. You will be asked questions so the NPB can understand your level of risk for re-offending, not to retry you for your crime. The primary goal is that you have a fair and independent hearing based on all the facts.

Before deciding to release you on Parole, the NPB must be convinced of two things during the hearing:

**You will not be a risk to community safety by committing another crime or violating the conditions of your release.**

**Your release will help you become a law-abiding citizen.**

**DAY PAROLE**

You are eligible to be released on day parole at 1/6 of your sentence.

Day parole allows you gradual re-entry into the community to prepare for full parole. It is an opportunity to access treatment and programs not available in the institution.

Day parole is intended as a first step in your managed return to the community. However, day parole is not suitable for everybody. You should speak to your Case Manager to discuss whether this is the best option for you.

The granting of day parole does not mean full parole will automatically follow. You will have to apply for full parole when you are eligible and appear in front of the NPB again.

**Electronic Monitoring (EM)**

A requirement of day parole is 24-hour supervision. If you cannot find a place to live that can guarantee 24-hour supervision then EM is an option. To be considered for EM you must have a telephone line suitable for electronic monitoring. This means that the telephone must be a land line not a cell phone and must not have any services attached such as call forwarding, voice mail or an internet connection.

Electronic monitoring requires you to wear a wrist or ankle strap with an identification device at all times. It will set off an alarm if you are not in your house during your curfew.

**EDUCATION**

Do you need more education? Do you need to complete your grade 12? What about taking vocational training or upgrading other skills? How does education fit with your long or short term goals?

If you want to take courses while on parole, the NPB needs to know what courses you are going to take, where you will take them, how much they will cost, when do they start and end, and how you will get to and from the course.

When planning to go to school you should try to find out as much about the program as possible so you can decide whether or not it is for you. Also, ask yourself whether or not your education plans conflict with the treatment or employment plan you will submit to the NPB.

When confirming your education plans, ask yourself these questions:

**What do I have to do to get into the classes?**

**What are the start and end dates?**

**What time of day are the classes? Do they conflict with other treatment, work or curfews I will have?**

**Do I have a letter confirming that I am registered?**

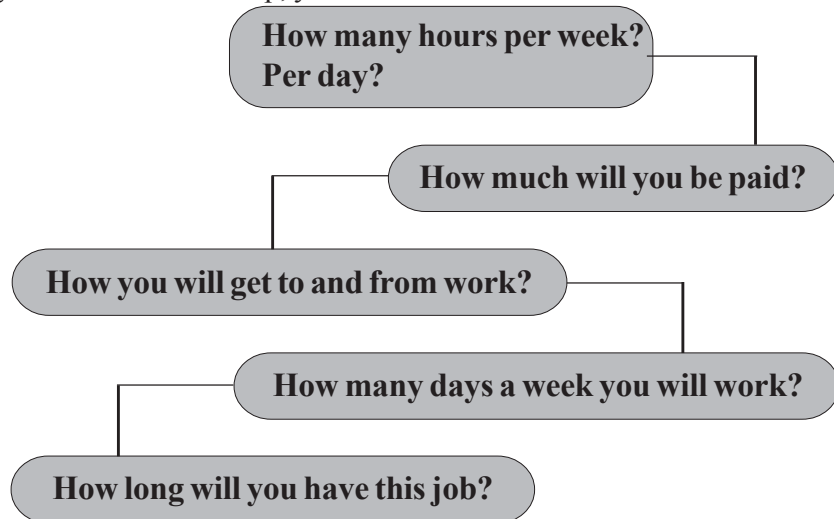
**How will I pay for the course?**

## EMPLOYMENT

If you are planning to work while released on parole, the NPB wants to know who you will work for, what work you will do, how many hours per week, how much you will be paid and how you will get to and from work. You must prove that your employment is confirmed and show how work will fit into your overall parole plan. The NPB will want to know what work skills you have, how long you have held a job in the past and what kind of work you have done.

If you are looking for a job, think about what you can do and what people or agencies can help you find work. Your Parole Supervisor can help you too.

If you have work lined up, you should be certain about:



Ask your potential employer to write a letter on business letterhead that confirms that you will be hired, the hours you will be working and that **he/she knows that you will be on parole**. *Be sure that you confirm your company's name, contact person and phone number before you submit your parole application.*

## FULL PAROLE

You are eligible to be released on full parole at 1/3 of your sentence.

If the NPB is satisfied that you have presented a plan that addresses the risk you pose to the community, then, the NPB may grant you full parole.

Release on full parole allows you to serve the remainder of your sentence in the community, under conditions set by the NPB that apply to your situation.

These conditions will apply until your warrant expiry date.

If you cannot abide by conditions in the community then parole may not be right for you.

***You should know that if you are granted parole, but later break the conditions of parole while in the community, you will lose your remission or "good time".***

### **Electronic Monitoring (EM) and full parole**

EM can be a condition of full parole. If EM is one of your conditions, it is reviewed every sixty days. The review will determine if EM should remain as a condition, be relaxed to allow more time out, or removed entirely. The NPB will consider your participation in programs, attendance to appointments and compliance with all of your conditions in its decision.

## THE HEARING

The Parole hearing will take place in the Correctional Centre. On the day of your hearing a Board member will review your file. If your offense resulted in the death of another individual, two board members will assess your case.

It is your statutory right to review your file at least 48 hours before your hearing. If you have not seen your file or you feel that some of the information is wrong or missing, you must advise the Conditional Release Coordinator.

You also have the right to have an assistant present at your hearing for advice and support. Your assistant will be allowed to address the Board members on your behalf. If you wish to have an assistant at your hearing, speak to your community parole officer.

If you are an Aboriginal offender or a non-Aboriginal offender committed to an Aboriginal way of life, you may request a hearing with an Aboriginal cultural advisor. Speak to your community parole officer if this is your wish.

At the hearing, be prepared to answer questions about why you commit offences:

**What you understand about your offending (addictions, triggers, crime cycles);**

**What you have done to address the factors that are associated with your offending;**

**How your release plan will manage your risk to reoffend.**

## Are you a Provincial offender applying for parole? Do you live outside Ontario and Quebec?

You should be aware of the following changes:

- The parole process is now handled by the NPB.
- You now have access to CSC halfway houses.
- Before: Offenders serving 90+ days could apply  
Now: Only offenders serving 6+ months can apply
- There is no automatic parole review.
- This means you *must* apply if you want parole.
- The NPB requires 16 weeks (4 months) to complete the assessment.
- This means you may not want to apply if your stat release date is 4 months or less.
- The NPB is not required to hold a hearing on your case if you are serving less than two years.

**ADDICTIONS TREATMENT**

Addictions are one of the reasons why people commit crime. *Is this an issue for you?* If it is, the NPB wants to know how your plan addresses the addiction issues that caused you to come to jail.

You can start to address your addictions while in jail by taking programs, such as the SAM course. The NPB wants to know about the relapse prevention plan you developed in SAM.

Talk to the Alcohol and Drug Counsellor in the institution to identify what would work best for you. Do you need: long or short term treatment, residential or outpatient setting, supportive recovery before or after treatment, ongoing counselling following treatment, support groups like AA/NA.

Try to get a letter confirming any treatment or counselling stating what is available for you through their agency.

**PAROLE DECISIONS**

After hearing from you, you and any other persons in the room will be asked to leave while the NPB makes a decision. The NPB will take as long as necessary to make a decision. Once the decision is made they will call you back into the room.

The NPB will read the reasons for the decision, focusing on two criteria:

**You will not present a risk to society by committing another crime and;**

**Your release will help you become a law-abiding citizen.**

You will receive a copy of the NPB's decision explaining why you were granted or denied parole. If granted parole, you will also receive a parole certificate with conditions that relate directly to your situation. You will be responsible to follow all of the conditions on your Parole Certificate and carry it with you at all times. It is the document that shows you are allowed to be in the community. If there are any conditions that you do not think you can agree to, you should discuss this with the NPB before the Certificate is signed and agreed to by you.

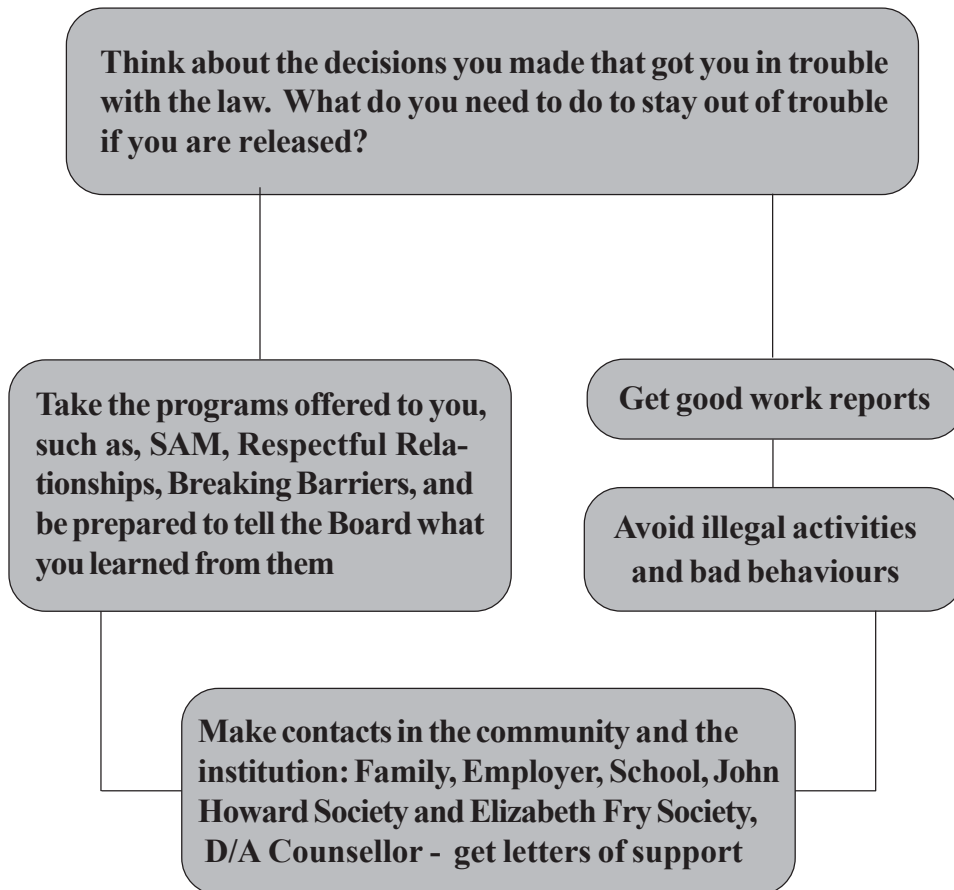
If the NPB denies your application for parole you can reapply after waiting 60 days. The NPB can choose to waive some of the 60 day waiting period and this means you can reapply for parole as soon as you improve your plan. However, there is no guarantee that you will get parole when you reapply.

If you disagree with the NPB's decision, you may appeal. Ask you Conditional Release Coordinator for more information.

**THINKING AHEAD**

You probably find it difficult to think about living in the community while you are in jail. But you need to consider how you will spend your time, what programs, courses and activities you will involve yourself in and how these programs can affect your success in the community.

Things that you can do to improve your chance for parole are:

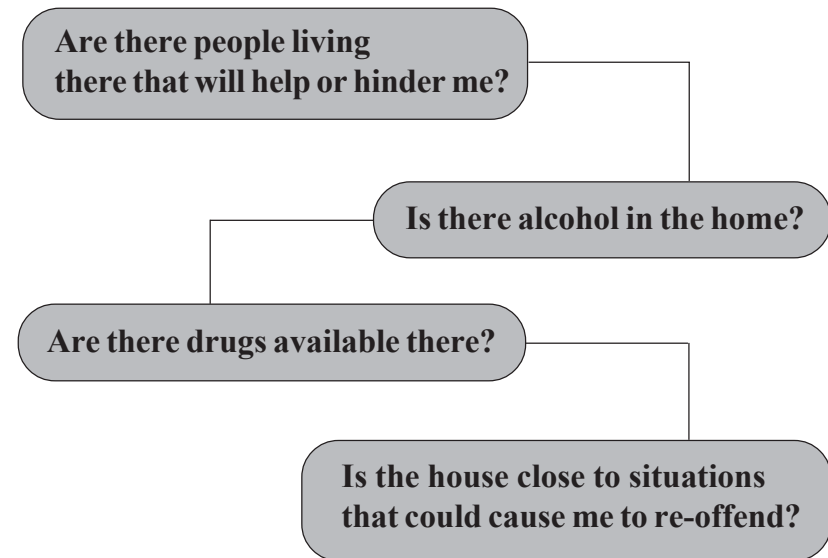


**CHOOSING A RESIDENCE**

Be specific about where you are going to live. Don't just say something like, *I am going to live with my family*. The NPB needs to know the street address and the names of everyone else who lives there.

Ask yourself: *If the NPB could see where I want to live, would they think it is safe and supportive?*

Ask yourself these questions about your residence plan:



**Try to get a letter from someone living at the residence stating: that you are welcome there, how long you can stay, what the house rules are and how much rent you are expected to pay.**

**MAKING A PLAN**

It is important for the NPB to know where you plan to live and what you plan to do with your time if released on parole.

The NPB must be convinced that you are living in a good place, without drugs or alcohol and with people who will help you follow your plan and parole conditions. This will help prevent situations that may result in your re-offending. The NPB will want to see you getting treatment for addictions, upgrading you education or working a stable job.

Start thinking about these things right away because it can take a long time to organize how you will spend your time. Take the time now to think about what you will be doing in the community. The more you plan, the greater chance that you will be successful while on parole.

**The plan you submit for parole will be checked by a Parole Supervisor in the community.**

You must be honest and realistic about everything you put in your plan because it will affect your parole chances. **Re-check all addresses and phone numbers to make sure they are complete and correct.**

**You can use this checklist to keep track of the positive things that you are doing while in jail.**

Programs I am currently taking (check all that apply):

- Substance Abuse Management (SAM)
- Native Brotherhood
- Breaking Barriers
- Group meetings (AA, NA)
- Employment Preparation Program (EPP)
- Other programs \_\_\_\_\_
  
- I have made contacts in the community
- I am repairing relationships in the community
- I am thinking about why I am in jail and planning what I will do differently if I am released
- I am listing my responsibilities
- I am not blaming others for my situation
- I am avoiding institutional charges
- I am getting good reports from institutional staff
- I am actively developing a pre-release plan that will give me the best opportunity to succeed while I am on parole.
- I have planned for education and skill development post-release (Dogwood, First-Aid, WHMIS, etc.)

You should apply for parole at least six weeks before you are eligible.

Ask your Case Manager if you need help with your release plan. He or she can help explain the issues. After you develop a plan, your Conditional Release Coordinator will forward it to a Parole Supervisor in the community who will check on your residence, employment and treatment and write a report for the NPB.

The Parole Supervisor's report is called a *Community Assessment* or C.A. The C.A. becomes part of your file. The C.A. tells the NPB about your residence and other parts of your parole plan. It will explain your history with community supervision, available community supports, victim information and your risk assessment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CS # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

**1/6  
 Day  
 Parole  
 Eligibility**

**Remember!**  
 You must give up your good time in exchange for parole. The NPB does not give good time back if you fail to follow your parole conditions

**Earned remission or "good time"**



**Earliest  
 Warrant  
 Start Date**

**1/3  
 Full  
 Parole  
 Eligibility**

**2/3  
 Probable Discharge Date (PDD)  
 End of Sentence and  
 Release at this date if all  
 remission earned**

**Warrant  
 Expiry  
 Date**

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

If parole is not granted, the waiting period to re-apply is 60 days, unless waived by the NPB.