



Montana Board of Pardons and Parole

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Greg Gianforte, Governor

Annette Carter, Board Chair

Structured Release Guidelines

History:

The Board of Pardons and Parole (Board) serves all Montana citizens by administering a parole system that balances public safety, offender accountability and change, and protecting the interest of victims and communities.

In May 2017, Montana enacted Justice Reinvestment policies that provided a framework for the state to transition to a full-time, professional decision-making body (SB 64). This statute required the new board to fully adopt paroling best practices, including structured release decision-making guidelines. As a professional board we consider how our decision-making practices can be part of a strategy for enhancing public safety and the wise use of resources.

In August 2017, the Board adopted and placed into use guidelines to structure and guide parole decisions and release conditions. In part, the guidelines consider: an inmate's risk and needs as determined by the Department of Corrections validated risk-and-needs assessment, participation in risk-reducing programs and treatment, institutional behavior as reflected by disciplinary records, and the severity of the offense.

Since that time, both the Council of State Governments and the Board, have collected and analyzed the Structured Release Guideline data. The pilot data from 2017 demonstrated a 74% concordance rate in a review of 133 cases. The latest data from 2020 demonstrated a 70% concordance rate in a review of 85 cases.

Current Data:

The 2020 Guideline data is attached to this document and includes the Distribution of Guideline Scores as well as the Concordance data.

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM):

The Board has completed the ARM process for the creation and adoption of an Administrative Rule addressing parole guidelines. It can be found as 20.25.308 Parole Guidelines.