

**Sunset Advisory Commission
2022 Board and Commission Questionnaire**

The Sunset Advisory Commission reviews every State board and commission and takes testimony regarding whether each board or commission should continue to operate or be eliminated and whether the powers and duties of any board or commission should be revised. Each board and commission has the burden of justifying its continued operation.

Please answer the following questions about the specific board or commission under review. If asked to testify before the Sunset Advisory Commission, please plan to provide concise recommendations regarding the continued operation of the board or commission under review and any revisions to its powers, duties, or membership.

1. In general, how often does the board and commission meet? Provide specific information on how often the board or commission has met in the past two fiscal years. Provide information on where agendas and minutes of meetings can be found.

The Parole Board holds virtual hearings approximately 9 times per month. The Parole Board convened 113 times during FY21 and 105 times during FY22. Schedules for each hearing are emailed to the staff at the hearing site, Prisoners’ Rights Office, Vermont Restitution Unit and uploaded to the Parole Board website ([Vermont Parole Board | Agency of Human Services](#)). Results of the individual hearings may be obtained from the Parole Board Office.

The Parole Board also serves as the advisory board for pardons per 28 VSA § 453. On request of the governor, the board may make recommendations to him or her regarding such matters.

2. Provide the names of members of the board or commission, their term length and expiration, their appointing authority, and the amount of any per diem they receive.

Board Member Name	Seat Description	Term Length & Expiration	Appointing Authority	Per Diem
Dean George	Chair	3 years – Expires 2/28/2023	Governor	\$20,500 annually in lieu of per diem.
Patricia LaBier Boucher	Vice Chair	3 years – Expires 2/29/2024	Governor	\$100.00 per diem for each day of official duties together with reimbursement of reasonable expenses
Wayne Dengler	Member	3 years – Expires 2/28/2025	Governor	\$100.00 per diem for each day of official duties together with reimbursement of reasonable expenses
Richard Grassi	Member	3 years – Expires 2/28/2023	Governor	\$100.00 per diem for each day of official duties together with

				reimbursement of reasonable expenses
Tom Giffin	Member	3 years – Expires 2/28/2025	Governor	\$100.00 per diem for each day of official duties together with reimbursement of reasonable expenses
Linn Caroleo	Alternate	3 years – Expires 2/28/2025	Governor	\$100.00 per diem for each day of official duties together with reimbursement of reasonable expenses
Mary Stephens	Alternate	3 years – Expires 2/28/2024	Governor	\$100.00 per diem for each day of official duties together with reimbursement of reasonable expenses
Mary Jane Ainsworth	Director	4 years – Expires 2/29/2024	Governor after consultation with the board	Salary as determined secretary of human services, in consultation with parole board and department of human resources.

3. Provide an overview of the board or commission’s purpose.

The Parole Board is an independent entity that considers eligible offenders for parole and oversees compliance with conditions of parole by rendering just decisions by balancing victim needs, the risk to public safety, while promoting offender accountability success.

Additionally, the Parole Board conducts Parole Violation hearings ensuring that due process, and disposition of parole violations are properly and legally managed.

4. Is that purpose still needed? What would happen if the board or commission no longer fulfilled that purpose?

The purpose is needed. If the board no longer fulfilled this purpose, then:

- a. Eligible offenders would not be considered for parole;
- b. Parolees who have alleged to have violated the terms and conditions of their parole, they are afforded the opportunity to be represented by an attorney to assist with their hearing. Supervised individuals on Community Furlough Supervision are not afforded these same rights.
- c. Act 148, An Act Relating to Justice Reinvestment (2019-2020 session), expanded the use of parole to include implementing presumptive parole.

5. How well is the board or commission performing in executing that purpose? What evidence can you provide to substantiate that performance?

In 2021, 713 offenders appeared before the board for different types of hearings. 428 of those offenders were considered for parole and 286 of those were granted parole. The Board received 12 presumptive parole cases in addition to the above individuals considered for parole. Of these 12, the Board determined through their administrative review that 4 would be schedule for a parole hearing the next month. The board held 128 parole violation hearings, in which 65 offenders were continued on parole and in 9 cases no action was taken, and the violation was dismissed.

6. If the purpose is still needed, can State government be more effective and efficient if the purpose was executed in a different manner?

It would be difficult if not impossible for State Government to provide effective and efficient Parole related hearings without extensive training and expense to facilitate others the ability to meet the Parole Board legal responsibilities. Parole Board Members are provided excellent training and tools to manage their responsibilities and do so at a very small cost as compared to other jurisdictions.

7. If the purpose is still needed, do any of your board or commission's functions overlap or duplicate those of another State board or commission or federal or State agency? If so, is your board or commission still the best entity to fulfill the purpose?

No. We are not aware of any Parole Board functions that overlap or duplicate any other boards or commissions.

8. Does the board or commission's enabling law continue to correctly reflect the purpose and activities of the board or commission?

Current Vermont Statutes accurately reflect the purpose and requirements of the board. The Board Chair, and Board Director, are actively involved with the administration, and legislature in developing any updates, or changes that may improve efficiency and manage Parole related functions, and legal matters.

9. Provide a list of the board and commission's last fiscal year expenditures including staffing costs. How are these funded?

10. Is the board or commission required by law to prepare any reports or studies for the Legislature, the Governor, or any State agency or officer? If so, have those reports or studies been produced? Does the board or commission have ongoing reporting obligations?

The below report is the only report required by law to be prepared and was submitted by January 15, 2022, per Act 148 of 2020.

In accordance with Act 148 of 2020, Section 20, the Chair of the Vermont Parole Board was to report to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions on the implementation of presumptive parole as established by 28 V.S.A. §§ 501a and 502a. The report included an analysis of the current administrative burden of presumptive parole and the anticipated administrative burden of

expanding presumptive parole eligibility to offenders who have committed a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5201.

In addition, the Parole Board Chair and Director are generally invited to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions every year to provide a general introduction to the Parole Board procedures and presentation of the previous year's statistics. The Parole Board provides updates to the Administration through the Governor's Legal Counsel.