



NEBRASKA BOARD OF PAROLE

Division of Parole Supervision



NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Communities.

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



Board of Parole

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Introduction

Established by Article IV, section 13 of the Nebraska State Constitution, the Board of Parole is charged with the authority and power to grant parole release after conviction and judgment to individuals eligible for parole, as that term is defined by the Legislature, under such conditions as may be prescribed by law. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-188 *et. seq.* provides for the creation of the Board of Parole and sets forth its statutory powers and duties, which generally include deciding whether and when to grant parole to individuals, also whether and when to revoke the parole of individuals. The Division of Parole Supervision (formerly known as the Office of Parole Administration) is placed within the organizational structure of the Board of Parole and is charged with the authority and power to supervise individuals in the community, under prescribed conditions, who have been granted parole release by the Board of Parole.

The Board of Parole regularly meets with individuals who are approaching their parole eligibility date and counsels them about the programs and requirements needed in order to be set for a public parole hearing. The Board of Parole then conducts public hearings for those individuals who are reasonably likely to parole, having met the requirements and recommendations that will provide a stepping stone to successful transition into the community.

Parole is an opportunity for individuals to serve a portion of their court-imposed sentence in the community with appropriate supervision. This privilege is granted to individuals who have been appropriately prepared for transition into the community after certain statutory requirements have been met. Once released into the community, individuals on parole or supervised by parole officers under the guidance of the Division of Parole Supervision and the Director of Supervision and Services. Community supervision involves not only monitoring, but also collaboration and education to develop an individual's strengths and abilities to meet challenges in ways that reduce the risk of returning to the criminal justice system. Other components of community supervision include strategies such as electronic monitoring, drug testing, substance abuse programming, and other group sessions to encourage changed thinking patterns. The Division of Parole Supervision employs evidence-based practices in providing community supervision services to individuals.

Vision

The Nebraska Board of Parole and the Division of Parole Supervision are committed to serving and protecting the public. The Board will strive to make informed and appropriate parole decision by giving due consideration to and utilizing the resources of the Division of Parole Supervision, including innovative case management for the successful re-entry of clients back into the community to become productive and responsible citizens.

Mission

It is the mission of the Nebraska Board of Parole and the Division of Parole Supervision to continue its research, understanding, and implementation of evidence based approaches as it pertains to the release of clients who have appropriately been prepared for community supervision. The Board and the Division of Parole Supervision are dedicated to maintaining public safety, reducing recidivism, and addressing the needs of victims, while integrating clients into society through a balance of best practice supervision and treatment strategies.

Values

The values that we believe in as an agency are change, consistency, and dedication. As a group, we have identified that these values are defined and/or enacted by us in the following ways:

- We believe that **change** provides opportunities for growth for our clients as well as our agency and that we can serve as effective catalysts for that growth through the use of collaborative, intentional, and evidence-based practices, which promote not only client success but also staff development and public safety.
- We believe that **consistency** is critical for the accountability and success of our clients, staff, and agency and to achieve that consistency we must clearly communicate our expectations and utilize a systematic approach that provides individualized case management in decision-making, supervision practices, and agency operations.
- We are **dedicated** to promoting behavior change with our clients to help them reintegrate successfully, to respecting our coworkers and supporting one another through teamwork, to the shared goals and mission of our agency, and foremost to ensuring the safety of the public and our communities.

Board of Parole 2017-18

- ❖ LB 841 passed this year to allow for the Board and its Division of Parole Supervision to make some much needed changes, including a revamping of the offender review schedule to facilitate more time spent in hearings;
- ❖ The Board's subcommittees continued their work in the areas of re-entry, decision guidelines (including implementation and ongoing testing of the STRONG-R risk assessment); quality assurance; and modernizing offender reviews and hearings processes;
- ❖ Chair Cotton continued to guest lecture at various academic facilities and civic groups;
- ❖ The State of Nebraska Center of Operational Excellence provided Lean Six Sigma yellow belt training and certification to all Board members and staff, including the Division of Parole Supervision.
- ❖ Completion of agency optimization study to determine the role of the Board of Parole's staff assistants;
- ❖ Increased frequency of Open Board Meetings;
- ❖ Developed a Continuity of Operations Plan;
- ❖ Selected to be a participant in the NGA/NPRC Learning Collaborative initiative;
- ❖ Ongoing engagement with our community partners including: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Omaha Correctional Center Veterans Group, ReConnect, Inc., School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Nebraska – Omaha, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, University of Nebraska-Kearney
- ❖ Prison Fellowship Ministries
- ❖ Site visits to various transitional living facilities including: Bristol Station, MORE
- ❖ Board training including: NDCS Leadership Academy, Girls State, DAS Team Building, NDCS Emergency Preparedness / Fire Emergency, NDCS Substance Abuse Training,

Division of Parole Supervision 2017-18

- ❖ Implementation of a new assessment tool. The Ohio Risk Needs Assessment (ORAS) for clients who have been paroled by the Board which assesses risk of reoffending and criminogenic needs and well as quality assurance process to ensure implementation is successful;
- ❖ Ongoing development of new and modifications of existing policies and procedures;
- ❖ Reorganization of the Division of Parole Supervision to meet the needs of the growing and changing agency;
- ❖ Closing office in Fremont NE and working to secure office space in southeast NE as our population needs have shifted;
- ❖ Resource Center now located in Lincoln Regional Office;
- ❖ Although custodial sanctions proved to be challenging to begin implementing, eight jails have been contracted with throughout the state to ensure all territories are covered with a jail within 50 miles;
- ❖ Specialized Officers have been trained in the University of Cincinnati's cognitive Program- Cognitive Behavioral Interventions- A Comprehensive Curriculum (CBI-CC);
- ❖ Caseloads built on risk, not caseload number size in Omaha and Lincoln offices
- ❖ Supervisory Training University of Cincinnati EPICS (3 days);
- ❖ Norfolk Regional Office moved from its location at the Regional Center to office space more centrally located in Norfolk and more client friendly;
- ❖ Development of a reentry division within parole supervision;
- ❖ Completed first Request for Proposal (RFP) for treatment/life skills groups/classes for client on parole;
- ❖ Honor a well deserving staff member monthly who has gone "Above and Beyond";
- ❖ Collaboration with the Sherwood Foundation to explore reentry on a larger scale in relationship to criminal justice in Nebraska;
- ❖ Collaboration with the Department of Labor to bring employment classes to clients on parole;
- ❖ Development of data dashboards to assist staff in using data to guide their daily work and to make informed decisions;
- ❖ Developed a set of Quality Assurance processes that are shared with officers and supervisors via EPICS Progression spreadsheets, assessment tracking to ensure policy adherence, and case audits to ensure officers are providing and updating information on all clients;

- ❖ Created 'report cards' to provide feedback to supervisors and staff on quality assurance findings and connected those with training and coaching opportunities;
- ❖ Implementation of a long-term coaching schedule to support the use of the EPICS case management approach;
- ❖ Implementation of a centralized Service Portal ticketing system for use across the state;
- ❖ Implementation of an incentives and sanctions matrix through the use of the Carey Group's 4:1 software;
- ❖ Takeover of all Teletype functions pertaining to parole and training of several staff to develop a Certified Teletype team;
- ❖ Extensive modification of the Parolee Information Management System including integration with several outside vendor systems (4:1 BMS system, ORAS, etc.);
- ❖ Using grant funding, purchase and pilot testing of tablets for field use with officers;
- ❖ Distribution of new equipment (laptops and phones) for the majority of officers to bring equipment up-to-date;
- ❖ Creation and use of a fully-functional training space complete with state-of-the-art audio and video equipment to connect officers across the state as well as provide a space and the necessary resources to complete safety training on-site;
- ❖ Expansion of partnerships with data reporting entities like the Nebraska Center for Justice Research (Adult Trends in Justice Report), CSG, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics;
- ❖ Winner of the APPA Presidential Award for the Research and Training Team;
- ❖ Selected to be a recipient of technical assistance from the National Parole Resource Center;
- ❖ Obtained over \$100,000 from BJA or the Nebraska Crime Commission in funds to provide support for a full-time programmer to revitalize the data management system;
- ❖ Project Integrate grant participant which provides additional funding for indigent parole clients to obtain supportive transitional housing;
- ❖ Partnership with Mental Health Association/Honu House to increase transitional living opportunities and programming for clients;
- ❖ Supervisors started meeting with Officers 1:1 in the month of October and beginning in November all staff began 1:1 sessions with their immediate Supervisor.
- ❖ Valley Hope program for short-term residential treatment for clients currently on parole who need a higher level of care or who the Board feels meets the criteria to participate in treatment at Valley Hope followed by very structured living options rather than staying in prison to receive this treatment.

- ❖ Purchase of the Lynda.com bundle, which grants Parole staff unlimited access to over 6,500 e-learning courses, with over 60 new courses added each month. Topics range from software training, to business, to communication and project management skills.
- ❖ Training supervisor partnered and trained with NIC;
- ❖ Seven individuals who have completed the training for EPICS trainer certification:
- ❖ Developed ARC (parole's employee activity committee). Have members of ARC who have brought in snacks for employees to enjoy and receive funds for the committee, have hosted free food events, developed awards for employee/supervisor of the month and Shining Star awards to name a few;
- ❖ Initiated planning for transitioning to a paperless system agency wide;

Objectives and Goals to Measure Future Progress

In 2017, the Nebraska Board of Parole/Division of Parole Supervision set out to establish a strategic plan and series of objectives to guide the work of the agency as it moves forward with its mission and vision. These objectives are centered on aligning the agency with the following evidence-based principles, as noted in the agency's mission statement:

1. Assess actuarial risk/needs;
2. Enhance intrinsic motivation;
3. Target interventions;
4. Skill train with directed practice;
5. Increase positive reinforcement;
6. Engage ongoing support in natural communities;
7. Measure relevant processes/practices;
8. Provide measurement feedback.

As the Board/DPS continue with the work to support these principles, the following objectives will be pursued. Listed with these objectives are proposed measures which the agency may incorporate into future annual reports to assess our progress:

Objective 1: Steer the direction of our agency in accordance and alignment with our vision, mission, and values.

Proposed/potential measures:

- ❖ Serving/protecting the public data points: recidivism rates, new laws violations committed by clients on supervision;
- ❖ Informed decision-making: use and evaluation of parole guidelines;
- ❖ Successful reentry/integration of clients: percent of clients successfully completing parole, identification of successful methods for integration into society;
- ❖ Continue research/implementation of evidence-based practices: EBP implementation progress, staff risk assessment/BMS/EPICS progression and adherence;
- ❖ Addressing needs of victims: use of no contact special conditions, tracking of opposition;
- ❖ Change: for client success, evaluation of needs domains progression over time; for staff, evaluation of EBP training/progression and client assessments;
- ❖ Consistency: documentation and evaluation of systematic approaches to decision-making, supervision, and operations;
- ❖ Dedication: indicators of behavior change in clients and staff; client and staff assessments of officers/agency

Objective 2: Establish a seamless system for the transmission of data, and evaluation thereof, between parole decision-making and community supervision

Proposed/potential measures:

- ❖ Dashboard development: for Board members, Division of Parole Supervision staff, and shared dashboards for all; use of dashboards by staff
- ❖ Report creation: new report development, use of reports by staff
- ❖ Data management system: assessments by staff; project implementation for system redesign and updates

Objective 3: Secure and expand an effective treatment network for parole clients

Proposed/potential measures:

- ❖ Provider network: count and/or network analysis of providers across the state, gap analysis
- ❖ Request for proposed services: implementation of services with selected providers, outcomes with selected providers
- ❖ Custodial sanctions: use of custodial sanctions; assessment of outcomes after use of custodial sanctions

Objective 4: Foster the safety, well-being, and professional development of staff

Proposed/potential measures:

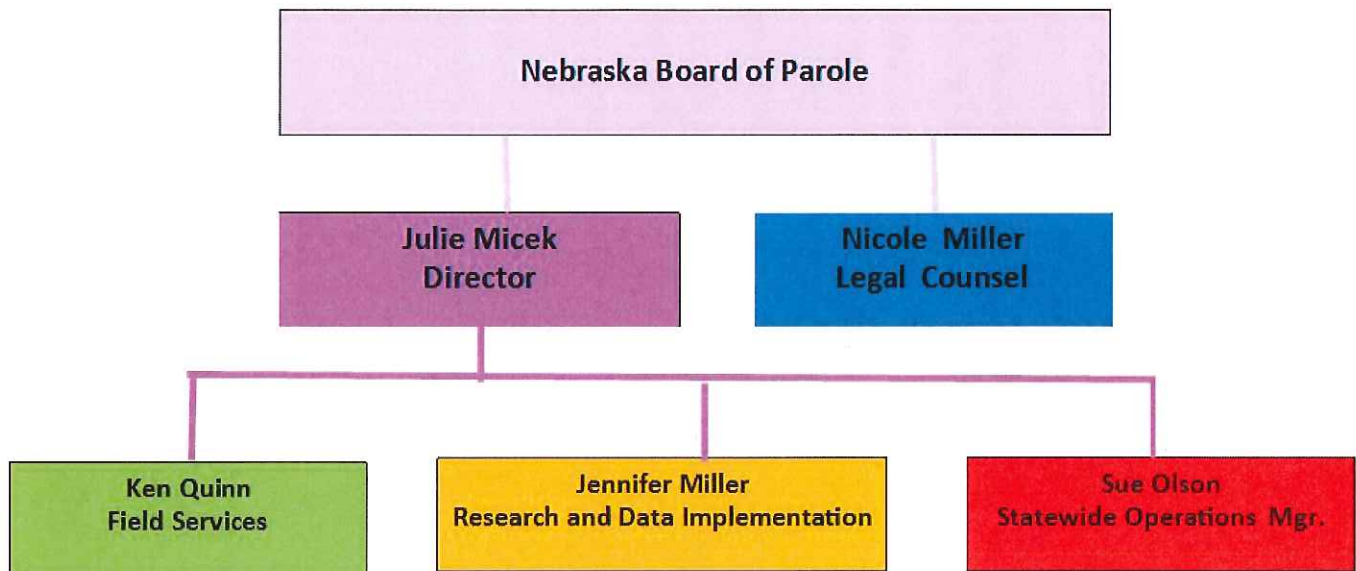
- ❖ Safety/well-being of staff: disciplinary actions taken and outcomes; grievances; injuries and/or illnesses and use of medical or sick leave; resource allocation/use assessment
- ❖ Professional development: attendance and engagement with internal/external training; participation in 1-on-1's; SMART goal attainment

Objective 5: Promote a more thorough understanding and comprehensive public understanding of parole through ongoing education with other criminal justice stakeholders

Proposed/potential measures:

- ❖ Partnerships with criminal justice stakeholders: count of partnerships with CJ entities (law enforcement, corrections, and courts entities); participation in Seamless Systems meetings; initiatives with the National Parole Resource Center
- ❖ Partnerships with non-CJ entities: count of partnerships with non-CJ entities (Department of Labor, Mental Health Association, Sherwood Reentry, etc.); engagement activities count/tracking (with entities like the Legislature, etc.)
- ❖ Community engagement: count of job fairs attended or speaking engagements; social media outreach efforts and success; website access data

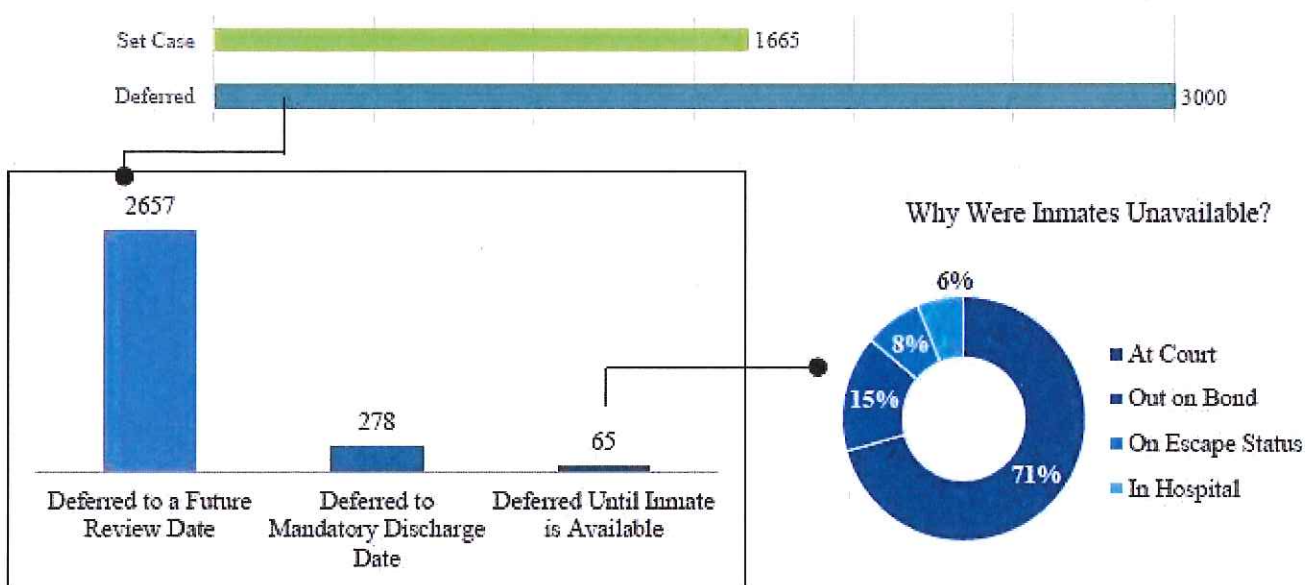
Organizational Chart—Leadership Branch



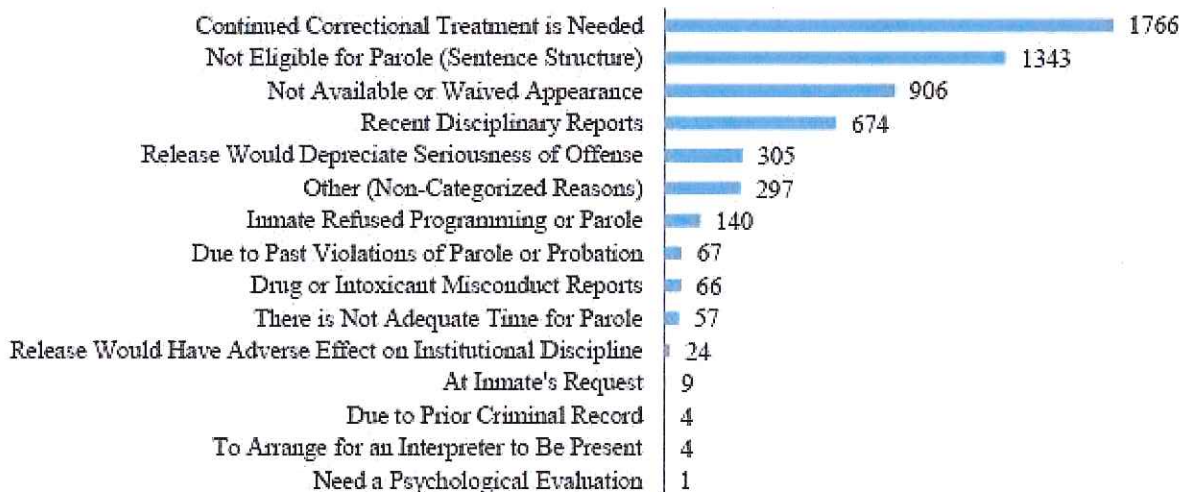
PAROLE REVIEWS IN FY 2018

A parole review is when the Board of Parole meets with an inmate to review the specifics of their case, their institutional behavior/ misconducts, and the progress they have made with respect to their programming. The Board of Parole conducts **case reviews** for inmates who are more than 2 years from their parole eligibility date and **key reviews** for inmates within 2 years of their parole eligibility date. Inmates with case reviews are deferred at those reviews to be seen at a later date. At a key review, the Board can decide to (a) set a parole hearing date for the inmate (a decision of set case); (b) defer the inmate to be seen at a later date or to the end of their sentence (a decision of deferred); or (c) no motion can be made by the Board. The graphs below provide the breakdown of all case and key review decisions and the reasons for those decisions.

Decision Count for All Reviews (4665)



Why Does the Board Defer Inmates at Review? (more than 1 reason may be listed for each inmate/review)



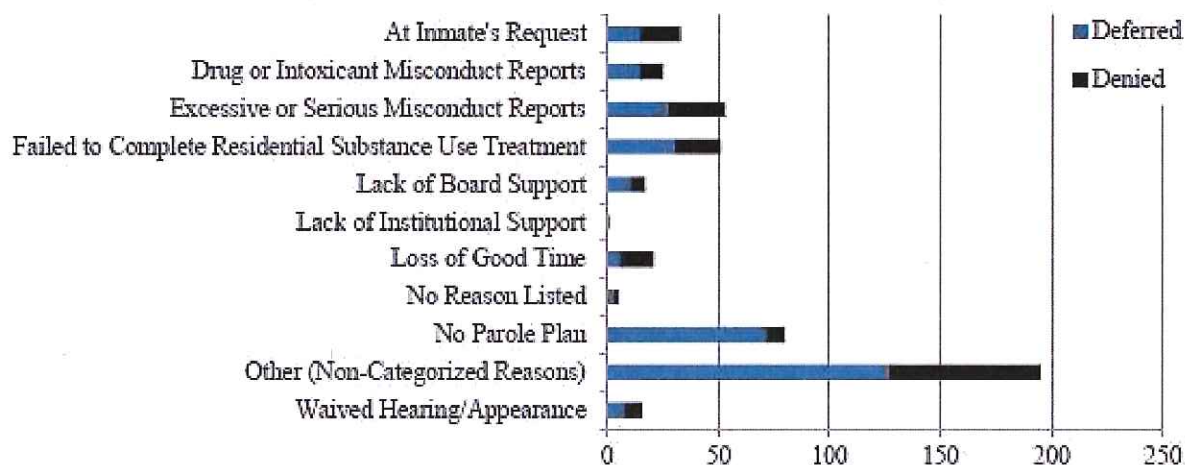
PAROLE HEARINGS IN FY 2018

A parole hearing is when the Board of Parole meets with an inmate to review the specifics of their case, their institutional behavior/ misconducts, and the progress they have made with respect to their programming and then determines if that inmate is ready for parole. At a parole hearing, the Board can decide to (a) parole an individual and place them on community supervision; (b) defer the inmate to be seen at a later date or to the end of their sentence (a decision of deferred); or (c) deny their parole (these individuals may still be seen at a later date if they are not denied until their jam out date).

Decision Count for All Hearings (1636)



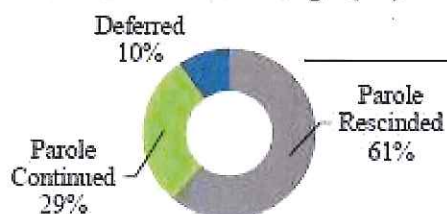
Why Does the Board Defer or Deny Inmates at Parole Hearings? (more than 1 reason may be listed for each inmate/hearing)



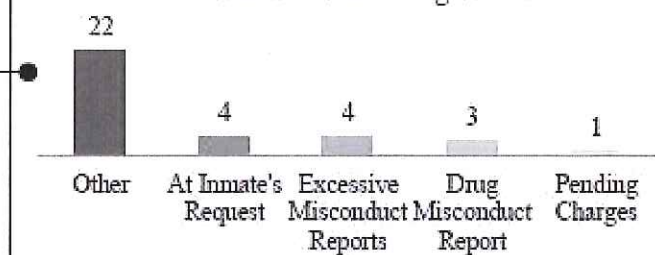
RESCISSION HEARINGS IN FY 2018

In some instances, a parole hearing is held prior to an individual's parole eligibility date; or there is some other reason for delay between the parole hearing where the Board approves an individual to be released into the community on parole, and the individual's actual discharge from an institution. On occasion, during this time period, circumstances may change or arise that alter that individual's eligibility or suitability for parole. In these cases, the Board holds a rescission hearing to determine whether the changed circumstances prevent the individual from being released into the community on parole. Data on rescission hearings during FY 2018 is displayed in the graphs below.

Rescission Hearings (31)



Reasons for Rescinding Parole



REVIEW OF PAROLE HEARINGS IN FY 2018

When a parole client commits a new law violation or violates the conditions that were placed on their parole certificate, the Board of Parole holds a type of hearing known as a “review of parole” hearing. At these hearings, the Board reviews the laws violations or “technical violations” (violations of parole conditions that are not against the law) and determines whether the client should have their parole revoked or continued. The Board can make three possible decisions at this stage: (a) continue to allow the client stay on parole possibly with additional conditions; (b) revoke the client’s current parole term but “reparole” that client with new conditions; or (c) revoke the client’s parole and return them to the custody of a Department of Corrections facility. The data regarding review of parole hearings is captured below in the following graphs.

Decision Count for All Review of Parole Hearings (423)

