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**What is
parole?**

**Why
apply for
parole?**

**How do I apply
for parole?**

Your Guide To Parole

Canada

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What is Parole?

Parole is a type of release that gives you a chance to finish the rest of your sentence in the community.

This is done under the supervision of a Correctional Service of Canada Parole Officer, with conditions that you must follow to reduce your risk of re-offending and to protect the community.

The Parole Board of Canada, an independent administrative tribunal, is responsible for making parole decisions.

What are the different types of parole?

There are two types of parole, day parole and full parole:

Day parole (DP) gives you a chance to participate in community-based activities while serving your sentence (e.g. employment, volunteer work, studies). This will prepare you for release on full parole or statutory release. While on day parole, you must return to your community-based residential facility at the end of each day. You must meet regularly with a Parole Officer.

Full parole (FP) lets you serve the rest of your sentence under supervision in the community. While on full parole you are normally allowed to live on your own but you'll need to report to a Parole Officer on a regular basis. During these meetings, you must let your Parole Officer know if anything changes with your release plan or life situation.

If you don't follow your conditions your parole can be suspended and/or revoked. This means you could return to an institution.

Am I guaranteed parole?

No. Even though the law requires the Parole Board to review offenders for parole at some point in their sentence, this doesn't mean that you will get parole. Parole is never guaranteed.

Note: Statutory release *isn't the same* as **parole** because it's a release by law, not a decision made by the Parole Board.

When am I eligible for parole?

This will depend on your parole eligibility dates (PED).

For **full parole**, most offenders are eligible at **1/3 of their sentence, or 7 years**, whichever is less.

For **day parole**, most offenders are eligible **6 months before** their full parole eligibility date.

You will have received an official document from CSC telling you when your sentence started, when it ends, your day and full parole eligibility dates, and your statutory release date. If you don't know your parole eligibility dates, ask your Parole Officer.

How do I apply for parole?

To be considered for day parole, you must submit an application to the Parole Board. Ask your Parole Officer for an application and when to apply. When you're done, give it to your Parole Officer who will give it to the Parole Board.

For **full parole**, you will **automatically** be scheduled by law for a full **parole review** within 6 months of your eligibility date.

If you don't know your eligibility dates, ask your Parole Officer.

I haven't completed all my programs. Should I still apply for parole?

This depends on the seriousness of your offence, your identified risk factors, and what programs you've taken to address them. You can talk to your Parole Officer about this. He or she can discuss your options with you.

By law, you will **automatically be scheduled for a full parole review.**

What if my parole is denied? Won't this look bad at my next parole review?

No. In fact, the Parole Board's decision will identify the reasons why your risk is not manageable in the community right now. This will allow you to focus on these specific issues before your next parole review.

Why apply for parole? Why not just wait for my statutory release date?

Research shows that offenders released gradually and under supervision are much more successful at safely re-integrating into the community, and are less likely to re-offend, than those who waited for their statutory release.

You can also access community supports (e.g. halfway house) and community-based programs earlier through day and full parole.

How does the Parole Board make its decision?

The Parole Board looks at all available information to decide the risk that you present and *if this risk can be safely managed in the community.*

The Parole Board will look at:

- Your **criminal and social history**, the reasons for and type of **offence**, including **your understanding of the offence** and any past offences;
- Any **progress** you have made by yourself or through participation in programs, your **behaviour in the institution** and while on any **previous conditional release(s)**;
- Any **victim statements**;
- Your **release plan** and your **community management strategy**.

How will my case be reviewed?

The Parole Board will review your case in one of two ways:

1. review your paper file(s) ***in their office*** and make a decision without meeting you, or
2. review your paper file(s) and ***meet with you*** at a hearing before making a decision.

The information the Parole Board will consider for review will be shared with you in advance.

Ask your Parole Officer how your case will be reviewed.

If you have a hearing, you have the right to an assistant, and to an interpreter if you don't understand English or French.

What happens at a parole hearing?

- A Hearing Officer will guide you and your Parole Officer into the hearing room, along with your assistant if you have one.
- Your Parole Officer will talk briefly about your case, and give his or her recommendations.
- A victim may observe and may choose to present a victim statement.
- There may be other observers present.
- The Board members will ask you questions to help them in their decision.
- In private, Board members will discuss your case further and come to a decision.
- Board members will then give their decision and the reasons for the decision, including any special conditions you must follow if you are granted parole.

Can I appeal a decision?

If you do not agree with the Parole Board's decision, you or a person acting for you can appeal the decision by sending a notice in writing to the Appeal Division of the Parole Board in Ottawa. You must do this within two months of the original decision. Talk to your Parole Officer for more information.

Who can I talk to for more information?

Your Parole Officer can help you if you need more information.