




Roy Cooper, Governor

Todd Ishee, Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety
 Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety
 Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety

FROM: Todd E. Ishee, Secretary 

RE: Mutual Agreement Parole Program Report

DATE: March 11, 2024

Pursuant to NC General Statute 143B-1482(a), The Department of Adult Correction and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission shall report by March 1 of each year to the Chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety and to the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety on the number of inmates enrolled in the mutual agreement parole program, the number completing the program and being paroled, and the number who enrolled but were terminated from the program. The information should be based on the previous calendar year.

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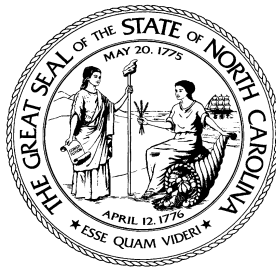
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Post Release Supervision and Parole Commission

Mutual Agreement Parole Program Report G.S. 143B-1482

February 20, 2024

Darren Jackson
Chairman

Haley E. Phillips
Commissioner

Graham H. Atkinson
Commissioner

Gregory Moss Jr.
Commissioner

INTRODUCTION

The Mutual Agreement Parole Program (MAPP) helps to prepare selected parole-eligible offenders for release through structured activities, scheduled progression in custody levels, participation in community-based programs and conditional parole dates. The offenders, the Division of Prisons (DOP), and the members of the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission (Parole Commission) sign a written agreement that sets forth a plan for the offender's eventual parole. The offender agrees to meet certain conditions set by the Division of Institutions and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission. In turn, the Parole Commission agrees to consider paroling the offender if those conditions are met. Although they are not legally enforceable contracts, MAPP agreements have proven to be useful tools in influencing and promoting positive offender behavior.

The Mutual Agreement Parole Program (MAPP) began in North Carolina in 1975 as a pilot project and went statewide a year later. In the early years, the program focused on committed youthful offenders and adult offenders involved in certain highly regarded vocational training programs such as the Iredell Furniture Program, the Cleveland Comprehensive Education Program and vocational training at North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women. Gradually, the Parole Commission began to use MAPP to encourage improved behavior and to structure a gradual release from prison for a broader range of offenders. Today, MAPP is an effective management tool that encourages behavioral change, rewards appropriate behavior, evaluates an offender's readiness for release and prepares the offender for successful re-entry into society.

G.S. 143B-1482(a) provides as follows:

(a) The Department of Adult Correction and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission shall report by March 1 of each year to the Chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety and to the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety on the number of inmates enrolled in the mutual agreement parole program, the number completing the program and being paroled, and the number who enrolled but were terminated from the program. The information should be based on the previous calendar year.

As mandated by the statute, this report presents statistical information regarding MAPP based on the 2023 calendar year.

ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM

An offender is eligible for the MAPP Program if he or she meets the following criteria:

- The offender has reached his regularly scheduled parole review date;
- The offender is in medium or minimum custody;
- The offender is not subject to a detainer or pending court action which may result in further confinement;
- The offender has not had an infraction within the past 90 days;
- The offender was convicted of a felony under pre-Structured Sentencing laws; and
- The offender recognizes a need for involvement in MAPP and expresses an interest in one or more of the following: learning a skill, improving educational achievements, modifying specific behaviors or engaging in personal growth program.

THE PROCESS

Once an offender has met eligibility, the review process begins. The Parole Commission sends notifications to victims, district attorneys, and the media. Stakeholders have a 30-day period in which to provide information regarding the case. The Parole Commission reviews all information obtained through the investigation and makes a final decision.

If the case receives a favorable vote, the case is forwarded to the Division of Prisons for development. During the development process, a case manager at the facility housing the offender develops a case plan to prepare the offender to transition back into the community. The plan includes activities and assignments that will address various needs identified by the case manager. In addition, a majority of offenders will be required to undergo a psychological assessment as part of the development process.

Cases that have completed the development stage return to the MAPP Office to be scheduled for negotiations. During the negotiations process, the DOI MAPP Director, a Parole Commissioner, and the MAPP Coordinator from the facility sit down with the offender to review the development plan and formulate the final agreement. Once all parties agree to the terms of the MAPP Plan, the parties sign the document, and the offender is enrolled in MAPP. The average MAPP Agreement takes 65 days from referral to completion.

On January 1, 2023, **219** offenders were participating in the Mutual Agreement Parole Program (MAPP). An additional **65** offenders were enrolled in the program during the calendar year, bringing the total to **284**. **Eighty-Six** completed the program and were released, **6** were terminated from the program. At the end of the year, a total of **173** offenders were actively participating in MAPP. The number of offenders eligible for MAPP on 12/31/23 was **958**. In situations where MAPP participation was suspended or terminated, it was the position of the Commission that these cases could not safely be paroled or participate in MAPP because of the nature

of their offenses, their prison conduct, and /or unfavorable psychological information.

The Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission has granted MAPP participation to **29.6%** of the eligible population for the year. In identifying offenders for MAPP, the Parole Commission considers the needs of the system, the rights of the individual and the safety of the public.

It is important that offenders who are participating in MAPP be placed in and satisfactorily complete programs that have been agreed upon as part of their MAPP contract by the Commission, DOP, and the offender. Participation in community-based programs, such as home leaves, community volunteer leave passes, and work release, allows the offender to demonstrate that he/she has matured and can safely handle responsibility in the community. It also provides authorities additional time to determine the offender's suitability for release. If the offender does not participate in the agreed upon community-based programs, the Commission suspends the agreement due to public safety concerns.

The Mutual Agreement Parole Program has proven to be an effective management tool in preparing offenders for a successful re-entry to society. The Department of Adult Correction and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission continues to work toward increasing MAPP participation without jeopardizing public safety.