

**Division of Prisons  
North Carolina Department of Correction**

**Report on the Status of the  
Mutual Agreement Parole Program  
[Section 17.1 of S.L. 2007-323]**

**March 1, 2008**

**Theodis Beck  
Secretary**

**Boyd Bennett  
Director of Prisons**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Mutual Agreement Parole Program (MAPP) helps to prepare selected parole-eligible inmates 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 and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission sign a written agreement that sets forth a plan for the inmate's eventual parole.<sup>1</sup> The inmate agrees to meet certain conditions set by the Division of Prisons and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission (Parole Commission); in turn, the Parole Commission agrees to parole the offender if those conditions are met. Although they are not legally enforceable contracts, MAPP agreements have proved to be useful tools in influencing and promoting positive inmate 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 inmates 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 motivate improved behavior and to structure a gradual release from prison for a broader range of inmates. 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 reentry into society.

Section 17.1 of Session Law 2007-323 provides as follows:

### **MUTUAL AGREEMENT PAROLE PROGRAM**

**SECTION 17.1.** The Department of 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 Joint Legislative Corrections, Crime Control, and Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee on the number of inmates enrolled in the 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 special provision, this report presents statistical information regarding MAPP based on the 2007 calendar year.

---

<sup>1</sup> Official signatories include offender, the DOP MAPP Director, two Parole Commissioners and the MAPP Coordinator at the facility where the inmate is housed.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM**

An inmate is eligible for the MAPP program if he meets the following criteria:

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

## **THE PROCESS**

Either the Parole Commission or the Division of Prisons can refer an inmate for review for MAPP consideration. Once the case has been recommended for review, the Parole Commission begins to investigate the case and 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 inmate develops a plan to prepare the inmate 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 DOP MAPP Director, a Parole Commissioner and the MAPP coordinator from the facility where the inmate is housed sit down with the inmate, 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 inmate is enrolled in MAPP. The average MAPP agreement takes 65 days from referral to completion.

## **THE NUMBERS**

On January 1, 2007, 244 inmates were participating in the Mutual Agreement Parole Program (MAPP). An additional 177 inmates were enrolled in the program during the calendar year, meaning that a total of 421 inmates participated in MAPP during 2007. One hundred and nineteen inmates completed the program and were released, while 44 were terminated from the program during the calendar year.

The North Carolina Post-Release and Parole Commission conducted formal investigations for MAPP participation on 226 inmates during 2007. Of those formal investigations:

- 177 cases were approved for MAPP by the Commission and DOP

- 33 cases were suspended/denied by the Commission based on information gathered during the investigation
- 13 cases were denied by DOP
- 2 cases are still under investigation by the Commission
- 1 case is still being considered by DOP

The North Carolina Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission denied parole and MAPP participation for 1,202 inmates during 2007. It was the Commission's determination that these cases could not safely be paroled or participate in MAPP because of the nature of their offenses, prison conduct, and/or unfavorable psychological information.

During 2007, the Commission also paroled 197 inmates who were released either under Community Service Parole, regular parole or pre-Fair parole. Of that number, 119 inmates participated in the MAPP Program. A total of 109 inmates were paroled under mandatory parole (Fair Sentence cases that are within 90 days of their sentence expiration dates). In the cases of inmates released under 90-day mandatory parole, most of these inmates were placed on Community Service Parole and were subsequently revoked.

It is important that inmates who are participating in MAPP be placed into and satisfactorily complete programs that have been agreed upon by the Commission, DOP and the inmate. Participation in community-based programs allows the inmate to demonstrate that he has matured and can safely handle responsibility in the community; and provides authorities needed additional observation time to ensure that he/she can be safely released. If the offender does not participate in prescribed community-based programs, the Commission has no alternative but to suspend the agreement to protect the public.

As of March 1, 2008, the Commission and DOP have 39 cases under consideration for MAPP.

### **SUMMARY**

MAPP is an effective management tool intended to prepare inmates for successful reentry into society. The Department of Correction and the Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission continue to try and increase MAPP participation to the extent increased participation is possible without jeopardizing public safety.