



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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Chair

Kevin Keefe  
Executive Director

**DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**ABDULLAH MUHUMMAD**

**(AKA EDWARD BROWN)**

**W37526**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** January 28, 2020

**DATE OF DECISION:** May 18, 2020

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Gloriann Moroney, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Karen McCarthy, Colette Santa

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of offense, criminal record, institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the Board, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is granted to a long-term residential program with special conditions, but not before six months in lower security.<sup>1</sup>

**I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

On July 23, 1979, in Suffolk Superior Court, Abdullah Muhammad pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of 55-year-old Junious E. Parker and was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, Mr. Muhammad received two 15 to 20 year sentences for two counts of armed robbery, an 8 to 10 year sentence for assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon, and 4 to 5 years for two counts of carrying a firearm without authority, all to be served concurrently with his life sentence.

<sup>1</sup> One Board Member voted to grant parole to an approved home plan

including his job as a janitor at the time of the hearing. Mr. Muhammad told the Board that he completed programs, such as Anger Management and Correctional Recovery Academy, as well as computer skills training. Mr. Muhammad also earned his GED, bachelor's degree, and OSHA certification while incarcerated. Board Members noted that Mr. Muhammad presented a thoughtful parole plan. He stated that he would like to step down to lower security before being released to a program, such as the Dismas House. Later, he could live with his wife and rely on his children and other family for support. Board Members discussed the importance of Mr. Muhammad's continued attendance at AA/NA meetings, as well as counseling for his transition back into the community.

The Board considered the testimony of Mr. Muhammad's wife and sister in support of parole, as well as additional letters of support. The Board considered a letter of opposition submitted by Boston Police Commissioner William Gross.

### **III. DECISION**

The Board is of the unanimous opinion that Mr. Muhammad has demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Muhammad has served 40 years for the murder of Mr. Parker. In rendering their decision, the Board recognizes that Mr. Muhammad will benefit from a gradual transition due to the many years he has been incarcerated. It is important that he can demonstrate success in a less restrictive environment. He has completed numerous programs and has maintained a positive adjustment. The Board did consider his recent request for a modified parole plan in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and his underlying health issues. A gradual reduction in security to a structured program will be an integral part of his reintegration.

The applicable standard used by the Board to assess a candidate for parole is: "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such offender is released, the offender will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." 120 C.M.R. 300.04. In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Mr. Muhammad's institutional behavior, as well as his participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of his incarceration. The Board has also considered a risk and needs assessment and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Muhammad's risk of recidivism. After applying this appropriately high standard to the circumstances of Mr. Muhammad's case, the Board is of the opinion that Abdullah Muhammad is rehabilitated and merits parole at this time. Parole is granted to a long-term residential program with special conditions, but not before six months in lower security.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Long term residential program for a minimum of 90 days; Waive work for program; Must be at home between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. or at PO's discretion.; ELMO-electronic monitoring at PO's discretion; Supervise for drugs; testing in accordance with agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence; testing in accordance with agency policy; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment; No contact with victim's family; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; AA/NA 3 times/week.

*I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing. Pursuant to G.L. c. 127, § 130, I further certify that all voting Board Members have reviewed the applicant's entire criminal record. This signature does not indicate authorship of the decision.*

  
Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

5/18/2020  
Date