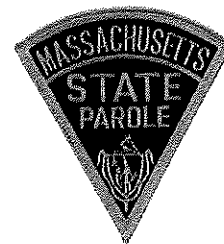




The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CHARLES CHAPLES
W39624

TYPE OF HEARING: **Review Hearing**

DATE OF HEARING: **May 1, 2025**

DATE OF DECISION: **September 24, 2025**

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz¹

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in 2 years from the date of the hearing.²

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On March 24, 1983, in Bristol Superior Court, Charles Chaples pleaded guilty to murder in the second-degree for the death of Raymond Santos. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he also received concurrent sentences of 3-5 years for larceny and breaking and entering with intent to commit a felony. Parole was denied following an initial hearing in 1997. Mr. Chaples has been released on parole on several occasions, but was returned to custody each time, most recently in 2021. His parole revocation was affirmed on February 11, 2022.

On May 1, 2025, Charles Chaples appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was represented by the Boston College Lifer Parole Clinic under the supervision of Attorney Frank Herrmann. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Charles Chaples' May 1, 2025, hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On March 6, 1982, in North Dartmouth, 22-year-old Charles Chaples shot and killed Raymond Santos. During the early morning hours of March 6, 1982, Charles Chaples broke into a house in Dartmouth and stole a 12-gauge shotgun, two boxes of shotgun shells, and a pair of gloves. He proceeded to an area behind Lincoln Park in North

¹ Chair Hurley was present for the hearing, but was no longer a Board Member at the time of vote.

² One Board Member voted to deny parole with a review in 4 years.

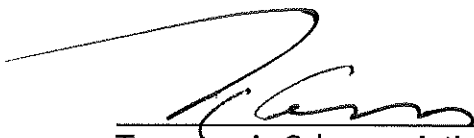
Dartmouth, where he parked his vehicle. He walked through a wooded area into the park and hid behind one of the amusement rides to observe the activity of the night watchmen. When Mr. Chaples observed Raymond Santos, a night watchman, proceed to his station, he scuffled his feet to get his attention. Mr. Santos turned around and shined a flashlight into Mr. Chaples' face. Mr. Chaples told him to shut off the flashlight and turn over the watchman's keys. Mr. Santos refused. When he repeated his demands a second time, Mr. Santos again refused. Mr. Chaples then fired the shotgun at Mr. Santos, ejecting the spent shell. He fired a second time, ejecting the shell again. After he fired a third time, Mr. Santos fell to the ground. Mr. Chaples left the area, reloaded the shotgun, and exited through the same wooded area where he had entered. Along the way, he accidentally dropped live shotgun shells and intentionally concealed other shells within the wooded area. Mr. Chaples wiped down the shotgun, dropped it in a briar patch, and then left the scene.

On March 6, 1982, police were dispatched to the maintenance warehouse at Lincoln Park, where personnel had discovered the body of Raymond Santos at approximately 7:30 a.m. Mr. Chaples was interviewed by police the following day and later confessed to the murder.

APPLICABLE STANDARD: Parole "[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. In making this determination, the Board takes into consideration an inmate's institutional behavior, their participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of incarceration, and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize the inmate's risk of recidivism. M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. The Board also considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing and/or in written submissions to the Board. (if applicable).

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Chaples appeared before the Board for the 11th time. He has had three prior returns to custody. He has been incarcerated on his most recent return to custody since December 2021. Mr. Chaples has completed some correspondences courses, but the Board continues to have concerns regarding Mr. Chaples' insight into his behaviors. The Board recommends the in-person Family Violence Education Group and that Mr. Chaples commit to exploring his concerning behavior that has resulted in his prior returns to custody. In rendering their decision, the Board considered testimony from Bristol County ADA Tara Burdman in opposition to parole. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Charles Chaples has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

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.


Tonomoy A. Coleman, Acting Chair


Date