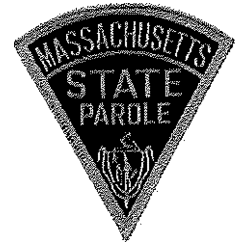




The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

CHRISTOPHER MIDDLEMISS
W96566

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: October 7, 2025

DATE OF DECISION: March 12, 2026

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sarah B. Coughlin, Angelo Gomez Jr., James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz¹

VOTE: Parole is granted to CRJ or approved home plan 2 weeks after date of Decision.²

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On May 28, 2010, following a jury trial in Middlesex Superior Court, Christopher Middlemiss was convicted of murder in the first-degree for the death of Alberto Cintron. He was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. On that same date, he received a concurrent 18 month sentence for armed assault with intent to rob.

Mr. Middlemiss became parole eligible following the Supreme Judicial Court's decision in Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216 (2024), where the court held that sentencing individuals who were ages 18 through 20 at the time of the offense (emerging adults) to life without the possibility of parole is unconstitutional. As a result of the SJC's decision regarding his first-degree murder conviction, Mr. Middlemiss was re-sentenced to life with the possibility of parole after 15 years.

On October 7, 2025, Mr. Middlemiss appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was represented by Attorney Zachary Lown. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Mr. Middlemiss' October 7, 2025, hearing.

¹ Board Member Ortiz was not present for the hearing, but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the file prior to vote.

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

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: Shortly after 2:00 a.m., on July 4, 2006, Christopher Middlemiss (age 20) and Joseph Morgan³ broke into the apartment of Alberto Cintron and waited for him to return home. Their intent was to rob him of drug money that they believed he had in his possession. Both men were masked, so Mr. Cintron (Mr. Middlemiss' upstairs neighbor) would not recognize them. Both men were armed with .45 caliber handguns. When Mr. Cintron arrived home with another individual about a half hour later, Mr. Middlemiss and Mr. Morgan ordered them to the ground. When Mr. Cintron refused to comply and asked, "Chris, is that you?," an altercation ensued. Mr. Middlemiss opened fire, hitting Mr. Cintron with numerous shots. Mr. Cintron's friend was able to escape by breaking through a window and jumping from the second floor apartment. Mr. Cintron managed to call 911 and relayed to dispatch that he was shot by "Chris . . . one of the neighbors downstairs." When first responders arrived, Mr. Cintron reiterated to a police officer that his neighbor, Chris, shot him. Mr. Cintron was rushed to Lowell General Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

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.

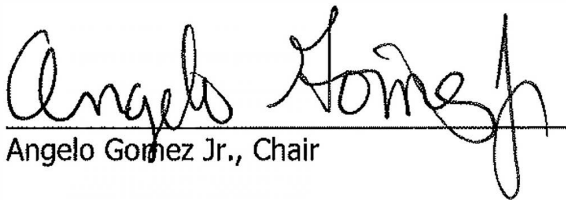
Where a parole candidate was convicted of first-degree murder for a crime committed when he was ages 18 through 20 years old, the Board considers the "unique aspects" of emerging adulthood that distinguish emerging adult offenders from older offenders. Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216, 238 (2024). Individuals who were emerging adults at the time of the offense must be afforded a "meaningful opportunity to obtain release based on demonstrated maturity and rehabilitation" and the Board evaluates "the circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime, including the age of the offender, together with all relevant information pertaining to the offender's character and actions during the intervening years since conviction." Id. (citing Diatchenko v. District Attorney for the Suffolk Dist., 466 Mass. 655, 674 (2013) (Diatchenko I); Miller v. Alabama, 567 U.S. 460, 471 (2012); Graham v. Florida, 560 U.S. 48, 75 (2010)). Since brain development in emerging adulthood is ongoing, the Board also considers the following factors when evaluating parole candidates who committed the underlying offenses as an emerging adult: 1) a lack of impulse control in emotionally arousing situations; 2) an increased likelihood to engage in risk taking behaviors in pursuit of reward; 3) increased susceptibility to peer influence which makes emerging adults more likely to engage in risky behavior; and 4) an emerging adult's greater capacity for change. See Mattis, 493 Mass. at 225-229.

³ Mr. Morgan was tried separately and convicted of first-degree murder. Commonwealth v. Morgan, 460 Mass. 277 (2011).

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Middlemiss appeared for an initial hearing after the Supreme Judicial Court's Mattis decision. Mr. Middlemiss was 20-years-old at the time of the offense and has been incarcerated for 19 years. He has received only four disciplinary reports during his period of incarceration. According to Dr. William Rinn's evaluation, Mr. Middlemiss is low risk on risk assessment tools. He has been in minimum security housing through the Department of Correction for over one year. He received his Hi-Set in 2008. He began investing in rehabilitative efforts prior to the Mattis decision. He has been consistently employed. He has a strong support system and presents with a re-entry plan to support his needs. The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Dr. Rinn and Deb Goldfarb, LICSW, as well as Mr. Middlemiss' father, aunt, and friend. The Board considered testimony in opposition to parole from both Mr. Cintron's brother and Middlesex County Assistant District Attorney Alicia Walsh. The Board concludes that Christopher Middlemiss has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Approve home plan before release; Waive work for 2 weeks or program; Must be home between 10 PM and 6 AM or PO's discretion; Electronic monitoring for 6 months; Supervise for drugs, testing in accordance with Agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence, testing in accordance with Agency policy; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; No contact with victim(s)' family; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment; Residential Program - CRJ.

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.



Angelo Gomez Jr., Chair

March 12, 2026
Date