Hearing Procedures for Offenders

Serving Life Sentences

1. When attending a Second Degree Lifer Hearing in support of or in opposition to parole, you must present identification to Parole Board staff prior to admission. You will be required to sign an attendance sheet.

2. You must submit to a wand search conducted by Parole Board staff.

3. The hearing room will have a designated seating area for victims to meet with the Victim Service Coordinator before the hearing begins.

4. The offender will be escorted into the hearing room by a Parole Board staff member and held until the hearing begins. No physical contact with the offender is allowed. Parole staff and the Correctional Officer responsible for transporting the offender will remain in the hearing room until the hearing is over.

5. When the hearing is about to begin, those who support parole and those who oppose it are brought into the room and escorted to separate, assigned seating areas

6. Once everyone is seated, Parole Board Members are informed that the hearing is ready to begin.

7. The Chair introduces the Members of the Board and swears in those who plan to speak in favor of or in opposition to parole. *The Chair guides the course of the hearing, and no one should speak unless ad-dressed by a Board Member first.*

8. Upon completion of the hearing, the Chair will in-struct everyone to remain seated until the offender has been escorted out of the room.

9. The Chair will then ask for the opposition to be escorted out by the Victim Service Coordinator.

10. Those in support of parole are allowed to leave after members of the opposition have been escorted from the room.

All hearings are conducted on the second floor of the Parole Board Central Office, located on 12 Mercer Road in Natick, Massachusetts.

Parole Board staff will instruct you on where to proceed when you arrive.

Massachusetts Parole Board

12 Mercer Road

Natick, MA. 01760

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Massachusetts Parole Board

Public Conduct at Parole Board Hearings/Proceedings

This pamphlet is intended to provide the public with helpful suggestions on how to approach, attend, and conduct oneself in all Parole Board proceedings.

A message from the

Massachusetts Parole Board

By participating in this parole proceeding, you are taking an active role in the criminal justice system. Your participation is valuable and appreciated.

Whether you oppose an offender's release or testify in favor of it, you are assisting the Board in reaching a decision that honors the facts of the case and brings justice to the victims, the offender, and the Commonwealth.

This pamphlet is designed to provide you with guidance on how to conduct yourself during what may be an unfamiliar and perhaps intimidating experience. Your cooperation and adherence to the Board's rules and procedures will help ensure that the proceeding runs smoothly and that your views are heard.

The Parole Board encourages your participation. Input from all parties will promote a fair proceeding for everyone involved.

1. Dress in an appropriate manner.	*Halter tops, shorts, worn out jeans, hats, and T-shirts are not appropriate. Do not chew gum, eat, or drink during the proceeding.*
2. Be on time.	*If you miss or delay the proceeding, you may diminish your involvement in the proceeding.*
3. Do not bring children into the proceeding unless the children are a part of the process.	*Parole proceedings are not appropriate for children. Please arrange for child care.*
4. Do not bring cell phones, pagers, or any other electronic devices into the proceeding.	*These devices will disrupt the proceeding. Disruptive conduct can be the basis for removal from a hearing or proceeding.*
5. Wait for direction from Parole Board Members or staff on where to sit for a proceeding.	*Parole hearings and proceedings have specific seating arrangements for all parties involved. There will be no physical contact allowed with the offender.*
6. Parole Board Members or staff will direct you when you have an opportunity to speak.	*Never argue or discuss proceedings with other parties in the room, unless directed by the Parole Board. You should always speak directly to the Parole Board.*
7. Do not attempt to bring a personal weapon or anything that could be mistaken for a weapon (for example, a lighter, pocket knife, or nail file), into the proceeding.	*All visitors will be scanned by a metal detector, and potentially dangerous items will be confiscated at the discretion of security staff.*
8. Speak clearly and loud enough to be heard by all.	*All Parole Board proceedings are recorded. Please do not nod or shake your head when answering questions. Also, please be direct and to the point when responding.*
9. Always address the Parole Board Members as "Sir or Madam Board Member"	*Please be respectful of the importance of the proceeding. If a proceeding is conducted in an orderly fashion, it is more likely that it will be fair to all parties involved.*
10. Depart promptly. Do not talk as you leave the proceeding. Do not gather to discuss the proceeding right outside the door or speak to the other presenting parties.	*Many proceedings are scheduled during the day, you may interfere with other proceedings.*