

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*

**PAROLE BOARD**

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*Chair*

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*Acting Executive Director*

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**RICKEY ALFORD**  
**W59381**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Review Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** June 1, 2023

**DATE OF DECISION:** September 7, 2023

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, James Kelcourse

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On February 15, 1995, in Clinton, Ricky Alford beat Julio Suarez, age 56, repeatedly with a baseball bat, killing him. On October 5, 1995, in Worcester Superior Court, Mr. Alford pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree and was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole. On July 30, 1999, Mr. Alford also pleaded guilty to an unrelated manslaughter charge in Louisiana. He received a 15-year sentence, concurrent with his life sentence in Massachusetts.

Mr. Alford appeared before the Board on June 1, 2023, for a review hearing. He was not represented by counsel. Mr. Alford was denied parole following hearings in 2010, 2015, and 2020. The entire video recording of Mr. Alford's June 1, 2023 hearing is fully incorporated by reference into the Board's decision.

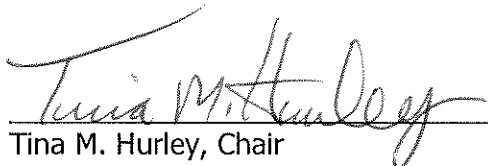
**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of offense, criminal record, institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the Board, we conclude that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole.

The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Alford has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Parole denied. Review in 2 years.<sup>1</sup> Case involves a MA murder. Also convicted of murder in Louisiana. Could benefit from additional programming. Demeanor at hearing did not suggest ready for release to community. Inmate has been incarcerated for 23 years. Currently on wait list for additional programming, which he would benefit from. Working in stitcher program. [He has] done Restorative Justice, Jericho program. [The victim's] family spoke against parole. [The District Attorney] spoke against parole. [The Board] suggests anger management, further programming to address [victim] empathy, including additional restorative justice, active listening.

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. Alford'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. Alford's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Alford's case, the Board is of the opinion that Mr. Alford is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Alford's next appearance before the Board will take place in two years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages him to continue working toward his full rehabilitation.

*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.*

  
Tina M. Hurley, Chair

09/07/2023

Date

<sup>1</sup> One Board Member voted to grant parole.