

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

PAROLE BOARD

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Chair

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

RODOLFO MELENDEZ¹
W89139

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: August 6, 2025

DATE OF DECISION: January 20, 2026

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sarah B. Coughlin, Angelo Gomez Jr.,² James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

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

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On February 19, 2008, in Hampden Superior Court, Rodolfo Melendez pleaded guilty to murder in the second-degree for the death of Young Man Kim. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he pleaded guilty to armed robbery and received a concurrent 10 to 15-year sentence. He also pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm and received a concurrent 3 to 5-year sentence. The life sentence was ordered to run concurrently with a 7 to 10-year sentence he received on January 29, 2007, out of Hampden Superior Court.

On December 16, 2005, Mr. Melendez had been arraigned in Holyoke District Court for armed robbery and possession of a firearm without an FID card. He was later indicted on these charges and, on January 29, 2007, in Hampden Superior Court, he pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm, intimidation of a witness, and armed robbery. He received concurrent 7 to 10-year sentences. On that same date, he pleaded guilty to possession of ammunition and received a 2-year concurrent sentence.

¹ Also known as Rudolfo Melendez.

² Board Member Angelo Gomez was not present for the hearing but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the file prior to vote. Board Member Tonomey Coleman participated in the hearing but departed the Board prior to vote.

On August 6, 2025, Mr. Melendez appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was not represented by counsel. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Mr. Melendez's August 6, 2025, hearing.

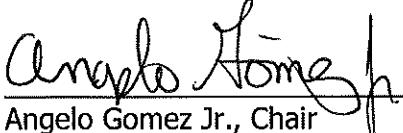
STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On November 21, 2005, 33-year-old Rodolfo Melendez entered Hair Plus Beauty Supplies in Springfield with the intent to commit an armed robbery. Along with his co-defendant, 20-year-old Pablo Carambot, the men began to speak to 64-year-old Young Man Kim, an employee of the store. During the conversation, Mr. Carambot pulled out a firearm and pointed it at Mr. Kim. When Mr. Kim threw an object at him, Mr. Carambot proceeded to fire one shot at Mr. Kim. The bullet struck Mr. Kim, and Mr. Carambot and Mr. Melendez fled the store. Mr. Kim was transported to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

In addition, responding officers noted that a tray appeared to be missing from a jewelry case in the store. Palm prints belonging to Mr. Melendez were recovered at the scene. Officers also received information from a witness that Mr. Carambot confessed to shooting the victim.

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.

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Melendez had his initial hearing before the Board. He is 52-years-old. Mr. Melendez has a significant criminal history from prior to this offense. He reports struggles with substance misuse. He has multiple disciplinary reports, which includes fighting. The Board recommends Mr. Melendez engage in programming related to Emotional Regulation and Violence Reduction. The Board considered the testimony of Mr. Melendez's family members in support of parole. The Board also considered the testimony of Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Lee Baker in opposition to parole. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Rodolfo Melendez 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.



Angelo Gomez Jr., Chair

January 20, 2026
Date