

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

WILSON MORALES
W56628

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: February 4, 2025

DATE OF DECISION: May 14, 2025

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

VOTE: Parole is granted on/after 2 weeks from date of issuance of Decision to GRIT.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On June 6, 1994, in Hampden Superior Court, Wilson Morales pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree for the death of Pablo Sanchez. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, he was found guilty of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon, for which he received a 10 to 20-year concurrent sentence. Parole was granted following an initial hearing in 2008. In 2009, his parole was revoked. He was denied parole after his review hearings in 2010, 2012, and 2017.¹ On February 4, 2025, Wilson Morales appeared before the Board for a review hearing. He was represented by Attorney Deirdre Thurber. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Wilson Morales' February 4, 2025, hearing.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On August 31, 1992, in Holyoke, 23-year-old Wilson Morales shot and killed 18-year-old Pablo Sanchez. An argument over a drug transaction led to an altercation between Angel Morales, Pablo Sanchez, and another man. Angel Morales fled from the fight and returned to the area with his brother Wilson Morales, who was armed with a gun. The Morales brothers engaged in a physical altercation with Mr. Sanchez and the other man, at which point Wilson Morales fired several shots at both men, fatally wounding Mr. Sanchez and seriously wounding the other. After the shooting, the Morales brothers fled first to New Jersey, and then to Puerto Rico, before surrendering to authorities.

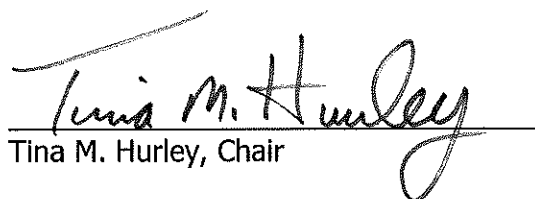
¹ Mr. Morales postponed his review hearings in 2021 and 2022.

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: This is Mr. Morales’ fifth appearance before the Board. He postponed his hearing in 2022. Mr. Morales was paroled in 2008, and revoked in January 2009, as a result of a mental health crisis. Following his return to custody, he was diagnosed with a major mental illness. He has had numerous psychiatric hospitalizations, in part due to his non-compliance with medication. As indicated in a forensic evaluation by Barbara Quinones, Ph.D., in May 2023, he was receptive to a medication adjustment and attended mental health appointments and has had no further behavioral problems. He no longer requires a Rogers Order, and he graduated from the Residential Treatment Unit. Mr. Morales has a supportive family who are aware of his mental health needs. The Board considered the expert opinion of Dr. Quinones in rendering its opinion. The Board is of the opinion that Mr. Morales would benefit from transitioning to a Residential Treatment Program that specifically treats individuals with mental illness. Mr. Morales’ conditions will include compliance with ongoing mental health treatment. Four of Mr. Morales’ family members testified in support of parole. The Board heard testimony in opposition to parole from Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Michael Julian. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Wilson Morales has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Long-Term Residential Treatment: GRIT program; Waive work for program and disability; Must take prescribed medication; 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 schizophrenia; Mandatory - hearing in the community at first sign of non-medication compliance.

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


Date