

A photograph of the Louisiana State Capitol building, a tall, ornate structure with a central tower and a dome, set against a clear sky. The building is framed by green trees in the foreground. A yellow rectangular block is positioned in the top left corner of the page, partially overlapping the image.

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Louisiana Board of Pardons & Parole

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our Mission _____	3
Our Vision _____	3
Our Values _____	3
Message from the Chairman _____	4
Board Members _____	5
Coming to a Decision _____	7
Clemency Process _____	8
Parole Process _____	9
Medical Treatment Furlough _____	10
Medical Parole Eligibility _____	11
Parole Supervision Statistics _____	11
2018 Strategic Plan Execution _____	14
2019 Strategic Plan _____	18
ACA Re-Accreditation _____	19

Our Mission

To serve the citizens of Louisiana through informed decision-making, thereby promoting public safety, addressing the needs of crime victims, and to facilitate successful reentry for offenders who have appropriately prepared for community supervision.

Our Vision

The Louisiana Board of Pardons & Parole, guided by evidence based principles, shall:

- Render just determination in regard to parole release and revocations, thereby maximizing the restoration of human potential;
- Ensure crime victims have a voice in the decision-making process;
- Use appropriate Department of Corrections and community resources to facilitate an offender's successful transition from confinement to the community;
- Impose reasonable conditions of release consistent with the goal of structured reintegration of the offender;
- Hold accountable those offenders who violate the conditions of release;
- Foster a positive relationship with all stakeholders;
- Administer the clemency process with recommendation to the Governor fully commensurate with public safety and due consideration;
- Strive to be a continuously learning organization

Our Values

We value Ethics, Integrity, Equity and Innovation.

Message from the Chairman



I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report on behalf of the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP). Over the past year, the BPP has taken tremendous strides to advance all aspects of our mission statement. Our progress towards achieving the strategic goals we set for 2018 is illustrated throughout this report. Please visit our webpage (<https://doc.louisiana.gov/louisiana-board-of-pardons-and-parole/>) for the 2019 strategic plan which sets out our plans for the year.

The historical criminal justice reform measures in late 2017 included changes to parole eligibility for over 2,000 offenders who were never eligible for parole consideration. Achieving the BPP's statutory obligation to consider eligible offenders in a timely manner has been challenging.

Throughout the year we have worked toward improved efficiency. Electronic processing for parole violations was fully implemented throughout all Probation & Parole offices. This greatly reduced the time to finalize parole decisions when a parole violation occurs. We have also fully implemented electronic parole files for board members to perform their due diligence in preparation for parole hearings. We will continue to find new ways to work efficiently through continued integration of technology and modernization.

This past summer brought about significant changes to the board's administrative team. We welcomed a new Executive Director, Mr. Francis Abbott. He brings years of experience in both the private and public sector. He has assembled a team of individuals who are particularly dedicated, hard-working, and caring people. Each member of the team is energetic in their efforts to implement change. It is a pleasure to share the workplace with them.

In the fall we worked with the Department of Corrections and the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement to develop an application for federal VOCA funding to develop a Louisiana Victim Outreach (LaVO) program. With the increase in new offenders now parole eligible, over 10% are convicted of violent offenses. We realized that their victims were not aware of the offender's new parole eligible status and were being re-traumatized when they received the required notice of a scheduled parole hearing. In December 2018 the BPP was awarded grant funding to develop the LaVO to better assist victims to understand, prepare for, and participate in the pardon and parole process. We are looking forward to fully developing this program as we realize the special place victims occupy in our criminal justice system.

The BPP continues to play a vital role in Louisiana's criminal justice system. We are committed to preserve and promote public safety through the evidence-based approach to parole decisions. I look forward to further our crime prevention efforts, exploring new partnerships, and working towards the goals we have set forth as we work to keep Louisiana's communities safe.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sheryl M. Ranatza". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Sheryl M. Ranatza, Board Chairman

Board Members



SHERYL M. RANATZA, Board Chair

Mrs. Ranatza retired from the position of Deputy Secretary with the LA Department of Public Safety and Corrections in 2011, after a career of over 30 years. She served in a variety of management positions throughout the DOC. She was appointed as Chairman of the Louisiana Parole Board in February 2012 and Chairman of the Board of Pardons in August 2012. She was re-appointed as Board Chair by Governor John Bel Edwards in January 2016.



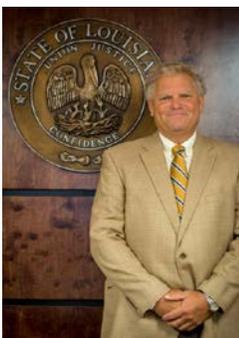
KEITH JONES

Mr. Jones is an attorney who has practiced in Baton Rouge since 1976. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Louisiana Tech University in 1973 and his Juris Doctorate degree from Louisiana State University Law Center in 1976. He is licensed to practice before all Louisiana courts and the United States Supreme Court. Through his law practice Mr. Jones has been exposed to various facets of criminal justice and has always had an interest in our corrections system and the offender population.



BRENNAN C. KELSEY, Committee on Parole

Mr. Kelsey is a Physical Therapist with over 20 years of experience in the healthcare field. Mr. Kelsey has worked in a variety of settings including mental health, outpatient, rehab and acute care. Mr. Kelsey received a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy from Louisiana State University Medical Center and a MBA in General Business and Healthcare from Southeastern Louisiana University. Mr. Kelsey was appointed by Governor John Bel Edwards to serve as an at-large member of the Committee on Parole.



KENNETH A. LOFTIN

Mr. Loftin retired in August 2015 after serving as Executive Director of Ware Youth Center in Coushatta for 27 years. Prior to his position at Ware, Mr. Loftin served as a Child Protective Investigator in the State of Louisiana's Office of Community Services. Mr. Loftin received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Behavioral Sciences with a concentration in psychology and sociology and a minor in religion from East Texas Baptist College.



ALVIN ROCHE', JR.

Mr. Roche' served as the Director of Library Services at Southern University Law Center from 1990 until his retirement in 2007. He had previously served as an Associate Law Librarian and Associate Professor at the University Library. Mr. Roche' received his Bachelor of Sciences Degree in Social Science-History with a minor in Library Science from Southern University and a Masters of Library Services from Louisiana State University. Mr. Roche' serves on the Board and Committee as the victims' advocate.



JIM WISE

After studying criminal justice at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana and completing the Calcasieu Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy, Mr. Wise served as a deputy in the Vernon Parish Sheriff's Office for 18 years as supervisor over all uniformed divisions. He later served as an Investigator at Louisiana State Penitentiary. Mr. Wise was first appointed to the Louisiana Parole Board in 2004 and was appointed to the Pardon Board in August 2012. He was re-appointed by

Governor John Bel Edwards in January 2016.



PEARL WISE, Committee on Parole

Ms. Wise's career in criminal justice career spanned over 20 years with the Division of Probation & Parole, working with parolees and supervising P&P officers. Ms. Wise received her Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Louisiana Monroe. She is a veteran of the Louisiana National Guard. After her retiring, Governor John Bel Edwards appointed Ms. Wise to serve as an at-large member of the Committee on Parole in

February 2016.

Coming to a Decision

In 2012, the duties, functions, and powers of the Board of Pardons were merged with that of the Board of Parole, creating a Committee on Parole.

All members of the Board are appointed by the Governor and are subject to confirmation by the Louisiana Senate. There are five members of the Board of Pardons. The Committee on Parole, a committee within the Board of Pardons, is composed of the five members of the Board of Pardons, and two at-large members appointed by the Governor. The at-large members serve only as members of the Committee on Parole and do not serve as members of the Board of Pardons.

In addition to the appointed members, there is an ex-officio member of the Board, the Warden of the facility in which the offender is housed. The ex-officio member is not a voting member nor is he counted for the purposes of the members necessary to take Board action.

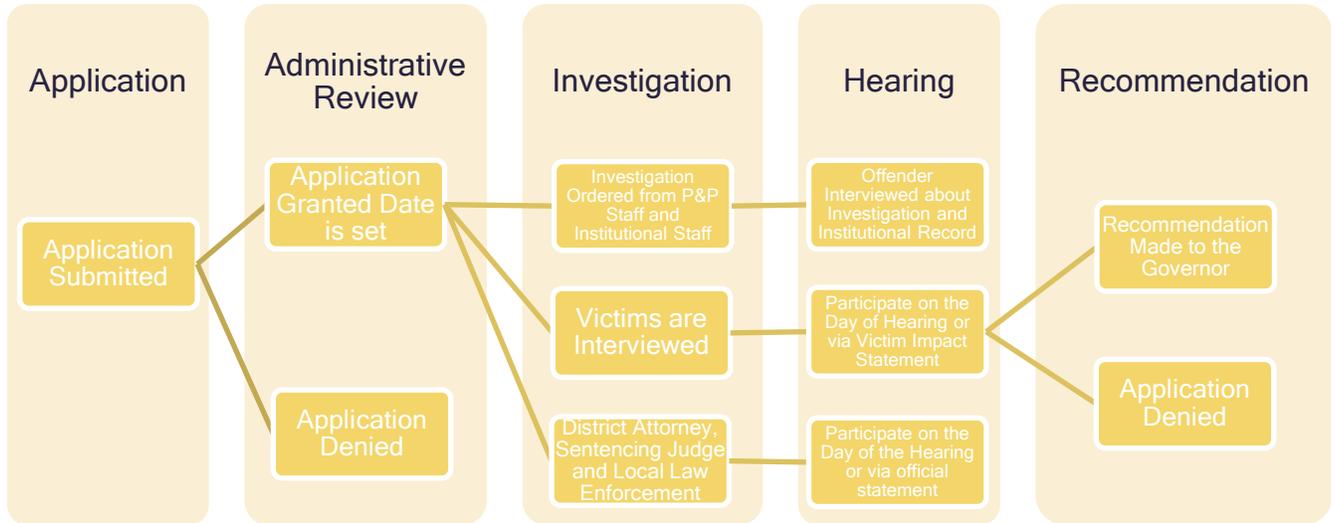
Members must have at least five years of experience in the field of penology, corrections, law enforcement, sociology, law, education, social work, medicine, or a combination thereof. Appointed members are also required to complete a comprehensive orientation training program within 90 days of their appointment and eight hours of in-service training annually. Training components include, but are not limited to:

- The elements of the decision-making process using evidence-based practices for determining offender risk;
- Needs, and motivation to change;
- Dynamics of criminal victimization;
- Security classifications.

Each of the Board's recommendations for clemency are forwarded to the Governor for final action. There are no time limits within which the Governor must act on any recommendation for favorable consideration by the Board of Pardons. However, the Committee on Parole is the sole authority for granting parole in Louisiana.

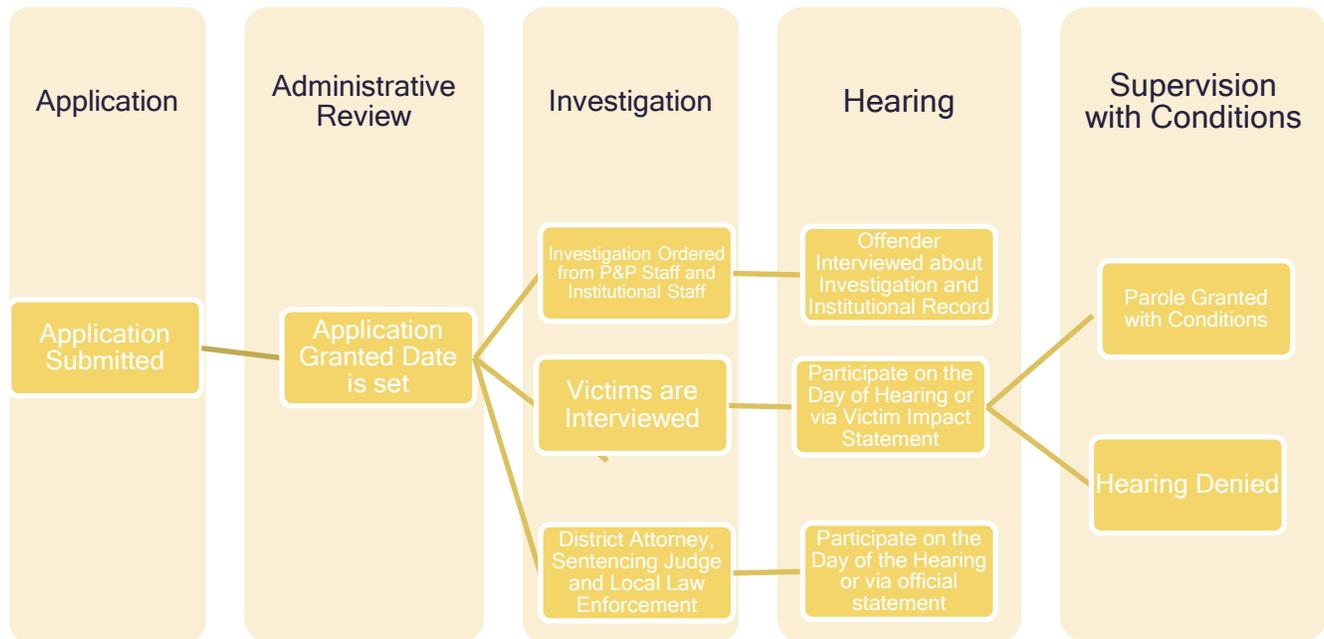
Clemency Process

The governor may grant reprieves to persons convicted of offenses against the state and, upon recommendation of the board of pardons, may commute sentences, pardon those convicted of offenses against the state, and remit fines and forfeitures imposed for such offenses. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the governor shall not grant any pardon to any person unless that person has paid all of the court costs which were imposed in connection with the conviction of the crime for which the pardon is to be issued.



Clemency Data	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY17	FY18
Applications received	879	931	804	1247	1600	514
Applications reviewed by Board	406	472	311	426	460	341
Clemency hearing opportunity granted	96	205	176	221	205	171
Clemency hearing opportunity denied	310	280	138	205	251	170
% of applications granted clemency hearing	23.60%	43.40%	56.60%	51.90%	44.60%	50.15%
Clemency hearings conducted	136	133	171	185	344	167
Relief Requested						
Reprieve - Capital Case	1	0	0	0	0	0
Commutation	34	41	101	112	193	114
Executive Pardon	101	92	70	73	151	53
Action Taken by the Board						
Favorable Decision	69	64	103	103	164	70
Unfavorable Decision	58	62	51	68	130	72
Taken Under Advisement	9	7	17	14	50	25
Cases Sent to the Governor	69	64	89	103	162	70

Parole Process



Prescriptive Bundles and Special Conditions of Release

While many of the offenders appearing before the Board have been exposed to Certified Treatment & Rehabilitative Programs there is still a portion that have not received programming that addresses their reasons for incarceration. Our support staff is reviewing records prior to hearings and flagging cases with special needs before their Board appearance. Ultimately we would like for these offenders to be placed in appropriate programming at facilities close to their residence plan to assist in strengthening family ties. We are focusing on the following risk factors:

- Substance Abuse
 - Medical Assisted Treatment
 - Long Term and Short Term
- Mental Health
 - Evaluations
 - Medicaid / Medicare Sign Up
 - After Care Plan
 - Specialized Parole Agents
- Employability
 - Expanding use of Transitional Work Program
 - Basic Vocational Training

- Education

A big challenge we face is the six to nine month time frame for which the Parole Certificate is valid. An offender may be denied due to lack of rehabilitative programming; but may not have had the opportunity to participate in programming. On the other hand if parole is granted, the Board may require the completion of a specific rehabilitation program prior to the parole release. For some offenders, particularly those who have been incarcerated for many years, completion may take longer than nine months. To address this issue we are developing a Denial Referral System to outline a prescriptive bundle for an offender who has been denied parole, track their program progress and completion, and expedite that offender's scheduling for a subsequent parole hearing.

PAROLEES GRANTED WITH CONTINGENCY							
Fiscal Year	TWP	SAB	HSE	Pre-Release	Total Granted Parole	Total Granted with Contingency	% Granted With Contingency
2012	86	168	15	0	673	269	40%
2013	150	120	8	14	671	292	44%
2014	125	101	17	20	865	263	30%
2015	91	93	7	10	756	201	27%
2016	63	101	8	10	647	182	28%
2017	84	103	4	5	521	196	38%
2018	38	107	1	0	564	146	26%

TWP - Transitional Work Program / SAB - Substance Abuse / HSE - High School Equivalency

Medical Treatment Furlough

An offender determined to be a limited-mobility offender may be considered by the Committee on Parole for medical treatment furlough release to an off-site medical facility appropriate to the offender's medical treatment needs. Limited -mobility offender is defined as an offender who is unable to perform activities of daily living without help or is bedbound, including but not limited to prolonged coma and medical ventilation. Medical treatment furlough is not available to any offender serving a sentence for a conviction of first degree murder.

Medical Treatment Furlough	Considered	Granted
FY18	11	6

Medical Parole Eligibility

Medical Parole is in addition to any other parole for which an offender may be eligible. The offender must be determined to be permanently disabled (unable to engage in substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical impairment which can be expected to result in death or which is or can be expected to be permanently irreversible) or terminally ill (any offender who is diagnosed with a terminal illness and death is expected within one year; the medical condition is usually permanent in nature and carries a poor prognosis). Medical parole is not available to any offender serving a sentence for a conviction of first or second degree murder.

Medical Parole	Considered	Granted
FY13	15	12
FY14	3	3
FY15	7	7
FY16	19	16
FY17	17	15
FY18	8	8

Parole Supervision Statistics

Average Number Of Offenders Under Jurisdiction Of The Board Of Pardons And Parole By Fiscal Year



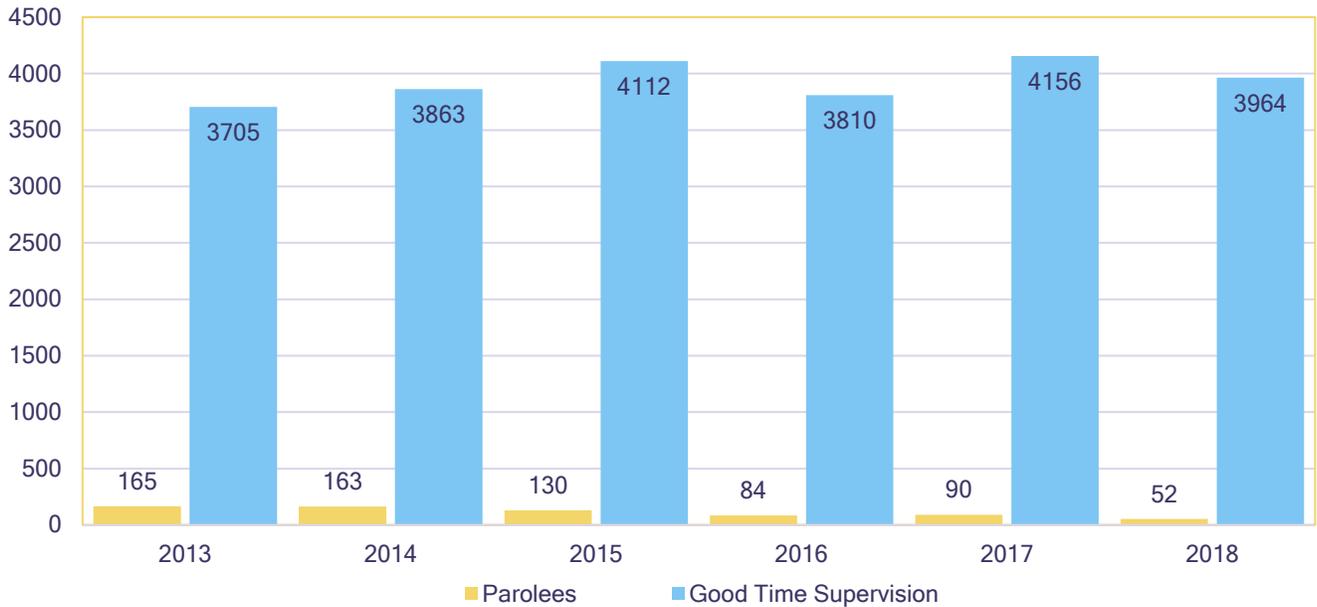
The chart above illustrates the average number of offenders who are under the jurisdiction of the Board for each fiscal year indicated.

Average Number Of Offenders By Supervision Type



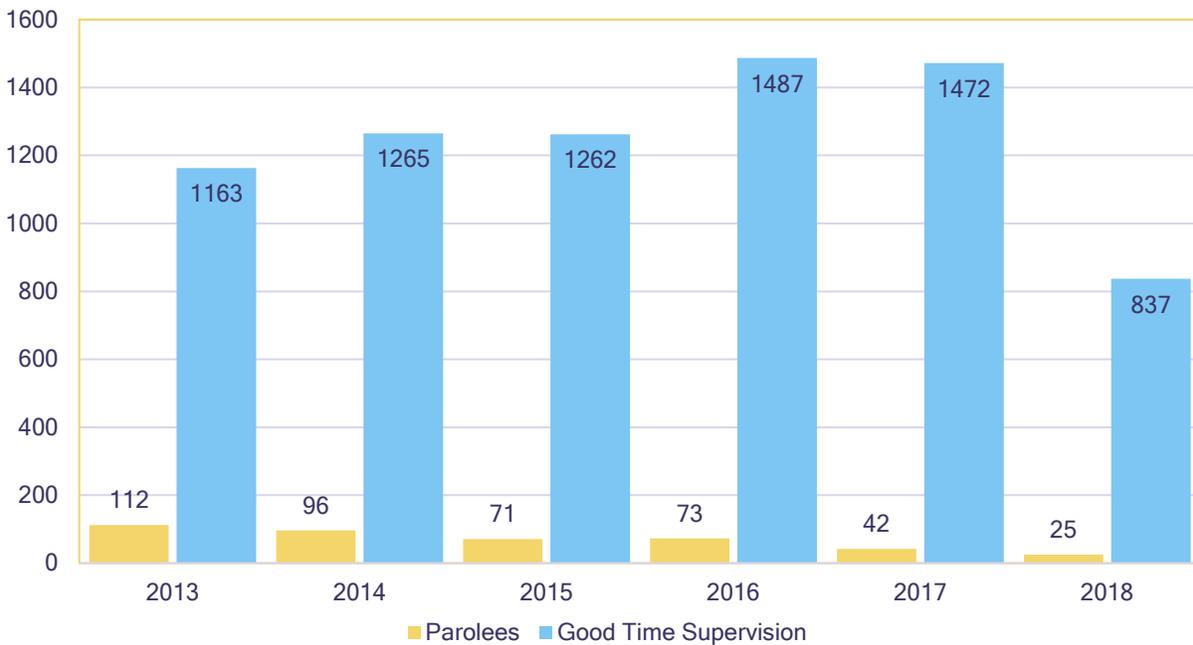
The chart above illustrates the average number of offenders who are under the jurisdiction of the Board for each fiscal year indicated, by type of supervision.

Revocations



The chart above illustrates the number of offenders whose parole supervision was revoked for each fiscal year indicated, by type of supervision. These offenders were returned to prison. The significant decrease in parolees whose supervision was revoked can be attributed to the Board's use of alternatives to revocation. (program participation, transitional work program, etc.)

Revoked for Technical Violation



To reduce incarceration for technical violations, various pieces of legislation have been approved by the Louisiana legislature. Most recently, Act 280 reduced the amount of time an offender can serve on a technical revocation. These measures allowed the prioritization of jail and prison beds for more serious offenders and for the direction of lower-level offenders to less expensive and, potentially more effective alternatives.

Other Actions (Performed by Single Member)

Other Actions (Performed by single member)	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY17	FY18
New felony conviction - Automatic revocation	682	641	703	756	840	1,053
Waived final revocation hearing	3,635	3,734	3,984	3,634	4,028	3,561
Deferred Preliminary Hearing	1,710	1,929	2,284	2491	2,505	2,468
Unsatisfactory Termination of Supervision	831	806	934	1204	1,280	,1110
Warrants	7,474	7,291	7,886	8340	8,247	6,999
Reprimands	1,329	1,213	1,221	1142	1,220	1,288
Add/Remove Special Conditions	1,569	1,183	1,164	1014	956	642
Total Single Member Actions	18,304	17,777	19,055	19,820	20,248	17,902

"I love what I do because it gives me the opportunity to help offenders and assist the public." - LaKisha Harris, Investigative Specialist

Act 299 Revocations 2nd or Subsequent Technical Violation			
Fiscal Year	2016	2017	2018
JUL	0	9	10
AUG	3	13	22
SEPT	13	15	7
OCT	19	17	15
NOV	10	11	0
DEC	19	17	0
JAN	17	5	0
FEB	12	1	0
MAR	15	23	0
APR	28	14	0
MAY	17	15	0
JUN	9	7	0
TOTAL	162	147	54

The chart above shows the number of times the Board imposed revocation under Act 299 for a 2nd or subsequent technical violation of the conditions of supervision, since the law became effective in August 2015.

2018 Strategic Plan Execution

Promote Public Safety

Collaboration is key to successful outcomes in reentry. Staff have worked to include as many law enforcement and service providers in our daily operations as possible. Through improvements in technology prosecutors have better access to Pre-Parole Investigations as well as Institutional Progress Reports. We continue to build relationships with community partners to pair releasing offenders with resources through innovative contingency requirements on parole decisions.

Informed Decision Making to Facilitate Successful Reentry

A great deal of our Bi-Annual Board Member Trainings have focused on strengthening the decision making process. In addition to training for Board members, we are pursuing training opportunities for support staff as well. Our staff has sought to learn more about Certified Treatment and Rehabilitation Programs offered at the various State operated institutions and participates in trainings involving topics vital to successful offender reentry. Areas of interest have included substance abuse, mental health, classification and evidence-based practices in a correctional setting. The goal is to screen offenders' files prior to a hearing and provide the Board with specialized recommendations for programming.

Addressing Needs of Crime Victims

Our mission statement says “*Addressing the needs of crime victims*” is one of the priorities of the Board. This has never been more difficult as we have seen major changes in legislation over the past three years and more offenders are receiving parole eligibility. Finding the balance between victims’ concerns, public safety and the rehabilitative efforts of the offender was never an easy job to begin with and now more than ever the Board needs more resources to bridge these gaps. As legislation has changed over the last two legislative sessions, more offenders with victims are eligible for parole. The Crime Victims Services Bureau of the Department of Corrections currently provides counseling on the day of the hearing. Moving forward it is our goal to identify victims in need of various services including education on the criminal justice system and mental health support prior to the day of the hearing. In addition, we will develop a network of victim services around Louisiana and make referrals, as contact is made with victims. To accomplish this, we have started the Louisiana Victim Outreach Program (LaVO) and were recently awarded a grant totaling \$180,000 from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement. Initially we will begin working with victims of violent offenses committed by Juvenile Lifers affected by Act 277 and 40 Year Lifers affected by Act 280.

Parole Board Staff Education and Outreach

2018 has been a very exciting year for the Board of Pardons and Parole. We have had a year filled with many changes that have provided several opportunities for outreach and education. In the last six months we have filled eight positions. With all of these staffing changes, we felt it was important to provide training opportunities that would not only benefit them but also use those opportunities to provide training for the offender population about the Board of Pardons and Parole.

Multiple trips have been made by Board members and staff to state prisons. These trips have included conducting live parole hearings, offender organized events and facility tours. This interaction with offenders and the staff provides insight into the Department of Corrections and the populations it serves.

“I am constantly encouraged to be innovative and learn different aspects of the job.” - Taylor Green, Investigative Specialist



In 2018, live hearings were held at Dixon Correctional Institution, Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women at Jetson and Louisiana State Penitentiary. These hearings give the offender the opportunity to plead for favorable consideration in a personal, face-to-face setting. The staff of the facility also get a firsthand look at what goes into hearings.

Over the past year Board members and staff have gone on various excursions to institutions. Destinations have included the Steve Hoyle Intensive Substance Abuse Program at Bossier Parish Prison (SHISAP), David Wade Correctional Center (DWCC), Elayn Hunt Correctional Center (EHCC), Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women at Jetson (LCIW) and Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP). Our newest board member, Keith Jones, and our Administrative Program Director John Poche, toured DWCC and SHISAP. While there they spoke to a group of offenders about the Board. Mr. Jones gained valuable training as a new board member, and was also able to bring some insight about the Board and its practices to the offender population at DWCC. Newly appointed Executive Director, Francis Abbott and Executive Management Officer, Elizabeth Traylor traveled to EHCC to participate in an offender led Empowerment Summit. Mr. Abbott spoke to a large group of the offender population about the Board and the many exciting changes that were taking place. In addition to the Empowerment Summit, Board staff have attended multiple Pre-Release classes at EHCC. Several staff



traveled to LCIW to speak to a large group of the female offenders. Mr. Abbott spoke to them about the mission of the Board and gave them some updates on changes that had been made in the last six months. Afterwards, he allowed the group to ask questions and the panel of board staff were able to answer many of their questions. This was a great opportunity for our staff to see the importance of what they do and how their jobs affect those that are incarcerated. LSP hosted an event to update the men housed there of the recent criminal justice reform successes that began with the Justice Reinvestment Initiative. Alongside Secretary LeBlanc, Mr. Abbott addressed offender concerns about the pardon and parole processes as well as outlined upcoming projects surrounding the topic of victim outreach. The information gathered during these site visits is imperative to growing the Board's understanding of the offender population

and expanding contingency offerings aimed at improving successful reentry. In addition, offenders get to ask questions about the pardon and parole processes.

As a Board, professional development and networking is essential to growing the knowledgebase of our members and staff. In July, Board Chair, Sheryl Ranatza was invited to speak on a panel at the Southern States Correctional Association Conference in Baton Rouge. Chairman Ranatza spoke to a group of



correctional staff from all over the country about the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Parole and was able to share insight with board members and staff from other states. Several board staff attended the workshop with Chairman Ranatza and gained valuable insight about how other states operate as it pertains to Pardon and Parole. Several executive staff, along with Chairman Ranatza, attended the Louisiana Correctional Association Training Conference in Lake Charles. While attending, staff were able to gain training on the newly implemented State Targeted Response Program for opioid use disorder, Victim Offender Dialogue, Courtroom



Security, Criminal Justice Reform, and several other areas, which they were able to bring back and share with staff and board members. Mr. Abbott had the opportunity to present at the Rural Criminal Justice Summit. This event was held on the campus of Southern Methodist University at the Dedman School of Law in Houston, TX with

the hopes of addressing issues of affecting justice involved individuals in rural communities.

2019 Strategic Plan

As we prepare for the challenges of 2019, it is important to build upon lessons learned in previous years. As we learn more about the needs of the populations we serve we can begin to focus our efforts on addressing these issues.

- Launch and grow our grant funded Louisiana Victim Outreach Program.
- Expand Prescriptive Bundles and Special Conditions of Parole Releases.
 - Employability
 - Medical Assisted Treatment
 - Mental Health Evaluations
 - Education
- Increase data tracking of internal process to improve efficiency.
 - Parole Decision Tracking
 - Denial Referral System
- Increase stakeholder involvement in pre and post-release.
 - Community Outreach
 - Strategic Collaborations

“I feel like I am the light at the end of the tunnel for these individuals.” - Ciara Marlow, Investigative Specialist

ACA Re-Accreditation

On August 5, 2018, the Louisiana Board of Pardons & Parole was reaccredited by the American Correctional Association. The accreditation certificate is displayed prominently in the Board offices and the Board hearing room as a small symbol of the enormous dedication and commitment demonstrated by each member of the Board and staff to the accreditation process. Moving forward we hope to secure a contract through Power DMS to manage our accreditation files electronically

Accreditation involves significant levels of compliance with rigorous standards to ensure maximum credibility, security, transparency, and efficiency. This process includes self-evaluation of:

- Level of compliance with all applicable national standards
- Agency operations
- Policies and procedures to assess compliance levels
- Identifying activities necessary to meet the requirements of the process
- Completing a self-evaluation report

After a rigorous audit by external auditors, the Commission on Accreditation awarded Accredited Status at its national meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Chairman Sheryl Ranatza (center), Administrative Director John Poche (left) and Executive Director Francis Abbott (right) with Accreditation Committee



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