

Board of Pardons and Parole

Who We Are:

- A body created and empowered by the Utah Constitution and legislative statutes. We are an independent state agency within the executive branch.
- Five full-time members and up to five pro tempore members.
- Our purpose is to determine when and under what conditions prison inmates should be released.
- Judges determine whether to send someone to prison for a felony conviction. They impose an indeterminate prison sentence (0-5, 1-15, 5-life, etc.). The Board Members, working by majority vote, determine release dates and parole conditions.

Mission: To render just decisions by balancing victim needs, offender accountability, and public safety with regard to the length of incarceration, parole supervision, termination of sentence, commutation of sentence, and pardons.

Vision: To make the State of Utah a safer, better place to live for all its citizens.

Values: To provide optimum protection of the public and safeguard the rights, privileges, and interests of victims and offenders; to make consistent, rational, and careful decisions, without regard to race, color, religion, gender, political affiliation, or national origin, on the merits of each case, taking into account aggravating and mitigating circumstances; to provide service in the most cost effective, efficient manner; and to respond to all inquiries in a timely fashion and work with other agencies to find solutions to problems.

How Decisions Are Made

1. Statutory backdrop: Utah Code Ann. §77-18-4 (serve sentence to maximum unless Board releases)
2. Start with minimum sentence imposed by the court
3. Sentencing Guidelines:
 - a. Recalculated by BOPP case analysts for consistency
 - b. Current Board (2009+) adheres pretty closely (validated by PEW)
4. BOPP decision factors (yellow handout)