

Connecticut Laws Governing Pardons and Parole

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Issue

Provide an overview of Connecticut's laws on pardons and parole. This report updates and expands OLR Report [2018-R-0177](#).

Summary

Under Connecticut law, the authority to grant pardons and parole after criminal convictions rests with the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP). (The governor's authority in this area is to grant reprieves after conviction for any offense, other than impeachment, until the next session of the General Assembly ([Conn. Const. Art. IV, § 13](#)).)

Regarding BOPP's authority to grant paroles, inmates who are sentenced to more than two years in prison generally can be considered. Inmates convicted of non-violent crimes are eligible to be considered for parole after serving 50% of their sentence. Inmates who committed violent crimes are eligible to be considered for parole after serving 85% of their sentence. Those convicted of certain crimes, like murder, are not eligible for parole.

In some circumstances, inmates nearing the end of their sentence or scheduled parole release date can be released before that date. The board can also release certain inmates on medical or compassionate parole. Additionally, alternative parole eligibility rules generally apply for certain inmates who were convicted of a crime committed while under age 21 and were sentenced to a prison term of more than ten years.

Regarding BOPP's authority to grant an absolute pardon or a provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation, the board may generally accept an application (1) three years after the applicant's conviction of a misdemeanor or violation and (2) five years after an applicant's conviction of a felony. For extraordinary circumstances, the board may accept an application for a pardon prior to these dates.

Among other things, this report discusses provisions as they apply to the pardon and parole processes that address requirements related to BOPP release panels, inmate eligibility, hearings and reviews, victim notification and statements, release conditions, revocation and rescission, discharge, pardon issuance, and record erasure. It also includes related miscellaneous provisions.

This report does not discuss special parole, which a judge can impose as part of an inmate's sentence, nor the provisions on deportation or the Interstate Compact for Adult Offender Supervision. (OLR Report [2025-R-0054](#) provides a summary of Connecticut's Special Parole System.)

BOPP's statistical information related to paroles, pardons, and certificates of rehabilitation applications through 2023 is available [here](#).

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BOPP's Authority

BOPP is a board within the Department of Correction (DOC) with independent decision-making authority to, among other things, (1) grant or deny parole, (2) establish parole conditions, (3) rescind or revoke parole or special parole, (4) grant commutations, (5) discharge any parolee or inmate eligible for parole from DOC custody, and (6) terminate special parole ([CGS § 54-124a\(f\)](#)). BOPP also has the authority to grant pardons (conditioned, provisional, or absolute) or certificates of rehabilitation for any offense against the state any time after the imposition and before or after the service of any sentence ([CGS § 54-130a\(b\)](#)). (OLR Report [2023-R-0161](#) describes the board's structure, including the appointment process and the requisite qualifications, training, and compensation or its members.)

Any decision of the board or a panel of the board must be made by a majority of the members present ([CGS § 54-124a\(p\)](#)). The board chairperson and the executive director must employ one psychologist with expertise in risk assessment and recidivism of criminal offenders to assist the board in parole release decisions ([CGS § 54-124a\(m\)](#)).

Paroles

Parole Orientation Program

The board consults with the DOC commissioner to establish a parole orientation program for all parole-eligible inmates when they are taken into DOC custody to provide general information on parole release, calculating time-served standards, general conditions of release, supervision practices, revocation and rescission policies, hearing procedures, and other information the board deems relevant to prepare an inmate for parole ([CGS § 54-124a\(l\)](#)).

BOPP's Parole Informational Brochure that is given to newly sentenced offenders is available [here](#).

General Parole Eligibility Rules

Inmates who are sentenced to more than two years in prison can generally be considered for release from prison on parole after serving a certain portion of their sentence. Inmates convicted of non-violent crimes may be eligible for parole after serving 50% of their sentence less any risk reduction credits. If a hearing is required before releasing an inmate, at least 75% of the sentence must be completed less any risk reduction credits. Inmates who committed violent crimes, home invasion, or 2nd degree burglary are generally eligible for parole after serving 85% of their sentence less any risk reduction credits. Those convicted of the following crimes are not eligible for parole: capital felony, murder with special circumstances, felony murder, arson murder, murder, and 1st degree aggravated sexual assault ([CGS § 54-125a\(a\) & \(b\)](#)).

Other Parole Eligibility Provisions

Parole of Inmate Nearing End of Sentence or Release Date

In addition to the general parole eligibility rules, other parole eligibility rules allow an inmate to be considered for release: (1) with six months or less left on the inmate's sentence and (2) within 18 months of parole release date.

Release With Six Months or Less Left on Sentence. An inmate with six months or less left on his or her sentence generally can be granted parole if the inmate agrees to be (1) subject to supervision by DOC personnel for one year and (2) retained in prison for up to the length of the unexpired prison sentence if he or she violates the parole conditions. Someone whose crime makes them ineligible for parole or eligible until they have served 85% of his or her sentence must serve 95% of the sentence before being eligible for release under this provision ([CGS § 54-125g](#)).

Release Within 18 Months of Parole Release Date. The board chairperson can transfer an inmate to a public or private nonprofit halfway house, group home, mental health facility, or approved community or private residence if he or she (1) has been granted parole release and (2) is within 18 months of the parole release date set by the board. The person is transferred to the board's jurisdiction but remains in DOC custody during the period of release and DOC employees supervise the person. The person may be returned to prison at any time ([CGS § 54-125h](#)).

Medical Parole

The board can release someone on medical parole at a date and under conditions it sets. The board can release an inmate (unless he or she was convicted of a capital felony or murder with special circumstances) at any time during his or her sentence if the inmate is diagnosed as suffering from a terminal condition, disease, or syndrome and is so debilitated or incapacitated by it as to be physically incapable of presenting a danger to society.

A licensed physician must make the diagnosis, which must (1) describe the terminal condition, disease, or syndrome; (2) include a prognosis of the likelihood of recovery; and (3) describe the inmate's physical incapacity. If the diagnosing physician is not employed by DOC or a hospital or medical facility used by DOC, the DOC medical director or a physician appointed by the DOC commissioner can review the diagnosis. A terminal condition, disease, or syndrome includes a prognosis for six months or less to live.

The board must require as a condition of release that the parolee agree to a placement determined by the board. This may include being placed for a definite or indefinite period in a hospital, hospice,

or other housing accommodation suitable to the medical condition, including with the inmate's family. The board can require periodic diagnoses as a condition of release. If the board reviews the diagnoses and finds that a parolee is no longer so debilitated or incapacitated as to be physically incapable of presenting a danger to society, the parolee must be returned to a DOC institution.

The board, DOC commissioner, or a prison warden or superintendent can request a diagnosis to determine eligibility for medical parole. The inmate or the inmate's spouse, parent, guardian, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, child over age 18, or attorney can make a request to the board or one of the officials for a diagnosis.

The board can appoint a special panel to implement these provisions. The board or special panel must review and decide medical parole requests on an emergency basis and act in all cases in as expeditious a manner as possible. The medical parole law does not affect an inmate's eligibility for any other form of parole or release ([CGS § 54-131a et seq.](#)).

Compassionate Parole

The board can grant compassionate parole release to an inmate (other than those convicted of a capital felony or murder with special circumstances) if the inmate (1) served at least half of the sentence or half after the board commuted the original sentence and (2) is so physically or mentally debilitated, incapacitated, or infirm due to advanced age or a condition, disease, or syndrome that is not terminal, as to be physically incapable of presenting a danger to society. A person granted release under this provision must be released under terms and conditions set by the board and supervised by DOC ([CGS § 54-131k](#)).

Parole Hearings

The law generally permits the board to hold a hearing to determine someone's suitability for parole if the person has served 75% of his or her definite or total effective sentence minus any earned risk reduction credits. For inmates who are not eligible for parole until they have served 85% of their sentence (see above), the board generally may hold a hearing when the person has met the 85% threshold. If a hearing is not held, the board must document the specific reasons and provide them to the inmate.

A board employee, or a panel if the chairperson deems it necessary, must assess the suitability for parole based on whether (1) there is a reasonable probability that the person will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and (2) the benefits to the person and society resulting from release to community supervision substantially outweigh the benefits from continued incarceration. If the

board determines that continued incarceration is necessary after a hearing, it must state specific reasons on the record why the person and public would not benefit from a period of parole supervision while transitioning from incarceration to the community. The board's decision cannot be appealed ([CGS § 54-125a\(d\) & \(e\)](#)).

Conducting Hearings

At least three board members must be present at each parole hearing. Parole release panels consist of two board members and the chairperson or a member the chairperson designates to act as chairperson. No panel may hold a hearing to determine the suitability for parole release unless the board chairperson has made reasonable efforts to determine the existence of and obtain all information deemed pertinent to the panel's decision and has certified that this information has been obtained or is unavailable.

Further, a panel cannot hold a hearing for an inmate who had to serve 85% of his or her sentence for parole eligibility unless the panel has the applicant's complete file, including any DOC documentation, the trial transcript, the sentencing record, and any previous parole hearing files. Each panel member must certify that the information has been reviewed in preparation for the hearing. The state's attorney must also send the board the record of someone sentenced to more than two years in prison within three weeks of the person being committed to custody ([CGS §§ 54-124a & -125a](#)).

The board can release someone on parole if it appears from all available information that there is a reasonable probability that the inmate will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and the release is not incompatible with the welfare of society. Under the terms and conditions set by the panel, the parolee may return to his or her home, reside in a residential community center (the parolee may be required to contribute to costs), or go elsewhere. The parolee remains under the board's jurisdiction until his or her period of parole expires. The parole order must set the limits of the parolee's residence, which the board and DOC have discretion to change. DOC personnel supervise people on parole ([CGS § 54-125a](#)).

Victim Statements

At panel hearings to determine an inmate's eligibility for parole, the panel must permit a crime victim to appear to make a statement for the record on whether the inmate should be released on parole or the nature of any terms or conditions of release. A victim can submit a written statement which becomes part of the record instead of appearing.

A “crime victim” is the victim of the crime, his or her legal representative, a member of a deceased victim’s immediate family, or a person designated by a deceased victim in a document that meets certain legal requirements.

When the board schedules a parole eligibility hearing, the judicial branch’s Office of Victim Services (OVS) must notify any victim of the inmate’s crime who is registered with the board of the hearing time, date, and location, and notify the victim that he or she may make or submit in writing a statement at the hearing. If the inmate is serving an indeterminate sentence or a sentence for felony murder, and was sentenced before July 1, 1981, OVS must work with the board to locate victims and their families to provide notice of the hearing. If such a victim is a police officer who is deceased, OVS must provide the notice to the police chief in the town where the crime occurred.

Nothing in the statute prohibits the board from using its discretion to permit a member or members of a victim’s immediate family to appear and make a statement under this provision ([CGS § 54-126a](#)).

Parole Decisions Without a Hearing

The board may consider certain inmates for release on parole without a hearing.

This applies to an inmate who:

1. was not convicted of a crime involving a victim known to the board who was injured or killed (a) in a crime or criminal attempt or (b) while attempting to prevent a crime, apprehend a suspect, or assist a police officer in apprehension;
2. was not convicted of a violent crime or certain other crimes, including 2nd degree burglary, 1st degree stalking, and criminally negligent homicide; and
3. is not prohibited from parole for any other reason.

Generally, inmates eligible for release under these procedures could be released on parole after serving half of their cumulative sentences. They can also be released within six months of the end of their sentences if they agree to be subject to DOC supervision for one year and to be returned to prison for the unexpired term of their sentences for violating parole conditions ([CGS § 54-125i\(a\)](#)).

Procedures

A board member or certain board employees can evaluate a person’s parole eligibility without a hearing by (1) using risk-based structured decision making and release criteria under the board’s

policies and (2) reviewing an inmate's offender accountability plan, including the environment to which the inmate plans to return. An employee can only conduct this evaluation if he or she is qualified by education, experience, or training in administering community corrections, parole, pardons, criminal justice, criminology, offender evaluation or supervision, or providing offenders with mental health services.

The board's chairperson must present a member's or employee's parole recommendation to a parole release panel for approval after making reasonable efforts to obtain all information pertinent to the decision and certifying that it has been obtained or is unavailable. After the chairperson does so, the panel determines whether the person is suitable for release on parole.

Parole may not be granted under these procedures unless board members and officers reviewing the inmate's file certify that they reviewed the recommendations and information ([CGS § 54-125i\(b\) & \(c\)](#)).

Alternative Parole Eligibility for Individuals Under Age 21

Eligibility Rules

Under the law, there are alternative parole eligibility rules for someone who (1) commits a crime when he or she is under age 18 and (2) is sentenced to more than 10 years in prison. These rules apply if they make someone eligible for parole sooner than under existing law, and they also apply to someone convicted of a crime who would otherwise be ineligible for parole. Under these rules, someone sentenced to:

1. 10 to 50 years in prison is eligible for parole after serving the greater of 12 years or 60% of his or her sentence or
2. more than 50 years in prison is eligible for parole after serving 30 years.

These rules apply to offenders incarcerated on or after October 1, 2015, regardless of when the crime was committed or when the offender was sentenced. They do not apply to any portion of a sentence imposed for a crime committed when the person was age 18 or older. Existing parole eligibility rules apply to such a sentence ([CGS § 54-125a\(f\)](#)).

Recently, the legislature broadened parole eligibility for certain offenders who were under age 21 when they committed the crime by extending (1) the alternative parole eligibility to offenders who were age 18, 19, or 20 when the crime was committed and (2) the lookback period to October 1, 2005, instead of 2015. It correspondingly applied the parole eligibility rules discussed above and

requirements on parole hearing and release decisions seen below to this new age group ([CGS § 54-125a\(g\)](#)).

Required Hearing

This law requires (1) a parole hearing when such a person becomes parole-eligible and (2) the board to notify, at least 12 months before the hearing, the Chief Public Defender's Office, appropriate state's attorney, DOC's Victim Services Unit (VSU), Office of Victim Advocate, and OVS. The Chief Public Defender's Office must provide counsel for an indigent inmate.

At the hearing, the board must allow:

1. the inmate to make a statement;
2. the inmate's counsel and state's attorney to submit reports and documents; and
3. any victim of the inmate's crime to make a statement, as allowed for other parole hearings.

The board may also request (1) testimony from mental health professionals and relevant witnesses and (2) reports from DOC or others ([CGS § 54-125a\(f\) & \(g\)](#)).

Release Decisions

Following the hearing, the board may release the inmate on parole if:

1. the release (a) holds the offender accountable to the community without compromising public safety; (b) reflects the offense's seriousness and makes the sentence proportional to the harm to victims and the community; (c) uses the most appropriate sanctions available, including prison, community punishment, and supervision; (d) could reduce criminal activity, impose just punishment, and provide the offender with meaningful and effective rehabilitation and reintegration; and (e) is fair and promotes respect for the law;
2. it appears from all available information, including DOC reports, that (a) there is a reasonable probability the offender will not violate the law again and (b) the benefits of release to the offender and society substantially outweigh the benefits from continued confinement; and
3. it appears from all available information, including DOC reports, that the offender is substantially rehabilitated, considering his or her character, background, and history.

The board must articulate reasons for its decision on the record. If the board denies parole, it may reassess the person's suitability for a hearing at a later time it determines but no sooner than two years after the denial. The board's decisions are not appealable ([CGS § 54-125a\(f\) & \(g\)](#)).

Conditions of Release

The board can set rules and regulations as it deems necessary for an inmate being released on parole and the panel for a particular case can set special provisions for the inmate's parole. The chairperson enforces the rules, regulations, and provisions and can retake and imprison the parolee for any reason the panel or the chairperson with the panel's approval deems sufficient. The chairperson can detain a person pending the panel's approval ([CGS § 54-126](#)).

The board, within available appropriations, can require an inmate to undergo specialized sexual offender treatment for at least one year before the board will schedule a hearing date to consider parole eligibility ([CGS § 54-125c](#)).

Incremental Sanctions for Parole Violations

The board chairperson and executive director are required to establish an incremental sanctions system for parole violations. This includes reincarceration based on the type, severity, and frequency of the violation and specific periods of incarceration for certain types of violations ([CGS § 54-124a\(l\)\(2\)](#)).

Revocation, Rescission, and Return to Prison

The board chairperson, in consultation with the board's executive director, must adopt regulations for parole revocation and rescission hearings including due process requirements ([CGS § 54-124a\(j\)](#)).

Rearrest. A request by the DOC commissioner, a DOC officer, the board, or the board chairperson is sufficient warrant to authorize any DOC officer or officer legally authorized to serve criminal process in Connecticut to return a person on parole to custody. Any officer, police officer, constable, or state marshal must arrest and hold any parolee or inmate when requested, without any written warrant ([CGS § 54-127](#)).

Parole Revocation or Rescission. A board employee must conduct all parole revocation and rescission hearings. Someone allowed to go on parole can have his or her parole revoked or rescinded if, after a hearing, the employee recommends it and at least two members of a board panel approve it ([CGS § 54-127a](#)).

Additionally, a police officer or a prosecutorial official may file an emergency petition with the supervisory staff of the probation or parole office and the chief state's attorney, citing the risk factors suggesting the parolee or person on probation is a serious threat to public safety. The

officer or official may present any information from criminal investigations or enforcement actions by law enforcement agencies. Within 48 hours of receiving the petition, the supervisory staff must seek a warrant for a probation violation or provide the rationale for not doing so ([CGS § 54-127b](#)).

State law prohibits cannabis possession or use from being grounds for revoking a person's parole, special parole, or probation if the person's violation met certain requirements (i.e., possession limit and age restrictions) or complied with the state's medical marijuana law. But it allowed cannabis use to be grounds for revocation if a person's conditions of parole, special parole, or probation (1) included a finding that cannabis use would pose a danger to the person or the public, with individualized reasons supporting that finding, and (2) required the person not to use cannabis ([CGS § 54-125k](#)).

Confinement Period. A paroled inmate returned to prison for violating parole can be imprisoned up to the unexpired portion of the inmate's sentence less any commutation or diminution of sentence earned. The board has discretion to determine that an inmate forfeits any or all of the earned time (earned time laws were repealed but still apply to inmates sentenced for crimes committed before October 1, 1994). The board can again parole the inmate ([CGS § 54-128](#)).

Discharge From Custody

If a board panel determines that a parolee or someone eligible for parole will lead an orderly life, by a unanimous vote of members present at a regular meeting, it can discharge the person from DOC custody and provide a written certificate to that effect under the board's seal ([CGS § 54-129](#)).

Community Partners in Action (a non-profit agency providing restorative services) and the DOC commissioner must make all reasonable efforts to secure employment and provide, directly or by contract, other necessary services for parolees or those discharged from custody, and the agents of the association can interview inmates before their discharge ([CGS § 54-131](#)).

Pardons

BOPP has the authority to grant pardons (conditioned, provisional, or absolute) or certificates of rehabilitation for any (1) offense against the state or (2) violation for which a sentence to a term of imprisonment may be imposed. The board may do so at any time after the imposition and before or after the service of any sentence ([CGS § 54-130a\(b\) & \(g\)](#)).

Pardon Eligibility Notice

The law requires the board to create a pardon eligibility notice explaining the pardons process and ensure it is given to a person when the person (1) is sentenced; (2) is released by DOC, including any pretrial release; (3) has completed or been discharged from a period of parole; or (4) has completed a period of probation or conditional discharge ([CGS § 54-130f](#)).

General Procedures

Eligibility. The board may generally accept a pardon application (1) three years after the applicant's conviction of a misdemeanor or violation and (2) five years after an applicant's conviction of a felony. If the board finds there are extraordinary circumstances, it may accept an application for a pardon before these dates ([CGS § 54-130a\(c\)](#)).

Processing of Applications. Upon written request by the state's attorney, the board must send pardon applications to them along with any non-confidential materials and documentations filed in support that may be shared; further, the state's attorney may appear at each session and make a statement ([CGS § 54-130a\(d\)](#)).

The board cannot deny an application for a pardon unless it provides a written statement of the factors considered and an explanation as to which factors the applicant did not satisfy ([CGS § 54-130a\(h\)](#)).

State law allows the board to institute inquiries into the previous history or character of any prisoner. Each prosecuting officer, judge, police officer, or other person must give the board any requested information regarding the prisoner's habits, disposition, career, and associates ([CGS § 54-130c](#)).

Hearings. For formal hearings, the board sits in panels of three members, and the board's chairperson must be on the panel if the hearing is for a commutation from the death penalty. The board must have a hearing at least once every three months and in various geographical areas of the state ([CGS § 54-124a\(e\)\(2\) & \(k\)](#)).

Victim Statement and Notification. The board must allow any victim of the crime for which the person was convicted to appear before the board to make a statement for the record concerning whether the convicted person should be granted a pardon. Alternatively, the victim may submit a written statement in that regard, which the board must make a part of the record ([CGS § 54-130d\(b\)](#)).

If the board is prepared to grant a pardon for a person convicted of a violent crime, the board must (1) make reasonable efforts to locate and notify any victim of the crime before granting a release or pardon and (2) allow the victim to appear before the board and make a statement or submit a statement as described above ([CGS § 54-130d\(c\)](#)).

Upon granting the pardon, the board must notify OVS of its action ([CGS § 54-130d\(d\)](#)).

Under this law, a “victim” is the actual crime victim, his or her legal representative, or a member of a deceased victim’s immediate family ([CGS § 54-130d\(a\)](#)).

Notification to the Court if Granted. If the board grants a pardon, it must provide written notification to the courts as follows:

1. for absolute pardons, to the (a) clerk of the court in which the person was convicted or (b) chief court administrator’s office if the person was convicted in the Court of Common Pleas, the Circuit Court, a municipal court, or a trial justice court.
2. for provisional pardons or a certificate of rehabilitation, to the clerk of the court in which the person was convicted ([CGS § 54-130a\(e\) & \(f\)](#)).

Expedited Pardons for Nonviolent Crimes

PA 15-2 authorized the board to establish an expedited pardon review process in cases involving nonviolent crimes ([CGS § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)](#)). These rules were promulgated under Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a(j)(2)-1a et seq. (Expedited Pardons Process). The board has the discretion to require a full hearing even if the applicant is eligible for an expedited hearing ([Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)-7a](#)).

Eligibility

The regulations allow a board employee to review each pardon application and identify applications eligible for an expedited pardon that meet criteria listed below ([Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)-2a](#)).

Under these rules, the board may grant an expedited pardon to an applicant without a hearing, if (1) the offense is not a violent offense, (2) it has been at least five years from the date of a felony conviction or at least three years from the date of a misdemeanor conviction (which is the same as for non-expedited pardons), and (3) the applicant has;

- a. completed serving his or her sentence, including any period of imprisonment, probation or parole, payment of court-ordered fines, and any court-ordered program or community service, as applicable;
- b. not been convicted of any other offense other than the offenses included in the application; and
- c. no pending criminal charges or open criminal cases in Connecticut or any other jurisdiction ([Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)-6a](#)).

Victim Notification

OVS or the DOC's VSU must attempt to identify and notify any victim of the offense that is the subject of a pardon application deemed eligible for an expedited pardon ([Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)-3a](#)). If a victim requests the opportunity to be heard personally before the board takes final action, the inmate becomes ineligible for an expedited pardon, and a full pardon hearing must be scheduled ([Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)-4a](#)).

Review and Approval

A panel consisting of three board members must meet to review each application for an expedited pardon. For an expedited pardon application to be approved, at least two of the three members of the panel must vote for approval. If the application is not approved, the pardon application may either be denied or scheduled for a full pardon hearing ([Conn. Agencies Regs. § 54-124a\(j\)\(2\)-5a](#)).

Provisional Pardons or Certificate of Rehabilitation

A "certificate of rehabilitation" is a form of relief from barriers or forfeitures to employment or the issuance of licenses, other than a provisional pardon, that is granted to an eligible offender by BOPP or the judicial branch's Court Support Services Division ([CGS §§ 54-130e\(a\)\(3\) & -108f](#)).

A "provisional pardon" is a form of relief from barriers or forfeitures to employment or the issuance of licenses granted to an eligible offender by BOPP ([CGS § 54-130e\(a\)\(8\)](#)).

General Provisions

BOPP may issue a provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation to relieve an eligible offender of barriers or forfeitures due to the person's criminal convictions specified in the provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation. This may be limited to one or more enumerated barriers or forfeitures or may relieve the eligible offender of all barriers and forfeitures.

The law requires the board to label the certificate of rehabilitation as a “certificate of employability” or a “certificate of suitability for licensure”, or both, as the board deems appropriate. The law specifies that a provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation must not apply or be construed to apply to the right of the person to retain, or be eligible for, public office ([CGS § 54-130e\(b\)](#)).

Limited Applicability. The board may limit the applicability of the provisional pardon or the certificate of rehabilitation to specified types of employment or licensure for which the eligible offender is otherwise qualified ([CGS § 54-130e\(e\)](#)).

Issuance of Provisional Pardon or Certificate

Upon verification of an eligible offender’s application, BOPP (either by a pardon panel or parole release panel) may, in its discretion, issue a provisional pardon or a certificate of rehabilitation. The board may do so at any time after an eligible offender’s sentencing, including any time before the date he or she is released from DOC custody or while under probation or parole ([CGS § 54-130e\(c\)](#)).

By law, the board may issue a provisional pardon or a certificate of rehabilitation only if the person is an eligible offender and the relief to be granted (1) may promote the public policy of rehabilitation of ex-offenders through employment and (2) is consistent with the public interest in public safety, victim safety, and property protection ([CGS § 54-130e\(d\)](#)).

Staff Investigation and Report to BOPP

In determining whether to issue a provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation, the board may request its staff to investigate the applicant and report on its investigation to the board. This report is confidential and may not be disclosed except (1) to the applicant, (2) where required or permitted by law, or (3) as authorized by the board ([CGS § 54-130e\(f\)](#)).

Temporary or Permanent Provisional Pardon or Certificate

If the board issues a provisional pardon or a certificate of rehabilitation before the eligible offender has completed serving the offender’s term of incarceration, probation, parole, or special parole, or any combination of them, the pardon or certificate is deemed temporary until the offender completes the term.

The board may revoke the temporary pardon or certificate if the offender violates any of its conditions. However, after the eligible offender completes the term of incarceration, probation, parole, or special parole, the temporary provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation must become permanent ([CGS § 54-130e\(g\)](#)).

Subsequent Provisional Pardon or Certificate

At any time, the board may issue a subsequent provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation to expand the relief previously granted. All the provisions that apply to the issuance of the initial pardon or certificate apply to the issuance of subsequent ones ([CGS § 54-130e\(h\)](#)).

Revocation After Reoffending

The board may revoke a permanent provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation if it is notified or otherwise becomes aware that the person has reoffended and has been convicted of a crime (felony or misdemeanor) after the provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation was issued. If a provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation is revoked, the barriers and forfeitures it relieves are reinstated as of the date the person receives written notice of the revocation. Upon receipt of the notice, the person must surrender the provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation to the issuing board or division ([CGS § 54-130e\(j\) & \(k\)](#)).

Monitoring

The law specifies that it does not require the board to continue monitoring the criminal activity of any person to whom it issued a provisional pardon or certificate of rehabilitation but who is no longer under DOC's parole or special parole supervision ([CGS § 54-130e\(k\)](#)).

Record Erasure

The granting of a provisional pardon or a certificate of rehabilitation does not entitle the person to erasure of the conviction record or relieve from disclosing the conviction as may be required ([CGS § 54-130a\(f\)](#)).

Miscellaneous Provisions

Absolute Pardons and IID Requirements End Date

Under state law, motorists may be required to install an ignition interlock device (IID) after certain administrative per se driver's license suspensions for driving under the influence (DUI). If the person was convicted for DUI and alcohol was one of the intoxicating substances, the required IID usage ends if the person received an absolute pardon ([PA 24-137](#), § 2, codified at [CGS § 14-227b\(m\)](#)).

Absolute Pardons for Certain School Threat-Related Offenses

The board must grant an absolute pardon to an applicant who is now at least age 18 but was convicted of committing certain school-related threats under the following circumstances:

1. the person was under age 18 when he or she committed the offense;
2. at least three years have passed since the person's conviction or discharge from court supervision or the care of an institution or agency to which he or she was committed, whichever is later, and during that three-year period, the person was not convicted as an adult of any crime; and
3. the person has had no subsequent pending juvenile proceedings or adult criminal proceedings ([CGS § 54-130g](#)).

Criminal History Search Fee for Pardon Application

By law, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection may waive the \$75 fee for a criminal history information record search for indigent individuals requesting the search in connection with their pardon application ([CGS § 29-11\(c\)\(1\)\(B\)](#)).

BOPP Reporting Requirements

The law requires BOPP to annually report to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), and make available online, specified parole-related case level data, including parole hearing outcomes and demographic information ([CGS § 54-125j](#)). The board must also annually report to OPM and the Sentencing Commission data on the number of provisional pardons and certificates of rehabilitation applications received, denied, granted, and revoked ([CGS § 54-130e\(l\)](#)).

BOPP's statistical information through 2023 is available [here](#).

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