

September 2012

GEORGIA PAROLE DISCOVERY A whole new world!

State Board of Pardons
and Paroles
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Director's Corner

Michael Nail, Director of Parole

As summer winds down, and school gets underway, it seems that things are back to a sense of normalcy. Reflecting on the agency's progress, I couldn't be more proud of the great job you are doing.

In Clemency, case processing by the CONS teams is at an all-time high and hearing examiners continue to increase the percentage of cases rated. In the Field Division, revocations are down and successful completions are rising, and the concept of "virtual offices" has become a reality.

In Support Operations, along with the first ever Victim/Offender Dialogue Program, soon officers will be graduating basic with the first ever certification as Probation/Parole Officer. Also we have embarked on a new era of technology to assist in helping us become more efficient and effective in our respective areas.

I could go on and on about the many initiatives and progress being made. One thing is certain though, none of it is possible without the commitment and dedication of our staff. As Coach Vince Lombardi said to his Green Bay Packers, "We cannot achieve perfection, but we will pursue it RELENTLESSLY!"

Thanks for your relentless effort in working to make us the most efficient and effective paroling authority in the nation!

Michael

Clemency Division Update

Melodee Stewart, Director

GDC's Boot Camp gets the boot!

Effective August 1, 2012, the Boot Camp Program, which was begun in Georgia in 1992, is no longer offered by the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC). Instead, the offenders who would previously have been considered for Boot Camp will now be considered for placement into the "SIP 3TO5" program. This program is an additional component to the existing Strategic Intervention Program (SIP) at Coastal State Prison. The criteria of this program remains the same as the previous Boot Camp criteria with the exception of the elimination of the 35 year age limit. Based on the offender's need as determined by GDC assessment, he will be placed in either the six month Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) program or the three month Intensive Re-Entry Program (IRP).

If the Parole Board approves the placement into SIP 3TO5, and if the offender successfully completes the program and no other factors prevent immediate release, the offender will be paroled the day after program graduation. It is anticipated that the recidivism rate for offenders completing either RSAT or IRP will be less than for those who completed boot camp.

Did you know? The average age of the Board's employees is 44, with the youngest being 20 years of age and the eldest being 77.

Field Operations Update

Jay Lacienski, Director

Mobile Crisis Assistance Available to Staff

The Georgia Crisis & Access Line (GCAL) is a 24/7 resource for parole staff for mental health, addiction and behavioral healthcare crisis services statewide. Mental health appointments are also scheduled through GCAL, for parolees re-entering the community with mental health conditions.

GCAL provides Mobile Crisis Services within 40 counties, and clinicians are available 24/7 by calling 800-715-4225. Parole Officers, families, and parolees may access GCAL for in-home and on-site crisis intervention, to assess individuals with urgent and emergent needs.

In the event an individual is observed to be at risk, GCAL can be contacted for phone triage. If determined necessary, a mobile crisis counselor will be dispatched. A brief on-site assessment will be conducted to determine the care required for the individual's stabilization.

In the event GCAL does not have mobile crisis services available in an area, guidance may be provided for accessing alternative immediate care.

The use of GCAL and mobile crisis counselors can be effective with assisting parole officers, families, and residential providers in maintaining the community stability of individuals with mental health conditions. Re-hospitalization or short term incarceration may be averted due to immediate availability of clinical interventions.

**Operations Support - Scott Maurer, Director
Shalandra Robertson, Director of Victim Services
Victim Offender Dialogue**

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) is launching Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD) this fall, providing an opportunity for victims of violent crimes to have a structured, safe, one-on-one meeting with their offender. Victims will be able to confront offenders with the full range of emotions they have experienced related to the crime including anger, shame, confusion and sometimes even compassion. VOD can only be initiated by the victim and the offender must voluntarily agree to participate and must acknowledge his/her role in the crime.

VOD is not simply a conversation. It requires a lengthy preparation process involving both the victim and the offender. A trained facilitator meets with the victim and offender separately during the preparation process over a period of several months. The fundamental role of the facilitator is to build a relationship of trust and honesty with the victim and offender, which allows both participants to feel comfortable enough to share the truth of their pain and shame.

Jon Wilson of justalternatives.org provided VOD facilitator training June 4th - June 8th. OVS Director, Shalandra Robertson, Program Manager, Elizabeth Langford, and six DOC staff graduated and are prepared to serve as facilitators. Additional training will be provided September 9th - 14th for eight additional facilitators. OVS is currently working to establish the framework of VOD to prepare for the fall 2012 launch.