

Parolees Frequently Asked Questions

Will I be notified when the inmate leaves the prison to begin parole?

If you are a victim of crime and registered with OVA and want to be notified of the exact date of the inmate's release from prison, you should call our office at 1.800.563.6399. Upon request, we do provide parole release information, when available, prior to the offender's actual release.

The release information currently available includes the offender's date of release, the PBPP office out of which the offender will be supervised and, when available, the name of the assigned parole agent. In cases where the offender is being paroled to a community corrections center, we also provide the name and location of the center.

If you are enrolled in PA SAVIN and your contact information is current, you will receive the following notifications from PA SAVIN via phone and/or email:

- When the inmate is released on parole from a SCI
- If the offender fails to report to the CCC or to the parole agent and is placed in "absconder" status

How long after release does the parolee have to report to his parole agent? How often will the parolee have to see the parole agent?

The parolee must report to the duty agent at the assigned parole office within 24 hours of release from prison, Monday through Friday. The number of times the parolee must see his parole agent is determined by the level of supervision the offender is under. Upon the offender's release from prison, parole agents utilize a risk-needs assessment to determine the appropriate level of supervision for the offender. In addition to this assessment, there are certain criteria that must also be considered:

- A parolee serving time for a violent offense can never be below the medium level of supervision
- Sex offender supervision must never be below the maximum level of supervision
- Upon release, ALL parolees must be at least under the medium level of supervision

There are two types of contacts involved: face-to-face and collateral. Face-to-face contacts entail the parolee and the parole agent meeting, either in the PBPP office or where the parolee lives or works. Collateral contacts involve the parole agent meeting with those who have contact with the parolee, without the parolee present. Collateral contacts can include treatment providers, employers, or family members.

Can I know where a parolee lives or works?

Due to legal restrictions, OVA staff is not permitted to release the addresses of private residences where parolees may live or businesses where parolees may work. Should you have a concern regarding the location of a parolee, please contact our office at 1.800.563.6399.

Can I know if he/she is in treatment or involved in special programs, like parenting classes or drug and alcohol counseling?

Information about the treatment an offender may be actively involved is confidential and cannot be released to the public. If you have questions about any conditions that the parolee is expected to follow, please contact our office.

What do I do if the parolee contacts me?

If the parolee is behaving in a way that is threatening and/or places you in immediate danger, you should contact your local police department or call 911 immediately. If the parolee has made or attempted to make contact with you, you may notify the parole agent. Be prepared that the agent will ask you questions about the type of the contact, the time and date it occurred, or if there were any other witnesses to the contact. You may always contact us to discuss what happened and what your options are.

Does my offender fall under Megan's Law?

This is not a question that can be answered generally as it depends on when the offender was sentenced and the crime of conviction. Please refer to the Sexual Offenders Assessment Board or PA Megan's Law for more specific information about Megan's Law in Pennsylvania. Also, you may call our office with any additional questions that you may have.

What happens if the parolee fails to report to the community corrections center or to the parole agent?

The parole agent will attempt to locate the offender and if this fails, PBPP will issue a warrant for the parolee's arrest. The parolee is considered an "absconder" when this occurs.

Am I allowed to contact the parole agent?

Yes. We encourage you to do so. Once the offender is paroled, our office has very little direct information about the offender and his progress while on parole. Although parole agents are restricted by law in providing specific information regarding an parolee's address and progress in treatment, they can talk to you in general terms about supervision and what is expected from a parolee.

However, if you are having difficulty reaching the parole agent, and have questions about contacting the parole agent or do not feel comfortable contacting the parole agent, you may call our office and we will make the contact on your behalf.

Is my contact with the parole agent confidential?

Not necessarily. Parole agents are not bound by the same confidentiality as staff members of the Office of the Victim Advocate. If you are worried about confidentiality, let the parole agent know at the beginning of your conversation. If you are providing information regarding potential violations of parole supervision, it is important to remember that the parole agent may have responsibility to act on such information, if warranted.

How can I find out which parole office is supervising a parolee?

You can find out which PBPP office is supervising the parolee by:

If you are a victim of crime, calling the Office of the Victim Advocate at 1.800.563.6399 during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.).

If you are a community member, calling the PBPP at 717.772.4343 during regular business hours.

Is the parolee allowed to leave the state?

A parolee may leave the state, but only with the permission of the parole agent. If a parolee does not receive permission and is found to have left his agent's district or the state without permission, this is considered a parole violation.

How do I receive restitution?

Agents do not collect restitution. However, as making restitution payments along with other court-ordered financial obligations is a condition of parole, agents can monitor payments to the county collection agent (i.e.: Clerk of Courts, Adult Probation, etc.). Parolees make payments directly to the county collection agent, who then disburses the money.

[You can check the status of restitution payments by searching the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania HERE.](#)

What is a violation of parole? Does any violation result in his return to prison?

A violation of parole occurs when the parolee fails to comply with conditions of parole. There are two types of violations: criminal and technical. A criminal violation occurs when the offender is convicted of a new crime while on parole. A technical violation occurs when the offender engages in behavior that may not be illegal, but goes against a condition of his parole. For example, it is not illegal for someone over the age of 21 to enter a bar and consume an alcoholic beverage. However, for an offender who is on parole and who has restrictions prohibiting him from consuming alcohol or entering a bar, this would be a technical violation.

Parole agents practice progressive sanctions, which may include the following: a written warning, attending additional treatment, increased contacts between the parolee and the agent, or having the parolee meet with the agent and the agent's supervisor.

If a violation does rise to the level where parole supervision staff wants to return the parolee to prison, the parolee is entitled to a hearing. If, after the hearing, the PBPP does not find that the offender violated parole to the extent that he should be returned to prison, the offender is immediately released and continues on parole until the sentence is complete.

If the PBPP does determine that the offender is going to be formally returned to prison, they may approve the offender for reparole, list the offender for an additional review, or have the offender serve the remaining balance of his sentence.

Does the parolee have to be employed?

As long as the offender is physically or otherwise capable of working, PBPP expects that they be employed or in an educational or job training program and be actively seeking employment.

Is a parolee allowed to drive?

Generally, yes. In specific types of offenses (DUI, etc), it is not uncommon for PBPP to impose a condition allowing a parolee to drive provided they possess a valid license, proof of insurance, and a valid registration. However, in addition, they typically also need their agent's permission to drive.

If a parolee is not restricted from driving, then the parole agent collects information such as the offender's driver's license information, as well as the make and model of the vehicle the offender will be driving.

What is the difference between a "mandatory" condition and other Board-imposed conditions? Can the parole agent impose conditions?

There are two types of conditions that impact an offender's parole: general and special. A general condition applies to every parolee regardless of the crime of conviction and includes, but is not limited to, the following: maintaining regular contact with parole supervision staff; complying with all laws, including the vehicle and liquor codes; abstaining from drug use, assaultive behavior and the possession of firearms; and abiding by any other special conditions.

Special conditions include both imposed conditions and mandatory conditions. Imposed special conditions are those added by parole supervision staff, hearing examiners, and Board Members. These can be removed or modified by parole supervision staff. Mandatory special conditions can be included only at the discretion of a Board Member and, therefore, can only be modified or removed by a Board Member.

What is the difference between a "no contact" condition as part of parole and a Protection From Abuse (PFA) Order? If there is a "no contact" condition, do I still need to apply for a PFA?

A "no contact" condition is imposed by the PBPP or parole agent and is enforced by a Parole agent. Violation of such a condition is handled by the parole agent.

A PFA is a court order issued by a Judge and enforced by the police. If you qualify, we suggest you obtain a PFA. A PFA can address other issues such as residency and custody. In domestic violence situations, this can be an important part of staying safer. If you obtain a PFA against someone under PBPP supervision, it would be helpful to let the parole agent know.

What is electronic monitoring?

When a parolee is placed on electronic monitoring, a base unit is placed in the parolee's residence and an ankle bracelet is worn by the parolee. When engaged, the PBPP is electronically notified if the parolee leaves their residence or tampers with the ankle bracelet. If the PBPP receives a notification, a phone call is placed to the parolee's residence. If the parolee does not answer, follow-up is done by the agent but this may not

occur immediately. If you have safety concerns, do not rely on electronic monitoring to help keep you safe.