



ABOUT YOUR HEARING

Your parole hearing is your chance to tell the Parole Commission why they should grant you your parole. It is where you explain what happened, show remorse, detail the ways you've changed through your incarceration, and let them know you're going home to success. Everything you've done up to this point has been preparing you for this presentation.

Although the outcome of this meeting will determine your future for the next few years, it is better to be prepared than to be scared. By getting your paperwork in order, building your case and being ready for your hearing, you can be confident that you've done everything possible and relax. The following suggestions will help you make sure you're ready for the big day.

WHAT TO DO DURING YOUR HEARING

- Speak clearly and slowly
- Pause and process each question before answering
- Ask questions if you don't understand something
- Make eye contact with the Commissioner(s)
- Hold something like a pen, paper clip or binder in your hands, so you don't fidget
- Give all the reasons you are a good candidate for parole
- Be prepared to explain infractions and "bad facts" (example: prior violations, criminal history)



AVOID



THINGS TO AVOID DURING YOUR HEARING

- Don't say or imply that you deserve parole
- Don't make excuses or blame others for your behavior
- Don't talk just to fill the silence. Stop and allow the Parole Commissioner to ask the next question
- Don't dodge questions or try to talk around them. Be direct and honest
- Don't look at victims/victim's representatives at an open hearing unless invited to do so
- Don't get sidetracked. Keep your answers concise and focused
- Don't be afraid, just do your best



Before Your Hearing

- Share in groups or take a class to get public speaking experience
- Meet with your case manager to make sure your institutional file is complete
- Work with your advocate or friend to do a mock parole hearing to prepare you for difficult questions you may face
- Be sure to bring:
 - a. a copy of your parole packet
 - b. two copies of any additional information you want to add (one for you and one for the Parole Commissioner)
 - c. a list of bullet points you want to discuss
 - d. a positive attitude

ABOUT PREPARE

PREPARE: Prepare for Parole and Reentry is a Maryland-based not-for-profit with a mission of empowering people to make their best case for parole. Our program began in the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) in 2021. It grew out of the work of Maryjoel Davis, and her organization Second Chance for Women, as well as the work that was already being done by the women in the prison to help themselves and others.

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PREPARE FOR YOUR HEARING



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