



## WHAT IS PAROLE?

Parole is the conditional release from prison prior to a mandatory release date. In Maryland, the Parole Commission considers a variety of factors before making a grant of release, including:

- The circumstances of the crime
- Remorse
- Rehabilitation/Institutional adjustment
- Reentry plan (e.g. housing, work, transportation)
- Educational achievements and work
- Risk of recidivism

It is possible, over time, to become a better candidate for parole, and your encouragement and support can guide your friend or family member in the right direction. It is important to start preparing immediately. Here are some ways you can help at any stage of the process.

## ABOUT PREPARE

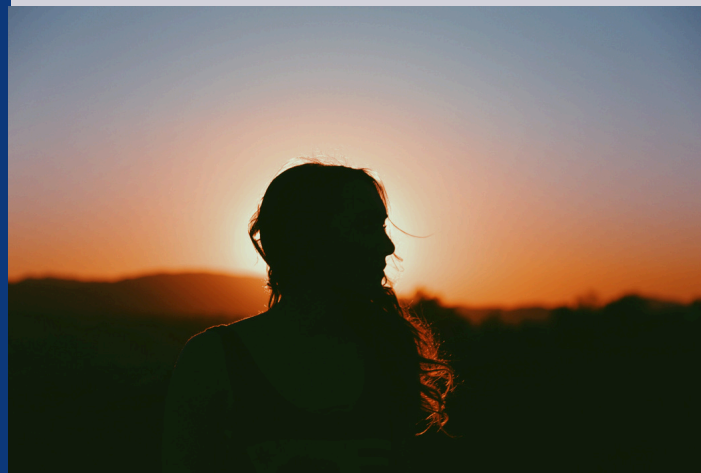
PREPARE: Prepare for Parole and Reentry is a Maryland-based not-for-profit with a mission of empowering people to make their best case for parole. Our program began in the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) in 2021. It grew out of the work of Maryjoel Davis, and her organization Second 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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# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT A PAROLE CANDIDATE



**PREPARE**  
PREpare for PARole and REentry

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

(MORE THAN A YEAR PRIOR TO HEARING)

From the day they are sentenced, an individual should be aware of the criteria for parole and begin actively working toward becoming the best possible candidate. S/he should also begin collecting documentation to include in the parole packet that will be assembled closer to the hearing. There are several things you can do to assist, even at an early stage:

- Encourage him/her to seek therapy, programming, and education
- Remind him/her to gather letters, evaluations, certificates, and infraction records
- Keep a duplicate copy of important documentation in a safe place
- Provide encouragement and emotional support
- Ask questions, verify dates, and resolve any issues or discrepancies immediately
- Be aware of parole eligibility, upcoming court hearings, and time limits. Consult an attorney or the Office of the Public Defender if you are uncertain. Some common court motions are:
  - Modification
  - 8-505/8-507
  - Post-Conviction



## HELP WITH PAROLE PACKET

(6-12 MONTHS BEFORE HEARING)

When your friend or family member is ready to start preparing his/her parole packet, there are several important roles you can play, depending on your relationship with the candidate and reentry assistance you plan to provide.

- If you have been maintaining a duplicate file, check it against the candidate's file to ensure everything has been submitted to the Parole Commission
- If you will be providing a specific type of support, especially a home or job, write a letter giving specific details
- If you are in the area that the candidate will return to, contact local reentry, recovery, mental health, or other resources. Get their information, a written document of what services they can provide, and an acceptance letter, if possible
- Even if none of this applies, you should still write a support letter highlighting your relationship with the candidate, the growth and remorse you've observed, and why you believe s/he will succeed on parole



## SPEAK TO PAROLE COMMISSION

(2-3 MONTHS BEFORE HEARING)

You are allowed a 30-minute advocacy meeting with a Parole Commissioner prior to your friend or family member's hearing, but you have to schedule it in advance. If you have a PREPARE advocate, s/he will make arrangements for you. If not, you can schedule a meeting with the Administrative Officer:

[mpc.administration@maryland.gov](mailto:mpc.administration@maryland.gov)  
Phone: (410) 585-3256

Up to four people may attend the meeting. Suggested topics are:

- The role you will play in the candidate's reentry
- Positive changes and growth you've noticed
- Ways the candidate has impressed you during their incarceration
- Ways the candidate seems remorseful and determined to make better choices in the future
- Ways you've supported the candidate during incarceration
- Suggestions the Commissioner may have on how the candidate could improve over the next few months