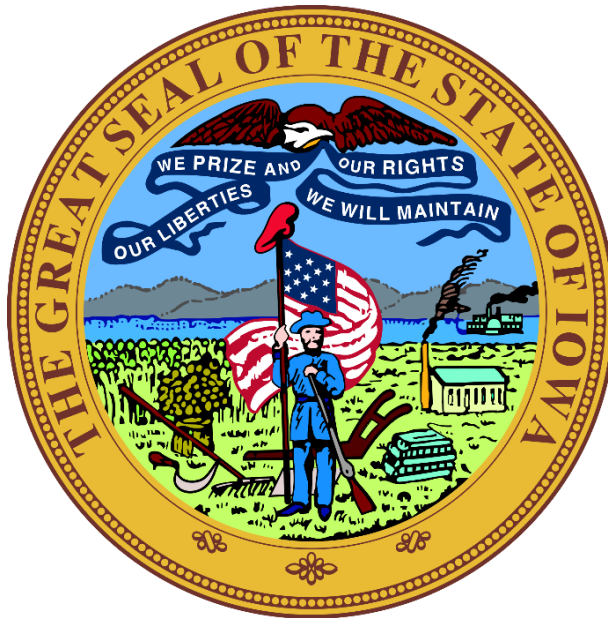




**Iowa Board of Parole
Annual Report Fiscal Year 2024**



**Renee Schulte, Chair
Meredith Lamberti, Vice Chair**

Board Members:

Ralph Haskins
James Moses
Jesse Rincon
Susie Weinacht

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Highlights

- The Board of Parole completed 10,294 deliberations in FY24. The deliberations resulted in 3,242 paroles, 1,162 work releases, and the imposition of 551 special sentences pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 903B.
- The Board continued to prioritize its work to ensure registered victims have the opportunity to provide input into the deliberative process and are notified of decisions made by the Board. In addition, the Board continues to have a toll-free victim telephone number to facilitate communication (800) 448-4611.
- Administrative law judges issued 3001 decisions in FY24 and 1,520 resulted in a discretionary revocation.
- The Legislature appropriated \$1,517,894 to the Board and \$107,775.86 was left unspent, half of which reverted to the General Fund, and half transferred to a training and technology carry forward account for FY24, per Iowa Code section 8.62(2).
- On July 1, 2023, the prison population totaled 8,157 offenders (116.7% capacity) and the year ended with 8,417 incarcerated (120.4% capacity).

Agency Overview

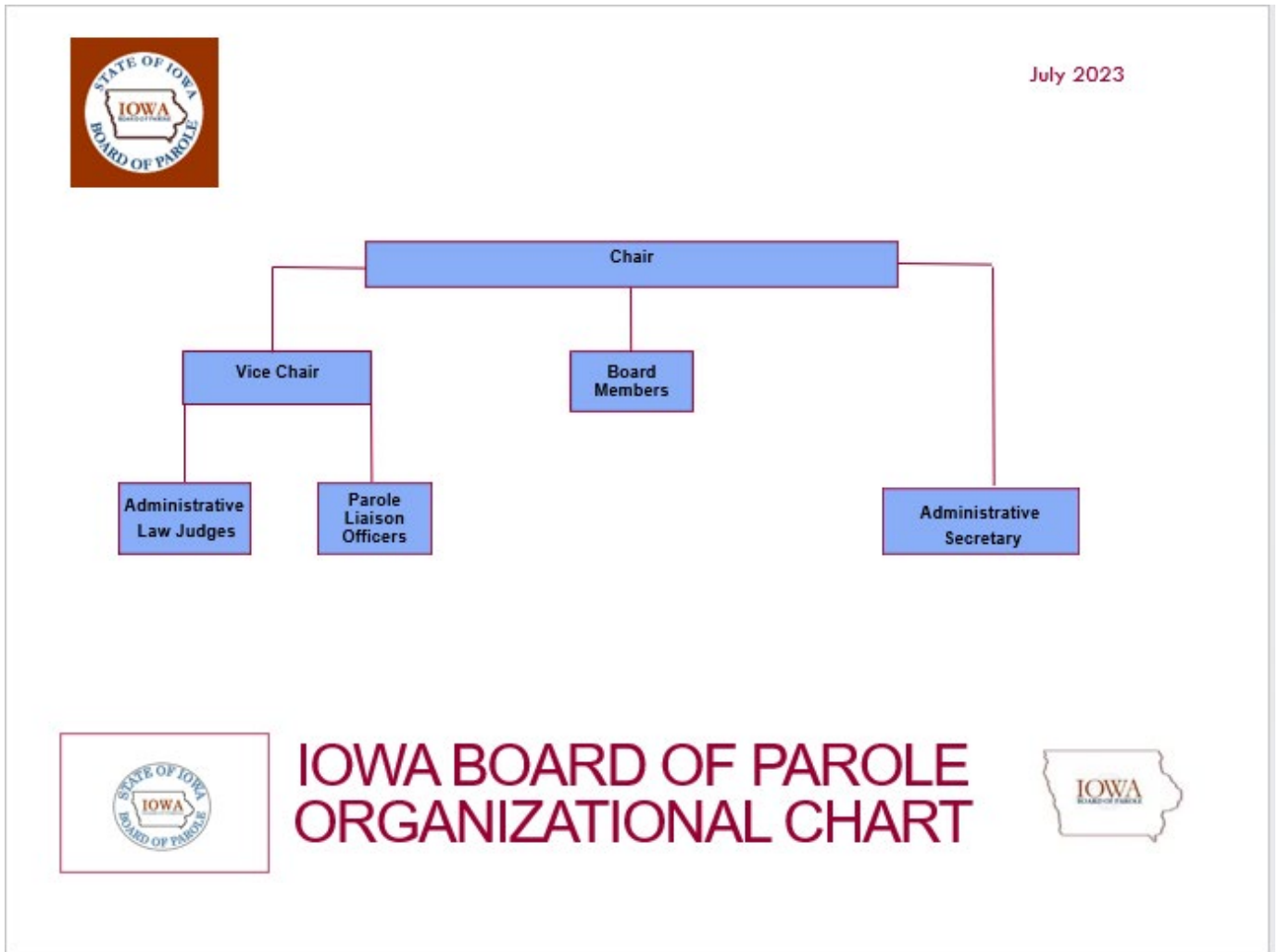
The Board of Parole was established in 1907 by the 37th Iowa General Assembly. The Board is composed of one full-time chairperson, one full-time vice-chairperson, and three full-time board members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate for staggered four-year terms. In fiscal year 2024, the term of one Board Member, Ralph Haskins, ended. James Moses, Jr. was appointed to the Board to fill this vacancy. Board membership must include at least two of the following: at least one non-lawyer, at least one lawyer licensed to practice law in Iowa with knowledge in correctional procedures and issues, and at least one individual who holds a master's degree in social work or counseling and guidance and who is knowledgeable about correctional procedures and issues. State law also requires that Board membership be racially diverse and balanced along political affiliation. Members report directly to the chairperson, and the member serving as chairperson serves in that role at the pleasure of the Governor. The Board has its own support staff¹, but also receives administrative support from the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC).

The mission of the Board is to enhance overall public safety by making evidence-based parole decisions to successfully reenter offenders back into the community to become productive and responsible citizens. To achieve this mission, the Board:

- Reviews and interviews offenders for parole and work release consideration in accordance with applicable administrative rules and via a deliberative system that respects the interest of the public, victims, and offenders, while being mindful of the finite resources available.
- Gathers and reviews information regarding new parole and work release programs being instituted or considered nationwide to determine which programs may be appropriate for use in Iowa.
- Utilizes evidence-based practices to perform risk assessments and promote supervised release at the appropriate time and level.
- Works to enhance a collaborative working relationship with all stakeholders in the criminal justice system by providing technical assistance, information, and counseling on matters related to the Board of Parole's purpose.
- Reviews and makes recommendations to the Governor regarding applications for reprieves, pardons, commutation of sentences, and special restoration of citizenship rights pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 914.

¹ See Table of Organization

Iowa Board of Parole Organizational Table



Board of Parole Members – Biographies

Renee Schulte, Chair

Appointed to the Board of Parole as Chair in September 2023, Renee has worked in many levels of behavioral health care including psychiatric hospital, child welfare, and therapeutic foster care as a licensed mental health counselor. As a legislator, she spearheaded the passage of mental health redesign in Iowa creating a regional system from an original 99 county system. As a consultant, she has worked with multiple states creating strategic plans, legislation and regulations. She has also used her expertise and unique background in government relations and consulting for both nonprofit and for-profit providers of healthcare services. She served on the Parole Board as an Alternate for two years, prior to this appointment.

Meredith Lamberti, Vice Chair

Meredith Lamberti was appointed by Governor Kim Reynolds as Vice Chair of the Board of Parole in November 2021. She grew up in Ankeny and later attended Drake University for both her undergraduate degree and law school, with a short stopover in between to teach English to middle school students in Shijiazhuang, China. After graduating from law school, Meredith was a law clerk to Iowa Supreme Court Justice Bruce Zager for two years. She then went on to work as an Assistant Attorney General where she represented the Department of Human Services in child and dependent adult abuse appeals, in addition to termination of parental rights appeals. Meredith also serves on the board at On With Life in her hometown and is an advisor to college members of her sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta. She is honored to continue her career of public service in this role.

Ralph Haskins, Board Member

Appointed by Governor Kim Reynolds as a member of the Iowa Board of Parole in 2019. Mr. Haskins holds a Bachelor's Degree from Michigan State University and numerous professional certifications. He and his wife have called Iowa their home since 1982 when he received a corporate transfer to the state. He attributes their relocation as a true gift bringing them to their cherished State of Iowa where they raised their four children and he successfully launched his career and founded a successful residential design-build construction firm and a construction material supply company. Mr. Haskins has been involved in numerous volunteer and philanthropic activities including chairing an international faith-based mission organization and is a past president of the Des Moines Area Home Builders Association. He attends Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines and has been active in projects there including oversight of building the Knapp House of Hope in partnership with MainStream Living. In addition, he has employed and mentored numerous incarcerated individuals and believes in second chances. He is also an active citizen engaging in various policy matters and takes pleasure in serving Governor Reynolds on the Board of Parole.

Sue "Susie" Weinacht, Board Member

Appointed as an Alternate Member of the Board of Parole in 2017; then Board Member in 2019. Recognized by her community as a leader who makes a difference in the lives of many for the betterment of humanity; Susie is a recipient of the State of Iowa 2020 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Achievement Award for her demonstrated commitment to the vision of Dr. King by promoting the racial equality of all people in Iowa through service, diversity, cultural awareness, and active community participation. Among other recent recognitions is the Cedar Rapids Gazette Everyday Hero recognition, Woman of Achievement in Service to the Community, by Waypoint Services, and the Community Biggie Award, presented by Iowa BIG. Her educational background includes earning an Executive Leadership Certificate from Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, and a BSc in Education & Teaching Certificate from Eastern Illinois University.

Jesse Rincon, Board Member

Jesse Rincon was appointed by Governor Reynolds to the Board of Parole in November of 2023. He worked in the California prisons from 1996 to 2005. Jesse started out as a CO and worked himself up to training Lieutenant. In 2005, Jesse decided to move back to his hometown of Des Moines Iowa and continue his correctional career with the Fifth Judicial District as an RO, then to PO II, and then eventually promoted to PPO III. He enjoys his role as a board member, because it is a good opportunity to have mental flexibility and view different perspectives from the other members of the board. Jesse enjoys spending time with family, riding his motorcycle, and playing guitar, to bring balance to his life.

James "JaMo" Moses, Board Member

James Moses was appointed to the Board of Parole (BOP) in May of 2024. James holds a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts in English from the University of Iowa. James played basketball for the Iowa Hawkeyes from 1988 through 1992. James started his career in Community Based Corrections at the 6th Judicial District Department of Correctional Services (DOC) in June of 1995 and transitioned to the 5th Judicial District (DOC) in the fall of 2021. James has over 28 years of Department of Corrections (DOC) experience prior to his appointment to the Board of Parole. James is humbled and honored by this opportunity to assist in Public Safety for the Citizens of Iowa.

Strategic Plan

Iowa Board of Parole undertook a strategic planning exercise to identify areas of focus for future development of the Board and its members. It is continuously reviewed based on additional insight and information gathered. The following are ongoing parts of the aforementioned plan:

Training and Professional Development:

- Participate in facility and field location visits to gain better understand operations and facilitate open and active communication across agency boundaries.
- Review intervention programs utilized in Iowa and similar states and explore if those programs would be beneficial to our offender population.
- Continue the practice, when feasible, of including an educational component after each business meeting to learn about and remain up to date on current practices, research, data, and legislation that affects paroling activities.

Analysis and Data Sophistication in Conjunction with Department of Corrections:

- Research and evaluate recidivism rates and identify patterns.
- Research and evaluate revocation activity to identify patterns.
- Evaluate and continue to develop evidence-based policies and practices.

Stakeholder and Public Outreach:

- Enhance and maintain the Board's website for purposes of providing accessibility to information pertaining to Board operations, meetings, and schedules.
- Enhance partnership with Department of Corrections policymakers.
- Enhance partnership with the Community-Based Corrections system.
- Enhance the notification system for registered victims.
- Assist the Governor, when requested, to collect and make recommendations for clemency and commutation of offender sentences.

Population Review Program in Conjunction with Department of Corrections:

- Develop and enhance the Board's methods for identifying cases and target populations to review via periodic internal reviews of the prison population.
- Review candidates at the appropriate time for release consideration.
- Research and evaluate alternatives to traditional revocation.

Parole Risk Assessment Tools

The Board adopted the Iowa Violence and Victimization Instrument (IVVI) as its primary static risk assessment tool for non-sex offenders. The Iowa Board of Parole routinely works with the Iowa Department of Corrections to review and evaluate the assessment tool. The assessment's main use is to aid the Board in measuring the potential for reoffending.

The Board continued to utilize the Iowa Sex Offender Risk Assessment (ISORA) and the Static-99 for sex offender specific risk calculation.

In addition to the IVVI static risk instrument, the IDOC also utilizes a dynamic risk assessment tool called the Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Reentry – Institution (DRAOR – Institution) for use in case planning.

Validated risk instruments are one of many tools utilized by the Iowa DOC and BOP.

Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON)

The Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON) is the main database shared by the Department of Corrections, the Board of Parole, and community-based corrections. This module makes it possible for the Board and the Iowa Department of Corrections to share information on a real-time basis and increases Board workflow and efficiency.

The Board of Parole continually works with the Department of Corrections to increase ICON functionality.

Panel Decisions

Panel reviews are held virtually via Zoom. This allows for Board members to participate remotely and provided victims from around the state to interact with the Board without traveling to Des Moines to participate.

Workload and Decisions Summary

The Board is a full time working board. The Board conducts case reviews, interviews, and decides appeals. The Board also reviews and votes on executive clemency and commutation applications. A complete breakdown of the Board's workload can be found below.

Workload and Decisions Summary

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
RELEASE DECISIONS			
Parole	2658	3488	3242
Work Release	1005	1202	1162
Special Sentence	479	551	551
Release Denied	5024	4702	3620
Appeals Denied	1021	824	626
Appeals with Modification	6	21	21
Interview Granted	560	417	430
Other/Miscellaneous ²	475	692	642
TOTAL DECISIONS	11228	11897	10294*
SPECIAL REVIEW DECISIONS			
Amend Decision	354	533	462
Paroles Rescinded	108	81	79
Work Release Rescinded	85	58	49
Special Sentence Rescinded	9	18	14
Special Review Denied	13	36	38
TOTAL SPECIAL REVIEW DECISIONS	569	726	642
EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY			
Commutation Decisions	86	12	20
Recommended	5	1	1
Pardon Decisions	14	16	27
Recommended	2	4	7
Firearm Restoration Decisions	47	42	93
Recommended	24	18	47
Firearm Restoration/Pardon Decisions	35	69	72
Recommended FA/P	7	17	18
Recommended FA Only	11	16	27

² Includes effective date changes, decision changes, special condition changes, and work release extensions.

* Drop in total release decisions due to change in ICON to align with State code reducing no release churn.

Parole Revocations

The parole revocation process begins with the receipt of a parole officer’s violation report. The alleged violator is subsequently notified to appear before an administrative law judge (ALJ) for a parole revocation hearing. The ALJ determines whether or not the parolee is in violation of the terms of the parole agreement. If the ALJ finds that a parole violation has occurred, one of the following sanctions may be imposed:

- Reinstatement of parole
- Reinstatement of parole with additional conditions imposed (for example, but not limited to, substance abuse evaluation, GPS monitoring, intensive parole supervision, referral to an appropriate treatment program)
- Revocation of parole to a work release program
- Revocation of parole and return to prison

Pursuant to Iowa Code Sections 908.10 and 908.10A, Board ALJs do not hear cases involving parolees sentenced to prison for new felonies or aggravated misdemeanors. In these instances, the parole is deemed revoked as of the date of the commission of the new offense. Although no hearing is conducted for an automatic revocation, an ALJ is required to process the revocation order and notify the parolee of the revocation.

Revocation Statistics

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
PAROLE REVOCATIONS			
PAROLE REVOCATION HEARINGS	2919	2760	3001
Parole Revoked to Prison ³	547	552	650
Automatic Revocations	339	319	336
Parole Revoked to Work Release	456	344	351
Paroles Revoked ⁴	1199	1091	1184
TOTAL PAROLES REVOKED	1538	1410	1520

³ Does not include automatic revocations.

⁴ Includes revoking parole to work release, and revoke and discharge parole but does not include automatic revocations.

Victim Services

The Board established its first program for victim participation in 1986. As part of this program, the position of Victim Coordinator was added to the Board's staff. Today, the Victim Coordinator's primary responsibility is to assist victims who want to exercise the following rights established by the Iowa Victim Rights Act, Iowa Code Chapter 915:

- Notify victims of violent crimes, not less than twenty days prior to the Board conducting a hearing at which the offender will be interviewed, and inform the victim that they may submit their opinion concerning the release of the offender in writing prior to the hearing or may appear personally or by counsel at the hearing to express an opinion concerning the offender's release.
- Notify the victim, whether or not the victim appears at the hearing or expresses an opinion, of the Board's decision regarding release of the offender.

The Board continues to register victims of violent offenses. The ICON victim module, merging DOC and BOP victim records, was completed in FY16 and has helped make this process much more accurate and efficient.

At the end of FY24 a total of 8,244 victims were registered with the Board of Parole. The Board mailed a total of 5,882 victim notifications during FY24.