

Parole Guidelines Scores range from one, for an individual with the poorest probability for success, to seven for an offender with the greatest probability for successfully discharging their sentence on parole without returning to prison.

The guidelines are neither automatic nor presumptive of whether an offender will receive parole. Parole panel members retain the discretion to vote outside the guidelines when circumstances of an individual case merit doing so.

Offense Severity Class	MALE RISK LEVEL			
	Highest (16)	High (9-15)	Moderate (4-8)	Low (3 or less)
Highest	1	2	2	3
High	2	3	4	4
Moderate	2	4	5	6
Low	3	4	6	7

Offense Severity Class	FEMALE RISK LEVEL		
	High (10+)	Moderate (4-9)	Low (3 or less)
Highest	2	2	3
High	3	4	4
Moderate	3	5	6
Low	4	6	7



Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles
P.O. Box 13401, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711



TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

PAROLE GUIDELINES

HISTORY

Prior to 1983, the Board used Salient and Significant Factor Score sheets when making parole decisions. The Board adopted the PABLO Scale, in 1983, to aid members in applying similar criteria to parole decisions.

The Legislature mandated the Board incorporate Parole Guidelines, in 1985, with minimum release criteria, into parole decision-making. Based on research, the Parole Guidelines were to consider the seriousness of the offense and the likelihood of a favorable parole outcome.

The Board combined the PABLO Scale with Parole Guidelines that measured parole risks to set a parole risk score in 1987.

After conducting a study of guideline usage in 1996, the Criminal Justice Policy Council recommended revised guidelines be developed to ensure the criteria reflect Board policy, to apply the guidelines in a consistent manner to all candidates for parole (reliable), and to predict the of risk to public safety (valid).

The Policy Board adopted the assessment and design of the new parole guidelines as submitted by Security Response Technologies Inc., on January 18, 2001.

On January 29, 2009, the Board adopted Dr. James Austin's report, modifying and updating the Parole Guidelines. Additionally, he revised instructions for completing the risk assessment, created a new Supplemental DWI Risk Assessment Factors and Scale and trained staff.

In 2012, MGT of America Inc., conducted research and recommended the change to separate risk scales by gender, which the Board adopted.

On April 16, 2015, the Board partnered with a consultant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and adopted a new range of Recommended Parole Approval Rates. In addition and based upon research a recommendation was also made to change the final guideline level from 4 to 3 in the "High" Risk, "Moderate" Offense Severity position of the Matrix.

COMPONENTS OF THE GUIDELINES

The revised parole guidelines consist of two major components that interact to provide a single score. The first is a Risk Assessment Instrument that weighs both static and dynamic factors associated with the inmate's record. The other component is Offense Severity class.

RISK ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Static factors are those associated with the inmate's prior criminal record. They will not change over time. Dynamic factors reflect characteristics the inmate has demonstrated since being incarcerated and are factors that can change over time.



Static factors include:

- Age at first commitment to a juvenile or adult correctional facility;
- History of supervisory release revocations for felony offenses;
- Prior incarcerations;
- Employment history;
- The commitment offense.

Dynamic factors include:

- Inmate's current age;
- Whether the inmate is a confirmed security threat group (gang) member;
- Education, vocational and certified on-the-job training programs completed during the present incarceration;
- Prison disciplinary conduct;
- Current prison custody level.

An inmate can be assigned 0-10 points on static factors and 0-9 points on dynamic factors. A low score is associated with low risk. The higher the score, the greater the risk the inmate presents for a successful parole.

As a result of the revalidation study it was determined that a separate risk scale for males and females was necessary.

SCORE ASSIGNED RISK LEVEL		
Based on total of Static and Dynamic Factor points, risk level assigned to offender should be determined below:		
Offense Severity Class	MALE (POINTS)	FEMALE (POINTS)
Low Risk	3 or less	3 or less
Moderate Risk	4-8	4-9
High Risk	9-15	10+
Highest Risk	16+	N/A

OFFENSE SEVERITY CLASS

Parole Board members have assigned an offense severity rating to every one of the 2,642 felony charges in the Penal Code. Offense Severity classes range from Low for non-violent crimes such as credit card abuse, to Highest for capital murder. An inmate's most serious active offense is assigned an Offense Severity Class according to the established list.



THE PAROLE GUIDELINES SCORE

The two components of the guidelines – Risk Assessment and Offense Severity – are merged into a matrix that creates the offender's Parole Guidelines Score (at the intersection of risk level and offense severity in the diagrams below). Separate risk scales have been developed for male and female offenders.