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.

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 (10+)	High (7-9)	Moderate (4-6)	Low (3 or less)
Highest	1	2	2	3
High	2	3	4	4
Moderate	2	3	5	6
Low	3	4	6	7

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

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For more information on parole guidelines, please visit the website and select the "Parole Guidelines" link.

For information on the parole review status of an offender, please visit the website and select the "Inmate Search/Parole Review Information" link or call the toll free number.

TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

PAROLE GUIDELINES

HISTORY

Prior to 1983, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) used Salient and Significant Factor Score Sheets when making parole decisions.

In 1983, the Board adopted the PABLO Scale to aid members in applying similar criteria to parole decisions.

In 1985, the Legislature mandated that the Board incorporate Parole Guidelines, 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.

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

In 1996, after conducting a study of guideline usage, the Criminal Justice Policy Council recommended that revised guidelines be developed to ensure that 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).

On January 18, 2001, the Policy Board adopted the assessment and design of the new Parole Guidelines as submitted by Security Response Technologies, Inc.

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.

On October 28, 2020, the Board adopted Dr. James Austin's re-validation report, enhancing the risk assessment instrument, and discontinued use of the Supplemental DWI Risk Assessment Factors and Scale.

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 offender's record. The other component is the Offense Severity Class.

RISK ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Static factors are those associated with the offender's prior criminal record. They will not change over time. Dynamic factors reflect characteristics the offender has demonstrated since being incarcerated and 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; and
- The commitment offense.

Dynamic factors include:

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

An offender 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 in granting parole.

As a result of the revalidation study completed in 2012, 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	5 or less
Moderate Risk	4-6	6-9
High Risk	7-9	10+
Highest Risk	10+	N/A

OFFENSE SEVERITY CLASS

The Board has assigned an Offense Severity Ranking to every one of the felony offenses in the statute. Offense Severity Classes range from Low, for non-violent crimes such as credit card abuse, to Highest, for capital murder. An offender's most serious active offense is assigned an Offense Severity Class according to the established list.