



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
LANSING

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DATE: January 15, 2009

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee Members
House Judiciary Committee Members
Senate Judiciary and Corrections Appropriations Subcommittee Members
House Corrections Appropriations Subcommittee Members

FROM: Heidi Washington
Administrative Assistant

SUBJECT: Report on Parole Absconders

Pursuant to the requirements of MCL 791.240(4) (Public Act 487 of 2006), the Department of Corrections submits the attached report on parole absconders. This report can be viewed at www.michigan.gov/corrections.

c: John Rubitschun, FOA
Barry Wickman, Chief Financial Officer
Jacques McNeely, DMB
Lindsay Hollander, SFA
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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Pursuant to MCL 791.240(4)
Quarterly Report of Parole Absconders
January 2009

Section 40 (4) of Public Act 487 of 2006:

“The Department shall report to the legislature on a quarterly basis both of the following:

- (a) The number of parolees who are absconders.
- (b) The number of parolees who have been absconders for more than 3 months.”

Analysis of information contained in the Department’s CMIS data base showed that:

- As of 12/31/2008, there were 2,619 parolees listed as absconders.
- Of the 2,619 absconders, 1,824 had been on abscond status for more than 90 days.

The number of absconders has decreased moderately (-4.5%) since the last report despite a 6% larger parole population. The average time at large is about the same, and 93% of these cases are Very Low, Low or Middle risk for assaultive behavior on parole.

It is also worth noting that 70% of all absconders were placed on that status within the past fifteen months, demonstrating that most cases are resolved within a comparatively short time. Furthermore, about eight of every ten absconders are ultimately continued on parole supervision following detection; generally with a local sanction and frequently under increased terms of supervision. The principal determinant of whether an offender gets continued on parole is the assessment of risk to the public. If it is determined that the parolee does not present a significant risk of harm apart from a failure to report or an unreported move, the chances are quite high that he/she will be allowed to remain in the community, albeit with adjusted supervision requirements.

Field Operations Administration believes that public protection can and will be enhanced by promoting offender success through Collaborative Case Management. Traditional parole supervision has been to monitor parolees to detect violation behavior and respond to it appropriately. When the focus shifts from detection to reducing risk and addressing needs by anticipating and responding to problem behavior, parole violations are reduced. Absconder warrants can generally be divided into two types; failure to report and fleeing from supervision. While some parolees will undoubtedly flee supervision, the majority of "absconders" are avoiding supervision. With collaborative case management, agents work with offenders, their family members, and significant others to address problems and barriers to success. Failures to report because of drug use, loss of employment, police contact, etc., are reduced when parolees recognize that the role of the agent is to not only hold them accountable, but to assist in their success. When adjustment problems are dealt with through collaboration, counseling, treatment, or other interventions, not only are fewer warrants for failure to report issued, but minor problems don't escalate into more serious violation behavior. As collaborative case management is implemented throughout the state, we should see a reduction in the number of absconder warrants issued.