

## **National Strategic Planning Session Inaugurates the Efforts of the National Parole Resource Center (NPRC)**

The National Parole Resource Center held its first strategic planning session in Washington, DC, on April 22 – 23, 2010. The session assembled chairs and members from 11 US paroling authorities (CT, KY, GA, MD, MI, MO, NY, PA, WY, US, TX) along with other key stakeholders— individuals representing correctional institutions, parole supervision, state legislatures, victim advocates, formerly incarcerated persons, professional associations, the research community, and entities involved in providing assistance to practitioners. The Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections, who are jointly managing the effort, also participated.

The event invited insights and guidance regarding the operations and focus of the National Parole Resource Center. Discussions clearly emphasized the importance of paroling authorities in preventing crime, enhancing public safety, and assuring the wise use of public resources. The critical importance for paroling authorities in utilizing the lessons of evidence based practice and developing effective collaborations with other criminal justice and community partners was also emphasized.

The group considered and supported the need for paroling authorities to identify and work toward what have been termed “practice targets for parole excellence,” and agreed that the work of the NPRC should focus heavily upon supporting paroling authorities as they move toward:

1. The use of good, empirically-based, actuarial tools to assess risks and criminogenic needs of offenders;
2. The development of evidence-based, policy-driven decisionmaking tools and practices;
3. The development of meaningful partnerships with institutional corrections and community supervision--and others, including community organizations, public and private service providers, and victim advocacy organizations--to assure a seamless transition process;
4. The use of their influence and leverage to target institutional and community resources to mid and high risk offenders to address their criminogenic needs;
5. The practice of considering low risk offenders for release at the earliest stage possible—in light of statutes and other sentencing interests;
6. The practice of utilizing the parole interview/hearing/review process, as an opportunity to enhance offender motivation to change—among other goals;
7. Development of condition setting policy to minimize requirements on low-risk offenders, and target conditions to the criminogenic needs of medium and high risk offenders;
8. Development of policy-driven, graduated responses to parole violations that incorporate considerations of risk, criminogenic need and severity, assure even-handed treatment of violators, and utilize resources wisely ;

9. Development and strengthening of case-level decisionmaking skills/capacities in these areas, and
10. Development and strengthening of agency level policy making, strategic management and performance measurement skills/capacities.

The NPRC will also encourage paroling authorities and their supervision partners to work toward the 13 Strategies for Parole Success ([http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411791\\_public\\_safety\\_first.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411791_public_safety_first.pdf)) which include efforts to:

1. Define success as recidivism reduction and measure performance;
2. Tailor conditions of supervision to address criminogenic needs;
3. Focus resources on moderate and high-risk parolees;
4. Frontload supervision resources;
5. Implement earned discharge;
6. Implement place-based supervision;
7. Engage partners to expand intervention capacities.

And, at the case level:

8. Assess criminogenic risk and need factors;
9. Develop and implement supervision case plans that balance surveillance and treatment;
10. Involve parolees to enhance their engagement in assessment, case planning and supervision;
11. Engage informal social controls to facilitate community reintegration;
12. Incorporate incentives and rewards into the supervision process; and
13. Employ graduated, problem-solving responses to violations of parole conditions in a swift and certain manner.