

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Pursuant to MCL 791.240(4)
Quarterly Report of Parole Absconders
October 2012

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 9/30/2012 there were 1,743 parolees listed as absconders.
- Of the 1,743 absconders, 1,148 had been on abscond status for more than 90 days.

The number of absconders decreased by 1.6% since the last report, and the number on abscond status for more than 90 days decreased by 2.0%. The overall average time at large is still about the same.

There are now 33.4% fewer parole absconders than there were when this quarterly reporting began over five years ago (-875). During that same period of time, the parole population is 13.7% larger (+2,200).

It is also worth noting that 72% of all absconders were placed on that status within the past fifteen months, demonstrating that most cases are resolved within a comparatively short time. The Department recognizes that although some parolees attempt to flee from supervision, there are many for whom absconding warrants are issued because the offenders have simply stopped making their scheduled reports to the parole agents. For the sake of public safety, if these parolees cannot be located within a relatively brief time period available to the agents to investigate and attempt to re-establish contact, an arrest warrant is issued.

There is a variety of factors at work in such cases. Sometimes a relapse into substance abuse, the loss of a job, the loss of an approved home placement, contact with a police officer, or some other event leads an offender to believe his or her parole is in jeopardy, and the offender becomes fearful of the parole agent. There is a wide range of interventions available to the parole agent in these cases. After an analysis of the violation behavior, a review of the overall parole adjustment, an assessment of risk and resources at hand to manage it, if the agent concludes the offender does not pose a threat to public safety, reinstatement of the offender’s parole is recommended with a new strategy in mind for bringing the parolee into compliance and preventing a recurrence of the violation behavior. Part of any such strategy entails the parole agent’s collaboration with the parolee’s family, employer, therapist, etc. to strengthen the foundation of personal support and expectations that contributes to the offender’s successful adjustment. In some cases, a period of detention, enrollment into intensive substance abuse treatment or other residential programming, or an enhancement to community supervision in the form of electronic monitoring becomes part of the plan.

As the Department intensifies its efforts to discourage absconding behavior through an aggressive response to offenders’ non-compliance with their reporting obligations, prompt intervention when substance abuse occurs, expansion of after-hours compliance checks programs by parole agents and law enforcement partners, swift and certain containment in the face of behavior which reflects an increasing risk of recidivism, and the engagement of the public through the Department’s “Most Wanted” website, the Department expects a further reduction of the incidence of absconding violations as well as the percentage of cases that manage to avoid accountability for more than 90 days.