

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2020 REGULAR SESSION**

**Enrolled**

### **Senate Bill 620**

BY SENATORS CLEMENTS, TRUMP, BALDWIN, AND WELD

[Passed February 19, 2020; in effect 90 days from  
passage]



1 AN ACT to amend and reenact §62-12-13 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; and  
2 to amend said code by adding thereto a new section, designated §62-12-13c, all relating  
3 to authorizing the Commissioner of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation to  
4 approve home plans for inmates; authorizing the Commissioner of the Division of  
5 Corrections and Rehabilitation to establish a nonviolent offense parole program;  
6 establishing eligibility requirements for said program; clarifying that inmates released  
7 under said program are subject to the same conditions of release and sanctions;  
8 clarifying that inmate's failing to successfully complete the rehabilitation treatment  
9 program are ineligible for release; and clarifying that inmates not otherwise released  
10 may be eligible for said program at the time of successful completion of the rehabilitation  
11 treatment program.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 12. PROBATION AND PAROLE.**

**§62-12-13. Powers and duties of board; eligibility for parole; procedure for granting parole.**

1 (a) The Parole Board, whenever it is of the opinion that the best interests of the state  
2 and of the inmate will be served, and subject to the limitations provided in this section, shall  
3 release any inmate on parole for terms and upon conditions provided by this article.

4 (b) Any inmate of a state correctional institution is eligible for parole if he or she:

5 (1) (A) Has served the minimum term of his or her indeterminate sentence or has served  
6 one fourth of his or her definite term sentence, as the case may be; or

7 (B) He or she has applied for and been accepted by the Commissioner of Corrections  
8 and Rehabilitation into an accelerated parole program. To be eligible to participate in an  
9 accelerated parole program, the commissioner must determine that the inmate:

10 (i) Does not have a prior criminal conviction for a felony crime of violence against the  
11 person, a felony offense involving the use of a firearm, or a felony offense where the victim was  
12 a minor child;

13 (ii) Is not serving a sentence for a crime of violence against the person, or more than  
14 one felony for a controlled substance offense for which the inmate is serving a consecutive  
15 sentence, a felony offense involving the use of a firearm, or a felony offense where the victim  
16 was a minor child; and

17 (iii) Has successfully completed a rehabilitation treatment program created with the  
18 assistance of a standardized risk and needs assessment.

19 (C) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, any inmate who  
20 committed, or attempted to commit, a felony with the use, presentment, or brandishing of a  
21 firearm is not eligible for parole prior to serving a minimum of three years of his or her sentence  
22 or the maximum sentence imposed by the court, whichever is less: *Provided*, That any inmate  
23 who committed, or attempted to commit, any violation of §61-2-12 of this code, with the use,  
24 presentment, or brandishing of a firearm, is not eligible for parole prior to serving a minimum of  
25 five years of his or her sentence or one third of his or her definite term sentence, whichever is  
26 greater. Nothing in this paragraph applies to an accessory before the fact or a principal in the  
27 second degree who has been convicted as if he or she were a principal in the first degree if, in  
28 the commission of or in the attempted commission of the felony, only the principal in the first  
29 degree used, presented, or brandished a firearm. An inmate is not ineligible for parole under the  
30 provisions of this paragraph because of the commission or attempted commission of a felony  
31 with the use, presentment, or brandishing of a firearm unless that fact is clearly stated and  
32 included in the indictment or presentment by which the person was charged and was either: (i)  
33 Found guilty by the court at the time of trial upon a plea of guilty or nolo contendere; (ii) found  
34 guilty by the jury upon submitting to the jury a special interrogatory for such purpose if the

35 matter was tried before a jury; or (iii) found guilty by the court if the matter was tried by the court  
36 without a jury.

37 (D) The amendments to this subsection adopted in the year 1981:

38 (i) Apply to all applicable offenses occurring on or after August 1 of that year;

39 (ii) Apply with respect to the contents of any indictment or presentment returned on or  
40 after August 1 of that year irrespective of when the offense occurred;

41 (iii) Apply with respect to the submission of a special interrogatory to the jury and the  
42 finding to be made thereon in any case submitted to the jury on or after August 1 of that year or  
43 to the requisite findings of the court upon a plea of guilty or in any case tried without a jury:  
44 *Provided*, That the state gives notice in writing of its intent to seek such finding by the jury or  
45 court, as the case may be. The notice shall state with particularity the grounds upon which the  
46 finding will be sought as fully as the grounds are otherwise required to be stated in an  
47 indictment, unless the grounds upon which the finding will be sought are alleged in the  
48 indictment or presentment upon which the matter is being tried;

49 (iv) Does not apply with respect to cases not affected by the amendments and in those  
50 cases the prior provisions of this section apply and are construed without reference to the  
51 amendments; and

52 (v) Insofar as the amendments relate to mandatory sentences restricting the eligibility for  
53 parole, all matters requiring a mandatory sentence shall be proved beyond a reasonable doubt  
54 in all cases tried by the jury or the court.

55 (E) As used in this section, "felony crime of violence against the person" means felony  
56 offenses set forth in §61-2-1 *et seq.*, §61-3E-1 *et seq.*, §61-8B-1 *et seq.*, or §61-8D-1 *et seq.* of  
57 this code.

58 (F) As used in this section, "felony offense where the victim was a minor child" means  
59 any felony crime of violence against the person and any felony violation set forth in §61-8-1 *et*  
60 *seq.*, §61-8A-1 *et seq.*, §61-8C-1 *et seq.*, or §61-8D-1 *et seq.* of this code.

61 (G) For the purpose of this section, the term "firearm" means any instrument which will,  
62 or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an  
63 explosive, gunpowder, or any other similar means;

64 (2) Is not in punitive segregation or administrative segregation as a result of disciplinary  
65 action;

66 (3) Has prepared and submitted to the Parole Board a written parole release plan setting  
67 forth proposed plans for his or her place of residence, employment and, if appropriate, his or her  
68 plans regarding education and post-release counseling and treatment which has been approved  
69 by the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation: *Provided*, That an inmate's application for  
70 parole may be considered by the board without the prior submission of a home plan, but the  
71 inmate shall have a home plan approved by the division prior to his or her release on parole.  
72 The Commissioner of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation, or his or her designee,  
73 shall review and investigate the plan and provide findings to the board as to the suitability of the  
74 plan: *Provided, however*, That in cases in which there is a mandatory 30-day notification period  
75 required prior to the release of the inmate, pursuant to §62-12-23 of this code, the board may  
76 conduct an initial interview and deny parole without requiring the development of a plan. In the  
77 event the board believes parole should be granted, it may defer a final decision pending  
78 completion of an investigation and receipt of the commissioner's findings. Upon receipt of the  
79 plan, together with the investigation and findings, the board, through a panel, shall make a final  
80 decision regarding the granting or denial of parole; and

81 (4) Has satisfied the board that if released on parole he or she will not constitute a  
82 danger to the community.

83 (c) Except in the case of an inmate serving a life sentence, a person who has been  
84 previously twice convicted of a felony may not be released on parole until he or she has served  
85 the minimum term provided by law for the crime for which he or she was convicted. An inmate  
86 sentenced for life may not be paroled until he or she has served 10 years, and an inmate

87 sentenced for life who has been previously twice convicted of a felony may not be paroled until  
88 he or she has served 15 years: *Provided*, That an inmate convicted of first degree murder for an  
89 offense committed on or after June 10, 1994, is not eligible for parole until he or she has served  
90 15 years.

91 (d) In the case of an inmate sentenced to a state correctional facility regardless of the  
92 inmate's place of detention or incarceration, the Parole Board, as soon as that inmate becomes  
93 eligible, shall consider the advisability of his or her release on parole.

94 (e) If, upon consideration, parole is denied, the board shall promptly notify the inmate of  
95 the denial. The board shall, at the time of denial, notify the inmate of the month and year he or  
96 she may apply for reconsideration and review. The board shall at least once a year reconsider  
97 and review the case of every inmate who was denied parole and who is still eligible: *Provided*,  
98 That the board may reconsider and review parole eligibility any time within three years following  
99 the denial of parole of an inmate serving a life sentence with the possibility of parole.

100 (f) Any inmate in the custody of the commissioner for service of a sentence who reaches  
101 parole eligibility is entitled to a timely parole hearing without regard to the location in which he or  
102 she is housed.

103 (g) The board shall, with the approval of the Governor, adopt rules governing the  
104 procedure in the granting of parole. No provision of this article and none of the rules adopted  
105 under this article are intended or may be construed to contravene, limit, or otherwise interfere  
106 with or affect the authority of the Governor to grant pardons and reprieves, commute sentences,  
107 remit fines, or otherwise exercise his or her constitutional powers of executive clemency.

108 (h) (1) The Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall promulgate policies and  
109 procedures for developing a rehabilitation treatment plan created with the assistance of a  
110 standardized risk and needs assessment. The policies and procedures shall provide for, at a  
111 minimum, screening and selecting inmates for rehabilitation treatment and development, using  
112 standardized risk and needs assessment and substance abuse assessment tools, and

113 prioritizing the use of residential substance abuse treatment resources based on the results of  
114 the standardized risk and needs assessment and a substance abuse assessment. The results  
115 of all standardized risk and needs assessments and substance abuse assessments are  
116 confidential.

117 (2) An inmate shall not be paroled under paragraph (B), subdivision (1), subsection (b) of  
118 this section solely due to having successfully completed a rehabilitation treatment plan, but  
119 completion of all the requirements of a rehabilitation treatment plan along with compliance with  
120 the requirements of subsection (b) of this section creates a rebuttable presumption that parole is  
121 appropriate. The presumption created by this subdivision may be rebutted by a Parole Board  
122 finding that, according to the standardized risk and needs assessment, at the time parole  
123 release is sought the inmate still constitutes a reasonable risk to the safety or property of other  
124 persons if released. Nothing in subsection (b) of this section or in this subsection may be  
125 construed to create a right to parole.

126 (i) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, the Parole Board may  
127 grant or deny parole to an inmate against whom a detainer is lodged by a jurisdiction other than  
128 West Virginia for service of a sentence of incarceration, upon a written request for parole from  
129 the inmate. A denial of parole under this subsection precludes consideration for parole for a  
130 period of one year or until the provisions of subsection (b) of this section are applicable.

131 (j) If an inmate is otherwise eligible for parole pursuant to subsection (b) of this section,  
132 and has completed the rehabilitation treatment program required under subdivision (1),  
133 subsection (h) of this section, the Parole Board may not require the inmate to participate in an  
134 additional program, but may determine that the inmate must complete an assigned task or tasks  
135 prior to actual release on parole. The board may grant parole contingently, effective upon  
136 successful completion of the assigned task or tasks, without the need for a further hearing.



137 (k) (1) The Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall supervise all probationers and  
138 parolees whose supervision may have been undertaken by this state by reason of any interstate  
139 compact entered into pursuant to the Uniform Act for Out-of-State Parolee Supervision.

140 (2) The Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall provide supervision,  
141 treatment/recovery, and support services for all persons released to mandatory supervision  
142 under §15A-4-17 of this code.

143 (l) (1) When considering an inmate of a state correctional facility for release on parole,  
144 the Parole Board panel considering the parole shall have before it an authentic copy of, or  
145 report on, the inmate's current criminal record as provided through the West Virginia State  
146 Police, the United States Department of Justice, or any other reliable criminal information  
147 sources and written reports of the superintendent of the state correctional institution to which the  
148 inmate is sentenced:

149 (A) On the inmate's conduct record while in custody, including a detailed statement  
150 showing any and all infractions of disciplinary rules by the inmate and the nature and extent of  
151 discipline administered for the infractions;

152 (B) On the inmate's industrial record while in custody which shall include: The nature of  
153 his or her work, occupation or education, the average number of hours per day he or she has  
154 been employed or in class while in custody and a recommendation as to the nature and kinds of  
155 employment which he or she is best fitted to perform and in which the inmate is most likely to  
156 succeed when he or she leaves the state correctional institution; and

157 (C) On any physical, mental, psychological, or psychiatric examinations of the inmate.

158 (2) The Parole Board panel considering the parole may waive the requirement of any  
159 report when not available or not applicable as to any inmate considered for parole but, in every  
160 case, shall enter in its record its reason for the waiver: *Provided*, That in the case of an inmate  
161 who is incarcerated because the inmate has been found guilty of, or has pleaded guilty to, a  
162 felony under the provisions of §61-8-12 of this code or under the provisions of §61-8B-1 *et seq.*

163 or §61-8C-1 *et seq.* of this code, the Parole Board panel may not waive the report required by  
164 this subsection. The report shall include a study and diagnosis of the inmate, including an on-  
165 going treatment plan requiring active participation in sexual abuse counseling at an approved  
166 mental health facility or through some other approved program: *Provided, however,* That  
167 nothing disclosed by the inmate during the study or diagnosis may be made available to any  
168 law-enforcement agency, or other party without that inmate's consent, or admissible in any court  
169 of this state, unless the information disclosed indicates the intention or plans of the parolee to  
170 do harm to any person, animal, institution, or to property. Progress reports of outpatient  
171 treatment are to be made at least every six months to the parole officer supervising the parolee.  
172 In addition, in such cases, the Parole Board shall inform the prosecuting attorney of the county  
173 in which the person was convicted of the parole hearing and shall request that the prosecuting  
174 attorney inform the Parole Board of the circumstances surrounding a conviction or plea of guilty,  
175 plea bargaining, and other background information that might be useful in its deliberations.

176 (m) Before releasing any inmate on parole, the Parole Board shall arrange for the inmate  
177 to appear in person before a Parole Board panel and the panel may examine and interrogate  
178 him or her on any matters pertaining to his or her parole, including reports before the Parole  
179 Board made pursuant to the provisions of this section: *Provided,* That an inmate may appear by  
180 video teleconference if the members of the Parole Board panel conducting the examination are  
181 able to contemporaneously see the inmate and hear all of his or her remarks and if the inmate is  
182 able to contemporaneously see each of the members of the panel conducting the examination  
183 and hear all of the members' remarks: *Provided, however,* That the requirement that an inmate  
184 personally appear may be waived where a physician authorized to do so by the Commissioner  
185 of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation certifies that the inmate, due to a medical  
186 condition or disease, is too debilitated, either physically or cognitively, to appear. The panel  
187 shall reach its own written conclusions as to the desirability of releasing the inmate on parole  
188 and the majority of the panel considering the release must concur in the decision. The

189 superintendent shall furnish all necessary assistance and cooperate to the fullest extent with the  
190 Parole Board. All information, records, and reports received by the Parole Board shall be kept  
191 on permanent file.

192 (n) The Parole Board and its designated agents are at all times to have access to  
193 inmates imprisoned in any state correctional facility or in any jail in this state and may obtain any  
194 information or aid necessary to the performance of its duties from other departments and  
195 agencies of the state or from any political subdivision of the state.

196 (o) The Parole Board shall, if requested by the Governor, investigate and consider all  
197 applications for pardon, reprieve, or commutation and shall make recommendation on the  
198 applications to the Governor.

199 (p) Prior to making a recommendation for pardon, reprieve or commutation, the board  
200 shall notify the sentencing judge and prosecuting attorney at least ten days before the  
201 recommendation.

202 (q) A parolee shall participate as a condition of parole in the litter control program of the  
203 county to which he or she is released to the extent directed by the Parole Board, unless the  
204 board specifically finds that this alternative service would be inappropriate.

**§62-12-13c. Authority of commissioner to establish a nonviolent offense parole program.**

1 (a) The commissioner is authorized to establish a nonviolent offense parole program for  
2 any inmate of a state correctional facility in which an inmate may be paroled without action of  
3 the Parole Board based upon objective standards as set forth in this section, to commence on  
4 July 1, 2021.

5 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, any inmate of a state  
6 correctional facility is eligible for parole under the nonviolent offense parole program if:

7 (1) He or she has served at least the minimum term of his or her sentence and is eligible  
8 for parole as determined by the parole board; and

9 (2) He or she qualifies for the nonviolent offense parole program as authorized by this  
10 section.

11 (c) To qualify for the nonviolent offense parole program, the commissioner must  
12 determine that the inmate:

13 (1) Is not serving a sentence for a crime of violence against the person, crime of violence  
14 against an animal, or felony for a controlled substance offense which involves actual or  
15 threatened violence to a person, a felony offense involving the use of a firearm, or a felony  
16 offense where the victim was a minor child;

17 (2) Has successfully completed an individualized rehabilitation treatment program as  
18 determined by the division; and

19 (3) Has otherwise satisfied the requirements for parole eligibility set forth in §62-12-13 of  
20 this code.

21 (d) Any person released under the nonviolent offense parole program shall be subject to  
22 all conditions of release and sanctions for violations applicable to persons released on parole by  
23 the Parole Board, and all parole revocations of persons granted parole pursuant to this section  
24 shall be heard in accordance with the provisions of §62-12-19 of this code.

25 (e) The nonviolent offense parole program authorized by subsection (a) of this section  
26 requires no action by the Parole Board as to the release decision if the inmate qualifies for the  
27 program and has successfully completed his or her rehabilitation treatment program as  
28 determined by the commissioner.

29 (f) The commissioner shall develop a policy directive setting forth the processes and  
30 procedures to determine successful completion of the rehabilitation treatment program and to  
31 provide notice to the inmate. If the inmate fails to successfully complete his or her rehabilitation  
32 treatment program, his or her parole shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of  
33 §62-12-13 of this code. An inmate who has been denied parole pursuant to the provisions of  
34 §62-12-13 of this code and who thereafter successfully completes his or her rehabilitation

35 treatment program prior to his or her next parole review shall be eligible for release under the  
36 nonviolent offense parole program within a reasonable time after he or she may successfully  
37 complete such program as determined by the commissioner, provided the inmate remains  
38 qualified for release under the nonviolent offense parole program.



The Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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*Chairman, Senate Committee*

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*Chairman, House Committee*

Originated in the Senate.

In effect 90 days from passage.

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*Clerk of the Senate*

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*Clerk of the House of Delegates*

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*President of the Senate*

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*Speaker of the House of Delegates*

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The within ..... this the.....  
Day of ....., 2020.

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*Governor*