
WEST VIRGINIA CODE CHAPTER 15A
ARTICLE 7

WV Legislature

§15A-7-1. Creation of Bureau of Community Corrections; Organization of facilities.

(a) The commissioner shall establish a Bureau of Community Corrections. The commissioner shall establish which adult facilities or institutions shall appropriately be managed by the Bureau of Community Corrections.

(b) The commissioner shall appoint an assistant commissioner, who shall oversee the Bureau of Community Corrections.

(c) Where reference in this article is made to the "division", it shall mean the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

§15A-7-2. Duties of superintendents; bond; residence.

The commissioner shall appoint a Superintendent for each institution under the control of the division. The superintendent of a community corrections facility shall have the same duties and responsibilities as described in §15A-3-1 et seq. of this code.

WV Legislature

§15A-7-3. Hiring of other assistants and employees; duties of employees.

(a) Each superintendent of a community corrections facility shall, in the manner provided in §15A-3-5 of this code, hire all assistants and employees required for the management of these facilities or units, including a sufficient number of correctional employees to preserve order and enforce discipline among the inmates or parolees, to prevent escapes, to enforce laws, rules, and policies, and to protect the public. Any person employed by the office of the Commissioner of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation who on the effective date of this article is a classified civil service employee shall, within the limits contained in §29-6-1 et seq. of this code, remain in the civil service system as a covered employee.

(b) The commissioner shall, in the manner provided in §15A-3-5 of this code, hire all probation and parole officers, assistants, and employees required to carry out the duties as proscribed in this code for management of the parolee population, and probation population, as set forth in §15A-7-4 and §62-13-2(b) of this code, for the management of parolees, to preserve order, and enforce discipline among the parolees, to enforce laws, rules, and policies, and to protect the public. Any person employed by the office of the Commissioner of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation who on the effective date of this article is a classified civil service employee shall, within the limits contained in §29-6-1 et seq. of this code, remain in the civil service system as a covered employee. Nothing in this section shall limit the abilities of the Supreme Court of Appeals of this state to carry forth their responsibilities and duties as proscribed in this code. All persons appointed or employed by the director shall be paid all necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties.

§15A-7-4. Supervision of probationers and parolees; final determinations remaining with board of probation and parole.

The commissioner shall supervise all persons released on parole and placed in the charge of a state parole officer and all persons released on parole under any law of this state. He or she shall also supervise all probationers and parolees whose supervision may have been undertaken by this state by reason of any interstate compact entered into pursuant to the uniform act for out-of-state probation and parolee supervision. The commissioner shall prescribe rules for the supervision of probationers and parolees under his or her supervision and control, and shall succeed to all administrative and supervisory powers of the Parole Board and the authority of the Parole Board in those matters only.

The commissioner shall administer all other laws affecting the custody, control, treatment, and employment of persons sentenced or committed to institutions under the supervision of the department or affecting the operation and administration of institutions or functions of the division.

The final determination regarding the release of inmates from penal institutions and the final determination regarding revocation of parolees from those institutions pursuant to the provisions of §62-12-1 et seq. of this code shall remain within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Parole Board.

§15A-7-5. Powers and duties of state parole officers.

(a) Each state probation and parole officer employed by the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall:

- (1) Investigate all cases referred to him or her for investigation by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation and report in writing on the investigation;
- (2) Update the standardized risk and needs assessment adopted by the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation pursuant to §62-12-13(h) of this code for each parolee for whom an assessment has not been conducted for parole by a specialized assessment officer;
- (3) Supervise each parolee according to the assessment and supervision standards determined by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation;
- (4) Furnish to each parolee under his or her supervision a written statement of the conditions of his or her parole together with a copy of the rules prescribed by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation for the supervision of parolees;
- (5) Keep informed concerning the conduct and condition of each parolee under his or her supervision and report on the conduct and condition of each parolee in writing as often as required by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation;
- (6) Use all practicable and suitable methods to aid and encourage a parolee and to bring about improvement in his or her conduct and condition;
- (7) Keep detailed records of his or her work;
- (8) Keep accurate and complete accounts of, and give receipts for, all money collected from parolees under his or her supervision, and pay over the money to persons designated by a circuit court or the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation;
- (9) Give bond with good security, to be approved by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in a penalty of not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$3,000, as determined by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation; and
- (10) Perform any other duties required by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

(b) Each probation and parole officer, as described in this article, may, with or without an order or warrant:

- (1) Arrest or order confinement of any parolee or probationer under his or her supervision; and
- (2) Search a parolee or probationer, or a parolee or probationer's residence or property,

under his or her supervision. A probation and parole officer may apply for a search warrant, and execute the search warrant, in connection to a parolee's whereabouts, or a parolee's activities. He or she has all the powers of a notary public, with authority to act anywhere within the state.

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of this article to the contrary, the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation may issue a certificate authorizing any state parole officer who has successfully completed the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation's training program for firearms certification, which is the equivalent of that required of any correctional employee under §15A-3-10 of this code, to carry firearms or concealed weapons. Any parole officer authorized by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation may, without a state license, carry firearms and concealed weapons. Each state parole officer, authorized by the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation, shall carry with him or her a certificate authorizing him or her to carry a firearm or concealed weapon bearing the official signature of the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

(d) State parole officers, in recognition of the duties of their employment supervising confinement and supervised release, and the inherent arrest powers for violation of the same which constitute law enforcement, are determined to be qualified law-enforcement officers as that term is used in 18 U.S.C §926B.

(e) Any state parole officer may carry a concealed firearm for self-defense purposes pursuant to the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 926B if the following criteria are met:

(1) The Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation has a written policy authorizing a state parole officer to carry a concealed firearm for self-defense purposes;

(2) For those state parole officers wishing to avail themselves of the provisions of this subdivision, there shall be in place in the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation a requirement that those state parole officers must annually qualify in the use of a firearm with standards which are equal to or exceed those required of sheriff's deputies by the Law-Enforcement Professional Standards Program; and

(3) The Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation issues a photographic identification and certification card which identify the state parole officers who meet the provisions of this subdivision, as law-enforcement employees of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation pursuant to the provisions of §30-29-12 of this code.

(f) Any policy instituted pursuant to this subsection shall include provisions which:

(1) Preclude or remove a person from participation in the concealed firearm program;

(2) Preclude from participation persons prohibited by federal or state law from possessing or receiving a firearm and;

(3) Prohibit persons from carrying a firearm pursuant to the provisions of this subsection

while in an impaired state as defined in §17C-5-2 of this code.

(g) Any state parole officer who participates in a program authorized by the provisions of this subsection is responsible, at his or her expense, for obtaining and maintaining a suitable firearm and ammunition.

(h) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting the amendments to this section during the 2022, regular session of the Legislature to authorize those state parole officers wishing to do so to meet the requirements of the federal Law-Enforcement Officer's Safety Act, 18 U.S.C. § 926B.

(i) The privileges authorized by the amendments in this section enacted during the 2022, regular session of the Legislature are wholly within the discretion of the Commissioner of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

§15A-7-6. Parole supervision benefit fund.

(a) There is continued a special revenue account in the State Treasury designated the "Parole Supervision Benefit Fund". The fund is to be used by the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation for the benefit of parolee supervision with approval of the commissioner. The fund shall consist of moneys received from any source, including, but not limited to, funds donated by the general public or an organization dedicated to parole supervision improvement, and funds seized from parolees that are forfeited pursuant to the provisions of §60A-7-701 et seq. of this code.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code to the contrary, the commissioner may authorize use of the money in the fund created pursuant to this section for payment to a community corrections program established pursuant to §62-11C-1 et seq. of this code for providing enhanced supervision of parolees.