



STATE OF TENNESSEE

# Agency Strategic Plans

Executive Branch

Volume 1  
Five-Year Strategic Plans

A Report to  
Governor Bill Haslam and the General Assembly

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*The following BOPP report is excerpted  
from a larger state report that includes information  
on all Tennessee state government agencies.*

*Only BOPP specific information is listed here.*

## **Board of Probation and Parole**

The Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) contributes to public safety by managing the orderly release and supervision of adult offenders in such a manner as to promote lawful behavior and minimize risk to the general public. The General Assembly established the Board of Probation and Parole in 1999 by merging the Division of Adult Probation from the Department of Correction with the Board of Paroles. The agency has several functions including conducting hearings, community supervision of offenders, administering the Community Corrections Grant Program, and providing administrative support services.

The Board of Probation and Parole is an independent state board comprised of seven members appointed by the Governor. The board is responsible for determining which offenders will be granted parole and subsequently released from incarceration to community-based supervision. The board members and hearings officers conduct parole hearings at state penal institutions and local jails. Hearings officers, appointed by the chairman of the board, make non-binding recommendations to the board members. Additionally, the board makes non-binding recommendations to the Governor regarding executive clemency.

The Division of Field Services supervises parolees and offenders placed on probation by state criminal and circuit courts. The Field Services Division facilitates the reintegration of probationers and parolees into the community, thereby minimizing public safety risk and promoting lawful behavior. Probation and parole officers supervise and monitor offenders to ensure they meet their individual conditions of release and the standards of community supervision. The Division of Field Services is composed of eight districts across the state and has 44 field offices. The district and field offices work closely with other community resources, including law enforcement, treatment services, and other non-profit groups to promote overall offender success and public safety.

The BOPP also administers the Community Corrections Grant Program, which diverts felony offenders from incarceration by placing them in locally operated grant programs with intensive supervision, treatment programming, community service work, and victim restitution. Grant dollars fund 19 local agencies responsible for the programming for probationers sentenced by the courts. These programs emphasize treatment and vary in program type, encompassing residential supervision and supervision with a day reporting component.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole is to minimize public risk and promote lawful behavior by the prudent, orderly release and community supervision of adult offenders.

## Goals

1. Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will improve the offender success rate by decreasing the percentage of probationers whose probation supervision is revoked to 5.2%.
2. Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will improve the offender success rate by decreasing the percentage of parolees whose parole supervision is revoked to 6.8%.
3. Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will reduce the percentage of revoked offenders who are technical violators to 2.9%.
4. Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will improve the offender success rate by decreasing the percentage of community corrections offenders whose community supervision is revoked to 8.9%.

### Goal 1

Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will improve the offender success rate by decreasing the percentage of probationers whose probation supervision is revoked to 5.2%.

#### Strategies for Achieving Goal 1

1. Coordinate with the Department of Correction to improve offender success through targeted programming and seamless transition from the institutional setting to the community.
2. Employ evidenced-based practices in the supervision of probationers to divert them from further criminal activity.
3. Continue to use a validated risk and needs assessment instrument to assess offenders and identify their risk and treatment needs levels.
4. Train probation and parole officers in the use of the validated risk and needs assessment instrument and case management techniques, including motivational interaction.
5. Maintain a treatment services network to meet offenders' criminogenic needs.
6. Monitor and evaluate the use of the risk and needs assessment instrument, case management practices, and the treatment services network.

#### Performance Measure

1. Percent of probationers whose community supervision is revoked during the fiscal year.

FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
5.9%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%

### Goal 2

Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will improve the offender success rate by decreasing the percentage of parolees whose parole supervision is revoked to 6.8%.

## Strategies for Achieving Goal 2

1. Coordinate with the Department of Correction to improve offender success through targeted programming and seamless transition from the institutional setting to the community.
2. Employ evidenced-based practices in the supervision of probationers to divert them from further criminal activity.
3. Continue to use a validated risk and needs assessment instrument to assess offenders and identify their risk and treatment needs levels.
4. Train probation and parole officers in the use of the validated risk and needs assessment instrument and case management techniques, including motivational interaction.
5. Maintain a treatment services network to meet offenders' criminogenic needs.
6. Monitor and evaluate the use of the risk and needs assessment instrument, case management practices, and the treatment services network.

## Performance Measure

1. Percent of parolees whose community supervision is revoked during the fiscal year.

FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
8.3%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%

## Goal 3

Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will reduce the percentage of revoked offenders who are technical violators to 2.9%.

## Strategies for Achieving Goal 3

1. Coordinate with the Department of Correction to improve offender success through targeted programming and seamless transition from the institutional setting to the community.
2. Employ evidenced-based practices in the supervision of probationers to divert them from further criminal activity.
3. Continue to use a validated risk and needs assessment instrument to assess offenders and identify their risk and treatment needs levels.
4. Train probation and parole officers in the use of the validated risk and needs assessment instrument and case management techniques, including motivational interaction.
5. Maintain a treatment services network to meet offenders' criminogenic needs.
6. Monitor and evaluate the use of the risk and needs assessment instrument, case management practices, and the treatment services network.
7. Use the Administrative Case Review Committee process for offenders who violate the conditions of their community supervision, but do not commit new crimes, with the intent to avoid revocation and re-incarceration.

### **Performance Measure**

1. Percent of technical violators whose community supervision is revoked during the fiscal year.

FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%

### **Goal 4**

Through FY 2016, the Board of Probation and Parole will improve the offender success rate by decreasing the percentage of community corrections offenders whose community supervision is revoked to 8.9%.

### **Strategies for Achieving Goal 4**

1. Employ evidenced-based practices in the supervision of offenders to divert them from further criminal activity.
2. Continue to use a validated risk and needs assessment instrument to assess offenders and identify their risk and treatment needs levels.
3. Monitor and evaluate the use of the risk and needs assessment instrument and case management practices.

### **Performance Measure**

1. Percent of community corrections offenders whose supervision is revoked during the fiscal year.

FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
10.6%	8.9%	8.9%	8.9%	8.9%	8.9%

## **Additional Agency Information**

### **Statutory and Constitutional Objectives**

Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA), Title 40, Part 28, establishes the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) and defines the agency's responsibilities related to parole hearings and the supervision of offenders. The board decides which eligible felony offenders will be granted parole and released from incarceration. The board is then responsible for the supervision of parolees granted release and of felony offenders who are placed on probation by criminal courts (TCA 40-28-103). Administrative duties of the board include setting criteria for granting and revoking parole; developing a strategic plan, annual budget and staffing plans; and policies and procedures (TCA 40-28-104).

TCA 40-39-201 establishes the Tennessee Sexual Offender and Violent Sexual Offender Registration, Verification, and Tracking Act of 2004. The statute outlines the board's responsibilities related to the registration of certain sex offenders.

In July 2004, the General Assembly enacted the "Tennessee Serious and Violent Sex Offender Monitoring Pilot Project Act" in TCA 40-39-301 et seq.. This statute authorizes the Board of Probation and Parole's use of satellite-based monitoring of offenders using global positioning systems (GPS).

In 2009, the General Assembly enacted legislation requiring the trial courts, the Board of Probation and Parole, and the Department of Correction to coordinate efforts to prepare offenders for re-entry into society. The department or the board, as appropriate, would develop an individual treatment/supervision plan for each offender in its custody or under its supervision to enhance the offender's opportunity for successful re-entry into the community. The plan would be developed using a validated instrument to evaluate the individual risks and needs of the offender. The legislation requires the board, in preparing presentence reports, to include information identifying the defendant's risk and needs as determined by the risk and needs assessment, along with recommended treatment programs. The legislation also allows the board to impose intermediate administrative sanctions, including mandated participation in treatment programs unless otherwise directed by the court. The court may revoke the authority of the board to impose intermediate administrative sanctions in all cases, in certain specified cases, or for particular defendants.

Additionally, the General Assembly passed legislation in 2009 authorizing the board to collect an application fee from offenders who apply to relocate out-of-state.

In addition to the offenders under the Board of Probation and Parole's supervision, the agency administers the "Tennessee Community Corrections Act of 1985" (TCA 40-36-101). The Community Corrections Program provides services and programs in local jurisdictions for eligible felony offenders in lieu of incarceration in state penal institutions or local jails. The board awards grants to 19 agencies across the state that provide intensive supervision, treatment, and/or residential services.

The Governor has designated responsibility to the BOPP for reviewing all clemency requests. Using criteria established by the Governor, the BOPP hears clemency matters and submits non-binding recommendations for consideration by the Governor.

## **Obstacles to Meeting Objectives and Delivering Services and Means of Overcoming Obstacles**

**Obstacle 1** – Steady population increases have presented the Board of Probation and Parole with obstacles relative to service delivery. Between fiscal year 1999-2000 and fiscal year 2009-2010, the Division of Field Services has had a 64 percent growth in the total offender population. The Community Corrections Program experienced a 37 percent growth in the total offender population between fiscal year 1999-2000 and fiscal year 2009-2010. The Division of Field Services strives to maintain a ratio of one officer for every 75 offenders, which would allow for officers to spend adequate time with each offender under their supervision. However, in fiscal year 2011, BOPP maintained an average caseload size of one officer for every 110 offenders. Large caseload sizes inhibit individual officer attention, and ultimately offender success. Ideally,

officer caseload sizes will become smaller, allowing officers the opportunity to be more proactive with each offender in helping them find and maintain employment, obtain substance abuse and mental health treatment (as needed), and obtain job training and additional education.

In the winter of 2008, the Board of Probation and Parole and the Department of Correction began jointly implementing an alternative to incarceration program. The plan redirected resources away from incarceration, which costs approximately \$65 per inmate a day, to community-based programs, which cost between \$3 and \$25 per day. The board's goal through this plan is to reduce the revocation rates of offenders. Officials of both agencies believe that using evidence-based practices will enable Tennessee to join other states that have implemented successful offender re-entry programs. The result will be fewer victims, safer communities, and lower costs to taxpayers.

**Obstacle 2** – Until recently, the criminal justice field has suffered from a lack of research that identified proven methods of reducing offender recidivism.

Recent research efforts have provided the field with much needed information about how to increase public safety by helping offenders be successful in the community. This research indicates that certain programs and intervention strategies, when applied to a variety of offender populations, reliably produce sustained reductions in recidivism. The research shows that recidivism decreases when high-risk offenders successfully complete high-intensity treatment that addresses their criminogenic needs (factors that contribute to criminal behavior) and actually increases if low-risk offenders are assigned to high intensity treatment. Criminogenic factors include: substance abuse, mental health, anti-social peers and relationships, anti-social behaviors, and low self-control. Research also indicates that traditional punishments for offenders (such as jail, restitution, home confinement, and intensive supervision) and inappropriate treatment programs are likely to have an adverse affect on recidivism.

BOPP and the Department of Correction designed an approach that takes into account those practices and treatment programs that have been successful in other jurisdictions. Both agencies began using an assessment instrument that clearly identifies the risk and needs of offenders and incorporates a case management strategy focusing on treating criminogenic needs rather than traditional supervision methods. Additionally, the board expanded the use of an existing process, the Administrative Case Review Committee, to manage technical violators (probationers and parolees who violate conditions of their supervision, but do not commit new criminal acts) through intermediate sanctions prior to revocation and return to incarceration.

## **Means of Maximizing Federal and Other Non-State Sources of Revenue**

State appropriations are the primary source of funding for the Probation and Parole program. Revenues generated by the Board of Probation and Parole consist of fees collected from probationers and parolees, as mandated by statute. Supervision fees for the Probation and Parole program are collected and used to offset the costs of probationer and parolee supervision. Each year, the board, in conjunction with the Department of Finance and Administration, determines the most appropriate expenditure of these dollars. Fee dollars are spent on items such as: salaries and benefits for 93 Probation and Parole officer positions; drug testing/screening and confirmations; replacement of computer equipment for field staff; mental health evaluations; and officer safety equipment.

In addition to supervision fees, officers collect fees from offenders that go into the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund. Over \$2.5 million dollars went into this fund in fiscal year 2010.

The Community Corrections Grant Program is also funded primarily by state dollars. Eligible offenders are required to pay supervision fees. These dollars are used to offset requisite state funding.

In fiscal year 2008-2009, the board added a grants program manager to its staff. The grants program manager is responsible for seeking and submitting grant proposals to governmental entities and the private sector and for subsequently monitoring agency use of grant funding.

### **Means of Avoiding Unnecessary Costs and Expenditures**

BOPP regularly assesses operations to insure the necessity of costs and expenditures. Through internal inspections and reviews, activity monitoring, technological advancements, and collaborative committees, BOPP strives to meet agency objectives using available resources efficiently. BOPP's Research, Policy, and Planning Division inspects BOPP office locations, as well as Community Corrections agencies on an annual basis. The inspections insure compliance with statutes, rules and regulations, policies, and agency goals. The inspections result in reports that are distributed to agency management. Corrective action is required when inspections reveal non-compliance. This division annually reviews and updates operational policy and procedures to insure continued compliance with applicable laws and standards. Additionally, BOPP's internal auditor performs reviews throughout the year.

### **Future Challenges and Opportunities**

Tennessee's growing offender population will continue to be a challenge for the Board of Probation and Parole and Community Corrections agencies. In response, BOPP will research ways to improve operations using available resources. Expanded collaboration with the Department of Correction and other state and local entities, treatment providers, social service resources, and private employers holds promise for encouraging offender success. Technological advancements may offer alternative supervision tools that enable officers to focus their efforts on higher risk offenders. Studying the accomplishments of other states in reducing recidivism and increasing offender success should improve BOPP's ability to engage in best practices and improve success. Staff training also provides BOPP with a significant opportunity to increase overall success by amplifying its highly dedicated and hard-working team.