

## Definitions Page

**CORI Certification:** There are two certifications available for victims and survivors of crime. The first is for notification of an offender's release from prison. The second is for access to Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) documents.

**Inmate Classification:** Inmate classification is a review and assessment of the inmate's criminal history and personal adjustment. As part of the classification process and an offender's attempt to rehabilitate, the offender may be classified to a lower security level as they prepare for reintegration into the community.

**Sentence Computation:** After a sentence is imposed by the court, *several factors may reduce an inmate's sentence*. One factor is "*Earned good time*" credit, which an inmate is entitled to earn by law. The credit must be earned through satisfactory participation in a structured and accountable system of work and betterment programs. An inmate can earn a maximum amount of days off their sentence, depending on the institution where the offender is incarcerated. **Call the institution where the offender is incarcerated to find out how much time they can earn off their sentence each month.** All phone numbers are provided on the back of this brochure.

**Parole:** An offender may be approved to serve the remaining balance of their sentence in the community with supervision and certain conditions monitored by a Parole officer.

**Probation:** A court-ordered disposition alternative through which a convicted offender is placed under the control, supervision and care of a probation field officer.

**Youthful Offender:** A person who is between the ages of fourteen and seventeen who has been charged with a felony and who also has one of the following present:

- a previous commitment to the Department of Youth Services
- the person is charged with a crime which involves the infliction or threat of serious bodily harm; or
- the person is charged with a crime which involves certain weapons offenses

## Victim Services Resources

### Criminal History Systems Board

617-660-4690

### Massachusetts Department of Correction

978-369-3618

866-6-VICTIM

### Massachusetts Parole Board

508-650-4500

877-228-8482

### Department of Youth Services

617-960-3290

### Sex Offender Registry Board

978-740-6441

### Sheriff's Departments

#### Barnstable County

508-563-4300

#### Berkshire County

413-443-7220

#### Bristol County

508-995-6400

#### Dukes County

508-627-5173

#### Essex County

978-750-1900

#### Franklin County

413-774-4014

#### Hampden County

413-547-8000

#### Hampshire County

413-584-5911

#### Middlesex County

978-667-1711

#### Norfolk County

781-329-3705

#### Plymouth County

508-830-6200

#### Suffolk County

617-635-1000

#### Worcester County

508-854-1800

Deval L. Patrick, Governor  
Timothy P. Murray, Lieutenant Governor  
Kevin M. Burke, Secretary of Public Safety  
Barry J. LaCroix, Executive Director



# Victim Services in

## Post-Conviction Agencies

Information is Power...



Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety  
Criminal History Systems Board  
200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200  
Chelsea, MA 02150  
Tel: 617-660-4690  
TTY: 617-660-4606  
Fax: 617-660-5973

## Purpose of this brochure...

### Common Questions...

This brochure was designed to provide simple and comprehensive information to victims of crime, their families and other concerned individuals pertaining to notice of an offender's release in Massachusetts.

#### Becoming Certified for Notification

In order to be notified of an offender's release from custody, you must apply to be certified with the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB). You can print an application from the Internet at [www.mass.gov/chsb](http://www.mass.gov/chsb). The application must be faxed or mailed to CHSB for you to become a certified petitioner. You can also fill out an application with the assistance of a Victim Witness Advocate located in your local District Attorney's Office. Once you are certified, you are entitled to receive the following notifications:

#### Types of Notification:

##### **14 Day Advance Notification of the following:**

Transfer to a less secure facility (minimum security, pre-release)

Final Release date from custody

Consideration for parole supervision

Parole Release Date

##### **Emergency Notification of the following:**

Escape from any correctional setting or program activity

Escape from parole supervision

Court Ordered release

Breach of confidentiality

Emergency Escorted Trip

## Common Questions...

#### **How do I get notified when an offender is going to be released from prison?**

You must be certified by the CHSB to be registered for notification. Your information will be forwarded to the appropriate custodial authority and the Parole Board so that you will be notified.

#### **Who can be certified for Notice of an Offender's Release?**

The victim, witness or family member of a deceased, incompetent or minor aged victim may be certified for notification. In addition, any person who is in fear of an inmate in Massachusetts may become certified as a Citizen's Initiated Petition (CIP). To be certified under "CIP" you must include with your application a statement explaining your fear of the inmate. Please call CHSB 617-660-4690 for further information.

#### **What is the difference between a "state sentence" and a "House of Correction" sentence?**

A state sentence is typically more than 2 ½ years and means that the offender has been sentenced to serve a term of incarceration in the Department of Correction (DOC). While in the custody of the DOC, the inmate may be housed at various institutions, depending on the inmate's classification status. A House of Correction sentence is typically less than 2 ½ years and means that the offender is sentenced to serve a sentence at a local House of Correction, run by the Sheriff's Department.

#### **Who actually provides the notification?**

The Department of Correction or Sheriff's Office will provide all notifications pertaining to an adult offender's transfer and release from custody. The Parole Board will provide all notifications pertaining to an adult offender's parole. The Department of Youth Services provides all notification concerning Youthful Offenders and Juvenile Delinquents in DYS custody.

#### **Can an Offender earn time off of their sentence?**

Yes. Mass. General Law mandates that all correctional facilities allow offenders to earn time off of their sentence for participating in programs. Please call the correctional agency where the offender is incarcerated to find out how much earned good time they may receive. In addition, if an offender was held in jail prior to being sentenced, that amount of time will be reduced from their sentence.

#### **Will I be notified of the inmate's upcoming parole hearing?**

Yes. If you are certified through CHSB, you will be notified if an offender is considered for, or granted parole. Please call the Parole Board at 508-650-4500 for further information.

#### **What role does a certified person play in the parole process?**

Any certified person can submit input to the Parole Board to assist the Board in making a balanced, informed decision.

#### **What should I do if I move or change my contact information?**

You must call CHSB at 617-660-4690 to update any changes in your name, address and/or phone number(s).

#### **Will the inmate be informed that I am being notified?**

No. The existence of your certification is kept confidential.

#### **What should I do if I am receiving unwanted contact from an inmate?**

You should immediately contact the custodial authority where the offender is housed. If you are not sure who to call, you may call CHSB at 617-660-4690 and you will be referred to the appropriate agency.

#### **How do I find out more information about a Youthful Offender and/or Juvenile Delinquent in DYS custody?**

You may call the Victim Services Unit at the Department of Youth Services at 617-960-3290 for more information.

#### **How do I find out about the classification of registered sex offenders?**

You may call the Victim Services Unit at the Sex Offender Registry Board at 978-740-6441 for more information.