



Issue Note - Board Member Training Program

BACKGROUND

- One of the key principles that guide the Parole Board of Canada (PBC/the Board) in achieving the purpose of making quality conditional release decisions is to provide training to Board members, as stated in Section 101(d) of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA).
- The Board Member Training Program includes core training, continuous learning and development, and tools and reference materials, all of which support and develop the knowledge and skills required by Board members to complete their work.
- New Board members must complete Board Member Orientation, Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training, and must participate in the mandatory Annual Training on Risk Assessment (ATRA), which totals 31 days of training or approximately six weeks.
- Specialized training is delivered to Board members with specific tasks, roles, or designations including: member of the Appeal Division, pardon and record suspension decision maker, Vice-Chairperson, Executive Vice-Chairperson, and Chairperson.
- The delivery of continuous learning includes the Annual Training on Risk Assessment, Board Member Continuous Learning, Vice-Chairperson Continuous Learning and regional training.
 - Board members receive a minimum of three days formal continuous training per year.
 - Effective June 1, 2019, all full-time Board members were also granted two dedicated training/professional development days per month, which brings the annual minimum training days for full-time Board members to 27 days or 202.5 hours.
 - An average of 93 hours of regional training is provided annually; however, it is important to note that in previous years, some regions were not able to provide any or provided fewer hours of regional training due to workload pressures.
- A Board member, or Vice-Chairperson on behalf of a Board member, may also request individual training to address an identified gap in skills or knowledge. Board members may be required to attend core training for a second time or receive additional training, coaching, or tools.

- In addition to formal training, Board members are guided/ coached by their Vice-Chairperson, as well as experienced and knowledgeable Board members and staff on an ongoing basis.
- Integration strategies for new Board members vary region to region, and are used as needed for specific Board members depending on their strengths, weaknesses, and needs. These strategies include but are not limited to:
 - Assigning an experienced Board member mentor to new Board members;
 - Assigning fewer files and gradually increasing the number of files in a Board member's workload;
 - Assigning less complex files and gradually increasing the number of more complex files in the Board member's workload; and
 - Assigning experienced Board members in a lead role in hearings.
- On average, Board members are able to complete a full caseload within three to six months of training, though this is highly variable depending on the individual Board member. A full caseload may also not include highly complex files, as these may be reserved for later in a Board member's mandate.
- Elements of the Board Member Training Program are regularly updated, and a comprehensive review and modernization exercise of the Program in its entirety is currently underway.

Key Messages

- The Board Member Training Program is comprehensive and addresses the required knowledge and skills for Board members to complete their work no matter their role at the Board.
- Board members currently receive a minimum of 195 hours (27 days) of formal training the first year of their mandate.
- The progression of Board members from appointment to full caseload is highly variable and adaptable due to the individual strengths, weaknesses, and needs of each member.
- On average, a new Board member is able to complete a full caseload within three to six months of training.
- The Board Member Training Program is continually updated and is currently undergoing a comprehensive review and modernization.