

77-27-9 Parole proceedings.

- (1)
 - (a) The Board of Pardons and Parole may pardon or parole any offender or commute or terminate the sentence of any offender committed to a penal or correctional facility under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections for a felony or class A misdemeanor except as provided in Subsection (2).
 - (b) The board may not release any offender before the minimum term has been served unless the board finds mitigating circumstances which justify the release and unless the board has granted a full hearing, in open session, after previous notice of the time and location of the hearing, and recorded the proceedings and decisions of the board.
 - (c) The board may not pardon or parole any offender or commute or terminate the sentence of any offender unless the board has granted a full hearing, in open session, after previous notice of the time and location of the hearing, and recorded the proceedings and decisions of the board.
 - (d) The release of an offender shall be at the initiative of the board, which shall consider each case as the offender becomes eligible. However, a prisoner may submit the prisoner's own application, subject to the rules of the board promulgated in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act.
- (2)
 - (a) A person sentenced to prison prior to April 29, 1996, for a first degree felony involving child kidnapping, a violation of Section 76-5-301.1; aggravated kidnapping, a violation of Section 76-5-302; rape of a child, a violation of Section 76-5-402.1; object rape of a child, a violation of Section 76-5-402.3; sodomy upon a child, a violation of Section 76-5-403.1; aggravated sexual abuse of a child, a violation of Subsection 76-5-404.1(4); aggravated sexual assault, a violation of Section 76-5-405; or a prior offense as described in Section 76-3-407, may not be eligible for release on parole by the Board of Pardons and Parole until the offender has fully completed serving the minimum mandatory sentence imposed by the court. This Subsection (2)(a) supersedes any other provision of law.
 - (b) The board may not parole any offender or commute or terminate the sentence of any offender before the offender has served the minimum term for the offense, if the offender was sentenced prior to April 29, 1996, and if:
 - (i) the offender was convicted of forcible sexual abuse, forcible sodomy, rape, aggravated assault, kidnapping, aggravated kidnapping, or aggravated sexual assault as defined in Title 76, Chapter 5, Offenses Against the Person; and
 - (ii) the victim of the offense was under 18 years of age at the time the offense was committed.
 - (c) For a crime committed on or after April 29, 1996, the board may parole any offender under Subsections (2)(b)(i) and (ii) for lifetime parole as provided in this section.
 - (d) The board may not pardon or parole any offender or commute or terminate the sentence of any offender who is sentenced to life in prison without parole except as provided in Subsection (6).
 - (e) On or after April 27, 1992, the board may commute a sentence of death only to a sentence of life in prison without parole.
 - (f) The restrictions imposed in Subsections (2)(d) and (e) apply to all cases that come before the Board of Pardons and Parole on or after April 27, 1992.
- (3)
 - (a) The board may issue subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence, to administer oaths, and to take testimony for the purpose of any investigation by

the board or any of its members or by a designated hearing examiner in the performance of its duties.

- (b) A person who willfully disobeys a properly served subpoena issued by the board is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.
- (4)
- (a) The board may adopt rules consistent with law for its government, meetings and hearings, the conduct of proceedings before it, the parole and pardon of offenders, the commutation and termination of sentences, and the general conditions under which parole may be granted and revoked.
 - (b) The rules shall ensure an adequate opportunity for victims to participate at hearings held under this chapter, as provided in Section 77-27-9.5.
 - (c) The rules may allow the board to establish reasonable and equitable time limits on the presentations by all participants in hearings held under this chapter.
- (5) The board does not provide counseling or therapy for victims as a part of their participation in any hearing under this chapter.
- (6) The board may parole a person sentenced to life in prison without parole if the board finds by clear and convincing evidence that the person is permanently incapable of being a threat to the safety of society.

Amended by Chapter 110, 2010 General Session