



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

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**Probation and Parole Officers –
Social Work Qualifications and Training in Evidence-Based Practices**
July 2014

Social Work Qualifications

Montana

§ 46-23-1003 - Qualifications of probation and parole officers

(1) Probation and parole officers must have at least a college degree and some formal training in behavioral sciences. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the department. **Related work experience in the areas listed in 2-15-2302(2)(c)** may be substituted for educational requirements at the rate of 1 year of experience for 9 months formal education if approved by the department. All present employees are exempt from this requirement but are encouraged to further their education at the earliest opportunity.

§ 2-15-2302(2)(c) - Board of pardons and parole--composition--allocation--quasi-judicial

Board members must possess academic training that has qualified them for professional practice in a field such as criminology, education, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, law, **social work**, sociology, psychiatric nursing, or guidance and counseling. Related work experience in the areas listed may be substituted for these educational requirements.

New York

EXEC § 255 – Probation in the city of New York

1. There is hereby created a department of probation in and for the city of New York to have charge of all probation work in the supreme, family and criminal courts in the counties of Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens and Richmond.
4. The head of such probation department, out of moneys appropriated to such department for that purpose, is authorized to grant scholarships to employees in the probation service in such department, for graduate training in the field of probation at graduate schools or departments of **social work** located within the state whose programs are registered by the regents and accredited by the council on social work education. Each such scholarship shall entitle the holder thereof to a sum sufficient to pay the cost of tuition, not to exceed two thousand dollars annually, while in attendance at any of the said schools or departments for a period not to exceed two years of graduate professional study. Scholarships under this section shall be awarded to employees in the probation service in such department who apply therefore in the order of their seniority in their civil service titles.



Ohio

§ 5149.02 - Adult parole authority; chief

No person shall be appointed as chief of the adult parole authority who is not qualified by education or experience in correctional work, including law enforcement, probation, or parole, in law, **in social work**, or in a combination of the three categories.

§5149.04- Parole supervision section; superintendent

(B) The superintendent, or superintendents, of the field services section shall be a person, or persons, especially qualified by training and experience in the field of corrections. The superintendent, or superintendents, shall supervise the work of the section and shall formulate and execute an effective program of offender supervision. The superintendent, or superintendents, shall collect and preserve any records and statistics with respect to offenders that are required by the chief of the authority. The section also shall include other personnel who are necessary for the performance of the section's duties.

No person shall be appointed as a superintendent who is not qualified by education or experience in correctional work including law enforcement, probation, or parole work, in law, **in social work**, or in a combination of the three categories.

Oklahoma

57 § 515 - Probation - Parole Officers

All probation-parole officers shall be deemed peace officers and shall possess the powers granted by law to peace officers. Probation-parole officers shall meet all of the training and qualifications for peace officers required by Section 3311 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes. Qualifications for probation-parole officers shall be good character and a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university including at least twenty-four (24) credit hours in any combination of psychology, sociology, **social work**, criminology, education, criminal justice administration, penology or police science.

Tennessee

§ 40-28-602 - Director of probation and parole; qualifications; duties

(a) The commissioner shall appoint a director of probation and parole who shall devote full-time and capacities to the duties of the office. The director shall have at least five (5) years of related administrative experience or a bachelor's or advanced degree in any of the following fields: penology, corrections work, law enforcement, law, vocational education, public administration, rehabilitation or social work, medicine or the behavioral sciences.

Texas

Human Resources Code § 222.001 – Minimum Standards for Probation Officers

(a) To be eligible for appointment as a probation officer, a person who was not employed as a probation officer before September 1, 1981, must:

- (1) be of good moral character;
- (2) have acquired a bachelor's degree conferred by a college or university accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;



- (3) have either: (A) one year of graduate study in criminology, corrections, counseling, law, **social work**, psychology, sociology, or other field of instruction approved by the department; or (B) one year of experience in full-time case work, **counseling**, or community or group work: (i) in a social service, community, corrections, or juvenile agency that deals with offenders or disadvantaged persons; and (ii) that the department determines provides the kind of experience necessary to meet this requirement;
- (4) have satisfactorily completed the course of preservice training or instruction and any continuing education required by the department;
- (5) have passed the tests or examinations required by the department; and
- (6) possess the level of certification required by the department.

Training in Evidence-based Practices

Arkansas

§ 16-93-712. Parole supervision

- (b) A parole officer shall: (8) Receive annual training on **evidence-based practices** and criminal risk factors, as well as instruction on how to target these factors to reduce recidivism.

Idaho

§20-219 Probation and parole supervision and training—Limited supervision—Rulemaking

- (6) The state board of correction shall provide all supervising officers with initial and ongoing training and professional development services to support the implementation of **evidence-based supervision practices**. All supervising officers employed as of the effective date of this section shall complete the training requirements set forth in this subsection on or before July 1, 2016. All supervising officers hired after the effective date of this section shall complete the training requirements set forth in this subsection within two (2) years of their hire date. The training and professional development services shall include:

- (a) Assessment techniques;
- (b) Case planning;
- (c) Risk reduction and intervention strategies;
- (d) Effective communication skills;
- (e) Behavioral health needs;
- (f) Application of core correctional practices, including motivational interviewing, cognitive restructuring, structured skill building, problem solving, reinforcement and use of authority;
- (g) Training for supervising officers to become trainers so as to ensure long-term and self-sufficient training capacity in the state; and
- (h) Other topics identified by the board as evidence-based practices.

Illinois

730 ILCS 190/10 Evidence-Based Programming

- (d) The Parole Division of the Department of Corrections and the Prisoner Review Board shall provide their employees with **intensive and ongoing training and professional development services to support the implementation of evidence-based practices**. The training and professional development services shall include assessment techniques, case planning, cognitive behavioral training, risk reduction and intervention strategies,



effective communication skills, substance abuse treatment education, and other topics identified by the agencies or their employees.

Kansas

§ 21-6607. *Conditions of probation or suspended sentence; correctional supervision fund; searches; drug testing; written reports*

(e) There is hereby established in the state treasury the correctional supervision fund. All moneys credited to the correctional supervision fund shall be used for **the implementation of and training for use of a statewide, mandatory, standardized risk assessment tool** or instrument as specified by the Kansas sentencing commission, pursuant to K.S.A. 75-5291, and amendments thereto, **and for evidence-based offender supervision programs** by judicial branch personnel. If all expenditures for the program have been paid and moneys remain in the correctional supervision fund for a fiscal year, remaining moneys may be expended from the correctional supervision fund to support offender supervision by court services officers. All expenditures from the correctional supervision fund shall be made in accordance with appropriation acts upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to vouchers approved by the chief justice of the Kansas supreme court or by a person or persons designated by the chief justice.

Kentucky

§439.3102 *Training and professional development for department personnel concerning implementation of evidence-based practices*

(1) The department shall provide its employees with intensive initial and on-going training and professional development services to support the implementation of **evidence-based practices**.

(2) The training and professional development services shall include assessment techniques, case planning, risk reduction and intervention strategies, effective communication skills, cognitive-behavioral treatment, substance abuse, and other topics identified by the department or its employees.

Louisiana

§ 574.2. *Committee on Parole*

(A)(9)(a) Within ninety days of being appointed to the committee on parole, each member shall complete a comprehensive training course developed by the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

The training course shall be developed using training components consistent with those offered by the National Institute of Corrections or the American Probation and Parole Association, and shall include classes regarding the following topics: (i) The elements of the decision making process, through the **use of evidence-based practices** for determining offender risk, needs, and motivation to change, including the actuarial assessment tool used by the parole agent.

Mississippi

§ 47-7-9. *Division of Community Corrections; duties of personnel*

(2)(b) Division personnel shall complete annual **training on evidence-based practices** and criminal risk factors, as well as instructions on how to target these factors to reduce recidivism



South Carolina

§ 24-21-10. Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services; Board of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services

(D) Within ninety days of a parole board member's appointment by the Governor and confirmation by the Senate, the board member must complete a comprehensive training course developed by the department using training components consistent with those offered by the National Institute of Corrections or the American Probation and Parole Association. This training course must include classes regarding the following: (1) the elements of the decision making process, through the use of **evidence-based practices** for determining offender risk, needs and motivations to change, including the actuarial assessment tool that is used by the parole agent...

(E)(1) Each parole board member is also required to complete a minimum of eight hours of training annually, which shall be provided for in the department's annual budget. This annual training course must be developed using the training components consistent with those offered by the National Institute of Corrections or American Probation and Parole Association and must offer classes regarding:

- (a) a review and analysis of the effectiveness of the assessment tool used by the parole agents;
- (b) a review of the department's progress toward public safety goals;
- (c) the use of data in decision making; and
- (d) any information regarding promising and **evidence-based practices** offered in the corrections related and crime victim dynamics field.

(F) The department must develop a plan that includes the following:

- (3) establishment of goals for the department, which include training requirements, mechanisms to ensure quality implementation of the validated assessment tool, and safety performance indicators.

South Dakota

§24-15A-46. Training on evidence-based practices and criminal risk factors

Any employee who exercises supervision over a parolee pursuant to § 24-15-14 or provides intervention services to any parolee shall receive annual training **on evidence-based practices** and criminal risk factors, as well as instruction on how to target these factors to reduce recidivism.

NCSL Criminal Justice Program

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