

August 18, 2020

PA Department of Corrections and PA Parole Board Offer Safe Return for Parolees with Active State Warrants

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and the Pennsylvania Parole Board today announced an opportunity for state parolees with state parole warrants to participate in a statewide Safe Return initiative. Safe Return will be offered from August 24 to September 4 and eligible parolees can report to the closest parole office to reestablish compliance with parole supervision staff with the potential for more favorable consideration.

“Anyone with an active state parole warrant can surrender during the statewide Safe Return initiative,” said Christian Stephens, deputy secretary for parole field services. “Because people will be voluntarily surrendering, they’ll most likely receive more favorable consideration regarding their warrants than if they were otherwise stopped and arrested.

“Because of COVID-19, many reentrants may have become unavailable for supervision – due to the loss of housing or fear of returning to a state correctional institution or community corrections center during this health crisis. It is our goal to encourage those reentrants to turn themselves in so that they can come back into compliance with state parole supervision without fear of being returned to a state prison.”

In addition, operation Safe Return includes specialized services for those in need of help with unpaid fines or substance use disorder.

There are 1,871 parolees, or 4.5 percent of the total parolee population, classified as absconders. Safe Return aims to keep those absconders out of prison and into a stable, supportive environment. Those who surrender during Safe Return weeks will be processed through an expedited process.

In 2017, Operation Safe Return in Dauphin County was an overwhelming success, with more than 700 individuals turning themselves in to law enforcement and 5,340 warrants processed over the three-day period.

More information about operation Safe Return can be found on the website:

<https://www.cor.pa.gov/parole-supervision/Pages/Safe-Return.aspx>