What is the release review panel?

The RRP is a three-member panel, appointed by the executive director, to review and determine whether a youth who has completed his/her MLOS should be discharged from the custody of the TJJD, released under supervision (paroled) or given an extended length of stay.

Who is reviewed by the release review panel?

The RRP reviews youth committed to TJJD with an indeterminate sentence because the youth has not met program completion criteria by his/her MLOS, is not likely to meet program completion criteria on or before his/her MLOS date, or is recommended for a discharge.

Acronym Definitions

MDT: Multi-Disciplinary Team
MLOS: Minimum Length of Stay
PBIS: Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support
SSC: Special Services Committee
TJJD: Texas Juvenile Justice Department
RRP: Release Review Panel

Questions or comments?

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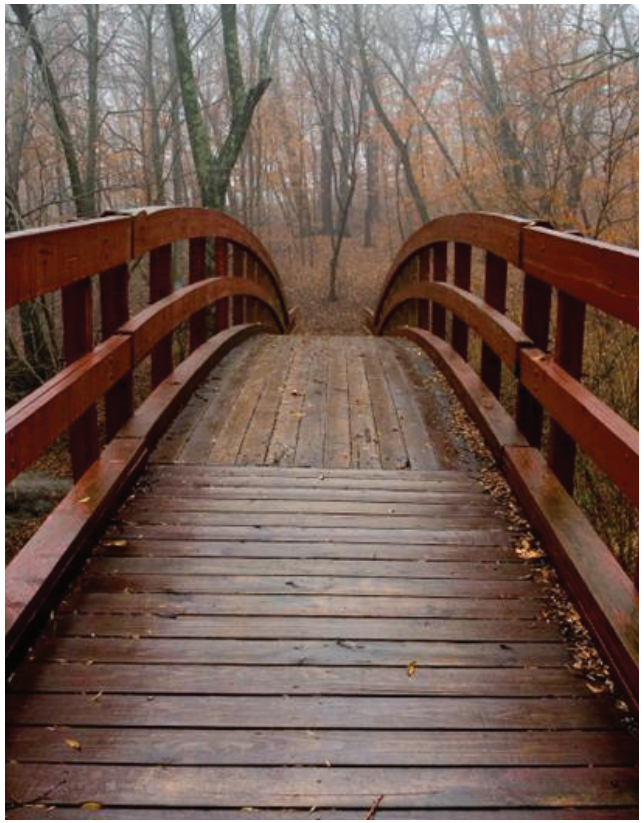
RELEASE REVIEW PANEL

INFORMATION FOR
Youth & Parents/Guardians



TEXAS JUVENILE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

How does the release review process work?

- The youth's MDT discusses the youth's progress in programming with the youth, the youth's parole officer, and his/her parent/guardian to determine if a referral to RRP is necessary.

- 15 days prior to the MLOS, the facility will send information about the youth's progress along with a recommendation to the RRP.

- If a youth has not met release criteria by his or her MLOS, the facility cannot release the youth.

- On the week of the MLOS date, the RRP begins its review to determine whether the youth is in need of additional rehabilitation and whether TJJD is the most suitable location to meet those rehabilitation needs.

- Within 30 days after the MLOS, the RRP will notify the facility, the youth, their parent/guardian, and advocacy group if needed, of their decision.

- If a youth is over the age of 18, the RRP cannot discuss their case with family members or send notifications to them unless a signed copy of the youth's authorization for disclosure paperwork is sent to the RRP panel coordinators.

What is the release review process?

- The review process begins after a youth's MDT refers the case to the RRP. The panel coordinators then assign the file to a panel member the week of the youth's MLOS.

- A panel member looks at many things when reviewing a youth: juvenile history, participation in treatment programs and supervision prior to commitment to TJJD, overall behavior while in TJJD and current participation levels in school, group, and assigned treatment programs.

- The RRP also looks at a youth's participation in the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support system and the Reading Improvement Program, if required to enroll. If the youth does not meet participation requirements, the law does not allow the youth to be released.

- After the RRP gathers and analyzes all available information, the three-member panel discusses the youth's progress. If needed, the RRP will call the case manager, the youth, or family members to clarify any information prior to their vote.

- The decision made by the RRP is by majority vote.

Who is involved in the review process?

- Facilities submit recommendations to the RRP based on a youth's progress in treatment and overall behavior.

- Youth, along with their parent/guardians, may send letters and emails to the RRP explaining why the youth should be released to parole, their stay extended, or discharged from TJJD.

- Parents may call and set an appointment to speak to the panel members assigned to the review.

- Advocacy groups may call or write the RRP to set an appointment with a panel member to discuss a youth's case.

What happens if the RRP votes to release to parole or discharge?

- The RRP notifies the facility where the youth is located. The facility then notifies the court of the release or discharge vote. The facility will also notify the family or guardian of the release date (if the youth is under 18 or if the authorization for disclosure paperwork is on file).

- Youth should be released from the facility within 15 days of the RRP's decision to release.

What happens with an extension vote?

- The youth and their parent/guardian (if under 18) will receive a letter from the RRP explaining the decision, recommending areas for the youth to focus during the extension period, and indicating the length of the extension.

- The youth will receive a new length of stay based on the day the RRP made its decision and the number of months extended.

- A request for reconsideration of the Panel's decision may be submitted by a youth, parent, guardian, designated advocate of the youth, an employee of the TJJD, or a person who provides volunteer services in the agency.

- The person submitting the request for reconsideration should state the reason for the request. Examples include, but are not limited to: progress in the general and/or specialized treatment programs, inaccurate information that was included in the decision, and new information not considered in the review that would likely impact the decision.

- The RRP will review the information and will decide to: 1) uphold the previous decision; 2) overturn the decision; or 3) reduce the length of an extension.