

PAROLEE QUESTIONNAIRE

131

(ATTACHMENT TO NCJ000784 STUDY)

Respondent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Agent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parolee Schedule

Up to this point we have been talking about parole in terms of what has affected you as an individual. Now we would like to ask a few questions about matters that seem to concern almost all parolees. Some of the questions may ask for details that you have already given us, but now we need to have every question in this set answered by everybody in just this form.

With most questions to follow we will give you a list of possible answers that have been mentioned to us by other parolees with whom we have talked. Pick the answer in each with which you would agree in general without thinking too much about it-- just as it first occurs to you. In many cases you will be given a chance to mention a different answer if none on the list seems right to you.

First, have you any question about what we are going to be doing now?

(If no question, proceed. If question, note it here.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Interviewer: be sure you check one item in each question.)

NCJ000785

O.K., let's start. Our first questions are about how you and your agent work together.

Every parolee has to talk with his agent about parole business, such as giving information about his work and home address and getting permissions of various sorts.

Many parolees also spend some time kidding around with the agent or discussing general subjects like sports or employment conditions. And sometimes parolees and agents talk about things that matter a good deal to the parolee.

1) About how much of your time with your agent is spent talking about straight parole business? Would you say

- almost all
- about half, or
- very little?
- NA

2) About how much time is spent talking about general topics or kidding around? Would you say

- over half
- less than half, or
- very little?
- none
- NA

3) Do you ever talk seriously with your agent about things that really matter to you?

- yes
- no
- NA

(if yes, then ask) How much do you talk serious with him? Would you say

- a lot
- some, or
- not very much?
- NA

4) Would you say that your agent treats you most like (choose one)

- |                                     |                                    |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a child    | <input type="checkbox"/> a man     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ other? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an inmate  | <input type="checkbox"/> a parolee | (specify)                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a criminal | <input type="checkbox"/> a friend  | <input type="checkbox"/> NA           |

(comments, if any) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) How well do you think your agent understands you and your way of life?

- very well
- fairly well
- or, not very well?
- NA

6) Now, we would like to know something about what your agent does. Would you say that your agent makes sure you have accurate and up-to-date information about procedures and decisions that affect your parole, for instance like how to apply for the certificate of rehabilitation, what is necessary for you to qualify for the early discharge, or decisions made about your case by the Board?

- most of the time
- some of the time, but not always
- almost never
- NA

7) Most parolees need to have some things done that only the agent can do, such as giving permissions to drive, buy a car, leave the county, arranging for the return of civil rights, or getting decisions from higher-ups. Have you ever asked your agent to do anything like this for you?

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ no

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

(If yes), Can you depend on him to take care of such matters promptly and efficiently?

\_\_\_\_\_ most of the time

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes, but not always

\_\_\_\_\_ almost never

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

(If no), Would you say that you haven't asked him for this kind of thing because

\_\_\_\_\_ you do what you want to do and hope that he doesn't find out?

\_\_\_\_\_ you feel there is no use asking or,

\_\_\_\_\_ you don't do anything that would require permission?

\_\_\_\_\_ other

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

8) Have you ever asked your agent for any kind of help other than giving permissions?

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ no

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

8a) (If yes, ask) What kind of help? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9) Whether you asked him to help or not, has your present agent actually helped you with any of the following matters? (Read one at a time--check if answer is yes)

- getting a job
- settling a problem with your employer
- finding a place to live
- deciding what to do about family problems
- getting medical care
- giving a loan
- buying a car
- clearing your drivers license
- getting car insurance
- arranging for payments on loans
- getting union membership
- establishing a business
- working out arrangements concerning traffic fines
- clearing up problems due to arrests, court actions, or a period in jail
- getting into vocational training or schooling
- getting help from welfare or other agencies
- managing your social life, such as helping you find leisure time activities, hobby opportunities, or ways to meet people.
- making decisions, such as whether to take a certain job, buy a certain car, or get married.
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

None

NA

10) When you really need something done can you count on him to help you out?

- almost always
- most of the time,
- or only once in awhile
- no
- NA

11) Do you feel your agent lets you know how he thinks you are doing on parole?

- yes
- no
- NA

(If yes), Do you know what he thinks because

- he tells you out in front or
  - just by the way he acts toward you
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

12) Most parolees have figured out a way of explaining to themselves why their agents act the way they do. We would like to know what you think goes on in your case. First, do you generally like the way your agent deals with you?

- yes
- no
- NA

(If yes, go on to next page and hand respondent copy of p. 7)

(If no, skip to page 8)

12) Tell me those statements that best describe why you think your agent treats you the way he does.

He treats me the way he does because:

- The system wants to keep parolees on the streets.
- I don't do anything to violate the rules.
- My agent is a decent person who is fair and consistent.
- I am probably an unusual kind of parolee.
- My agent doesn't bug me so long as he is covered.
- My agent sticks his neck out for what he thinks is right; he doesn't go by the book.
- Parole is easier than it used to be.
- I don't do anything to cause my agent trouble.
- The guys on top expect agents to help parolees.
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

(If no, skip to next page and hand respondent copy of p. 8)

12) Tell me those statements that best describe why you think your agent treats you the way he does.

My agent treats me the way he does because:

       My agent is taking orders from up above.

       My record's not too good.

       My agent's got too many parolees, so he doesn't have time for any one guy.

       My agent's a dog.

       I haven't been doing a good parole.

       The agent's job is to be a cop.

       My agent doesn't like my style of life and he's trying to make me over.

       He's mad because I've been playing games with him.

       My agent is not qualified for this kind of job.

       Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



13) Now we would like to know how you manage your relationship with your agent. In each of the following sets of three, pick the one comment that is most like what is true for you. (Read each set separately)

- a) \_\_\_\_\_ I send in my monthly report and ignore the rules the rest of the time.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I follow the rules in general, but I don't let the rules become a problem.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I'm very careful what I do and avoid everything that might possibly cause trouble.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

- b) \_\_\_\_\_ I stay away from the agent as much as possible.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I go to see my agent when I have specific business.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I go to see my agent, or telephone him, fairly often.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

- c) \_\_\_\_\_ I never talk with my agent about a problem unless he brings it up.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I tell my agent about a problem if I think he will find out anyway.  
\_\_\_\_\_ If I have a problem, I usually discuss it with my agent.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

- d) \_\_\_\_\_ I needle my agent whenever I can.  
\_\_\_\_\_ When I talk with my agent I say what I think whether we agree or disagree.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I let my agent think I go along with whatever he says.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

14) Now we would like to know about what being on parole--not just what your agent does--has meant for your life. Have any of the following things happened to you while you were on parole? For example:

\_\_\_\_\_ I had trouble because the agent talked about me with other people like my mother, wife, girlfriend, or employer.

\_\_\_\_\_ I had to break certain rules because there was no time to get permission or I couldn't reach the agent.

\_\_\_\_\_ I was not able to take a job that I wanted because the agent said no.

\_\_\_\_\_ I had to pretend I was not living with my girlfriend because of the rule against common-law.

\_\_\_\_\_ I couldn't complete a business deal because I couldn't get permission.

\_\_\_\_\_ I had a hard time getting jobs because I was a parolee.

\_\_\_\_\_ I was paid lower wages than others doing the same job because I was a parolee.

\_\_\_\_\_ I was arrested primarily because I was a parolee.

\_\_\_\_\_ When arrested, even when I was truthful, I was not believed because I was a parolee.

\_\_\_\_\_ When arrested, I was prevented from making bail because of a parole hold.

\_\_\_\_\_ When I was convicted on a misdemeanor I was sent back to prison rather than given a county jail sentence.

\_\_\_\_\_ My time was reset for the original offense when I was violated on a technical charge.

Have any other things like these happened because you were a parolee? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ None

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

15) Some parolees say that being on parole makes them feel uneasy in various ways.

Tell me if you have had any of these feelings. For example:

It is hard to relax knowing that the next day something could happen to make me go back.

I keep a watch out for signs of trouble.

Parole keeps me from fulfilling my potential.

As a parolee I can't get involved with people.

I feel that too many people know my private business because I am a parolee.

I feel I can't take responsibility for my own life when I have to get permission for so many things.

I sometimes worry about my agent getting information about me that could cause trouble for me.

I am sometimes uneasy in social situations because I am on parole.

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

None

NA

16) Do you feel you have needed to be on parole for any reason?

Yes

No

NA

17) (If yes) What is your main reason for needing parole? \_\_\_\_\_

NA

18) Some men have told us parole has been useful for the following reasons. Whether or not you needed parole, have any of these things been important for you?

\_\_\_\_\_ Being on parole keeps me working more steadily than ever before.

\_\_\_\_\_ At the beginning I needed some help getting started.

\_\_\_\_\_ It has been good to have someone who knows how to get things done with other agencies like employment, welfare, vocational rehab or unions.

\_\_\_\_\_ It has been useful to have someone to advise me.

\_\_\_\_\_ Being on parole reminds me to stay away from trouble.

\_\_\_\_\_ When I needed to make a decision it was useful to have someone with whom I could kick around the pros and cons.

\_\_\_\_\_ The parole rules have kept me from doing things that used to get me into trouble, for instance like drinking too much, writing NSF checks, fighting, using drugs, or some other bad habit.

\_\_\_\_\_ It has been good to have someone higher-up who went to bat for me.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have needed someone to help me with personal problems like family troubles or my own feelings about myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ None

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Now we would like to know something about how you think you have been doing on parole.

19) Many men have told us about things that seemed to change the way their parole was going, setting them back instead of getting them further toward discharge. Some of those things are listed here. Have any of these happened to you during this parole? (If the man is discharged, say, "Did any of these happen to you during your last parole?)

- an arrest
- a county jail sentence
- traffic violations
- a car accident
- other car problems
- losing a job or not being able to find employment
- missing nalline, OPC appointments, or group counseling
- too many bills
- a fight
- problems with my wife or other family members
- problems with the agent about living with a girlfriend.
- getting involved with bad associates
- drinking too much
- using drugs
- going PAL
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- None
- NA

20) (If any example is given, then ask) Did this event cause any of the following to happen? Answer yes to each consequence that happened in your case. (Read one at a time. Check all appropriate items.)

\_\_\_\_\_ My agent lost faith in me.

\_\_\_\_\_ He found out a lot of other things about me that I didn't want him to know.

\_\_\_\_\_ I lost faith in my ability to do parole.

\_\_\_\_\_ I lost faith in my agent.

\_\_\_\_\_ I felt better about my agent because he stood by me.

\_\_\_\_\_ I felt better about my chances on parole.

\_\_\_\_\_ My agent got mad at me.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ None

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

21) (Skip to question 24 if respondent is discharged; to question 26 if he is revoked; to question 32 if a lifetime parole). Could you tell me what you think your chances are for discharge on this parole? Are they:

\_\_\_\_\_ very good, almost a hundred percent,

\_\_\_\_\_ better than half,

\_\_\_\_\_ fifty-fifty

\_\_\_\_\_ less than average, or

\_\_\_\_\_ probably pretty poor?

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

22) Has your bet on your chances changed since you have been on parole? For instance, have your chances

\_\_\_\_\_ improved steadily, or

\_\_\_\_\_ gotten better since you had a set-back, or

\_\_\_\_\_ gotten worse, or

\_\_\_\_\_ stayed about the same?

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

23) Would you say that right now your agent rates your chances for discharge on this parole as:

\_\_\_\_\_ very good, almost a hundred percent,

\_\_\_\_\_ better than half,

\_\_\_\_\_ fifty-fifty

\_\_\_\_\_ less than average, or

\_\_\_\_\_ pretty poor?

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Skip to question 34)

(Questions 24 and 25 for discharged respondents only)

24) While you were on parole did your guess about your chances for discharge on that parole change? For instance, did your chances seem to

improve steadily, or

get worse for awhile after a set back and then improve, or

shift back and forth every month or two, or

stay about the same?

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NA

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

25) Did you think your agent generally agreed with your guess about your chances for discharge? For instance, would you say he usually rated your chances

worse than you, or

about the same as you, or

better than you thought?

don't know

NA

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Skip to question 34)



(Questions 26-31 for revoked respondents only)

26) While you were on parole did your guess about your chances for discharge on that parole change? For instance, did your chances seem to

- be pretty good most of the time until the last trouble, or
- shift back and forth every month or two, or
- get steadily worse.

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NA

27) Did you think your agent generally agreed with your guess about your chances for discharge on that parole? For instance, would you say he usually rated your chances

- worse than you, or
- about the same as you, or
- better than you thought?
- don't know

NA

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

28) Can you tell me at what point you actually knew you were going back to prison?

For instance, did you

- wait and hope for a long time after arrest before you were sure?
- did you know "this is it" when you were arrested?
- did you remain uncertain until you learned the Board decision?

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

29) Did your agent tell you what he was recommending to the Board before the Board decided?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

30) Did he say he recommended

\_\_\_\_\_ revoke, or

\_\_\_\_\_ continue.

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

31) Who told you you were actually revoked?

\_\_\_\_\_ the agent, or

\_\_\_\_\_ the jailer, or

\_\_\_\_\_ someone who came to transport you back, or

\_\_\_\_\_ some family member or personal friend who visited you in jail?

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

(Questions 32 and 33 for life-time parolees only)

32) Could you tell me what you think your chances are for staying out during your parole?

- very good, almost a hundred percent,
- better than half
- fifty-fifty
- less than average, or
- probably pretty poor?
- NA

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

33) Would you say that right now your agent rates your chances for staying out as:

- very good, almost a hundred percent,
- better than half
- fifty-fifty
- less than average, or
- probably pretty poor?
- NA

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Proceed to question 34)

34) Some parolees have suggested changes in parole like the following. Answer yes, if you agree; no, if you don't agree. (Read one by one. Check one answer for each item)

Change the power of the agent so he can give more help and has less power to send you back.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Have smaller caseloads so the agent has more time for each parolee.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Restore all civil rights to the man when he is released from prison.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Use parole just for the men who need it and discharge everyone else.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Take away the Board's power to reset your time when you get revoked.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Get more special programs for job training and placement.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Let some parolees become agents because they understand the problems better.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Provide more agents who can give professional counseling.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Provide each parolee with a basic weekly income until he gets his first paycheck.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Have more group counseling.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Make group counseling completely voluntary.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

Abolish parole entirely.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ NA

36) If you had the power to change anything you wanted to about parole, what would you do?

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(Interviewer, use own words) As I told you earlier this is the last time we will be asking to talk with you. We want to thank you for your help. We hope that your contributions with those of your fellows will help to make parole better in the future. Good luck to you in reaching your discharge goal.