



NEWS RELEASE



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
State Parole Board**

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NEW JERSEY STATE PAROLE BOARD SIMULATES WHAT LIFE IS LIKE FOR OFFENDERS REENTERING SOCIETY

REENTRY SIMULATION HELPS CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS, STUDENTS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE AFTER PRISON FOR OFFENDERS

TRENTON, NJ— The New Jersey State Parole Board hosted a reentry simulation event which provided approximately 50 criminal justice professionals and students with the opportunity to virtually walk in the shoes of an offender recently released from incarceration.



The purpose of this exercise was to give local legislators, criminal justice professionals, parole and correctional administrators, county service providers, probation, county and local police officers, and Monmouth University students a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges, difficulties, and pitfalls offenders face as they work to reenter society.

During the simulation participants assumed the identity of an offender reentering society. They had one hour to experience various scenarios that involved goals and tasks that they needed to achieve, such as obtain a driver’s license, visit social services, find housing, and visit their parole officer. At the end of one hour, the participants’ performance was evaluated to see if they had met enough goals to remain out of jail.

The New Jersey State Parole Board collectively said, “Events like this reentry simulation help criminal justice professionals and social agency employees better understand the frustrations and hopelessness that many individuals reentering society face. By recognizing these difficulties, we can better learn how to provide additional support for them. Educating public employees who help handle the reentry of offenders is paramount because an easier transition for those released from prison can invariably lead to safer communities and lower recidivism rates.”



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The New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) is committed to promoting public safety, utilizing effective methods to aid supervised offenders in reentering society, and to reduce the recidivism of offenders while addressing the needs of crime victims. As required by law, appointed parole board members and staff conduct approximately 13,500 hearings per year, solicit input from victims, and decide upon parole matters. Nearly 400 sworn SPB parole officers supervise more than 15,500 offenders and act as New Jersey's primary law enforcement agency responsible for sex offender supervision. Additionally, SPB officers are also active partners with a variety of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and task forces. Finally, the SPB's Community Programs Unit partners with government, non-profit, and private agencies to connect former inmates with vocational, mental health, and related services.

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