



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

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Public Information on Early Prison Releases

The Sacramento County District Attorney's Office has received many questions regarding the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitations (CDCR) releasing inmates after serving only fractions of their sentences – early releases.

In the interest of informing the public, we are providing the following information about these policies and what the office has done to prevent the early release of violent offenders.

2015-2016: CDCR began the early release of inmates through a new parole determination where inmates characterized as “nonviolent second-strikers” (NVSS) became eligible for early parole consideration.

Proposition 57 was then qualified. The California District Attorneys Association and District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert sued over the ballot title and summary of this initiative that allowed for early releases of so-called “nonviolent” inmates with long records of violence. When Proposition 57 became law, “nonviolent” inmates were also able to earn early parole under a new “nonviolent parole review” (NVPR).

Since 2015, without any obligation to do so, the Sacramento District Attorney's Office has been writing letters of opposition to the early release of inmates sentenced in Sacramento County who are violent offenders and an unreasonable risk to public safety. To date:

- Our office has submitted more than 1,600 letters opposing early releases of Sacramento County inmates under NVSS and NVPR to the Board of Parole Hearings.

Despite our oppositions, more than 600 inmates have been granted early release.

- 219 of the 600 have been charged with a new crime.

The District Attorney's Office has been informing the public of violent offenders granted early release by posting the opposition letters on the office's public website since 2015. [Early Prison Release Opposition Letters](#)

2018-2020: The Sacramento District Attorney's Office, in collaboration with Assemblyman Jim Cooper, wrote and advocated for Proposition 20.

This initiative, if passed, would have expanded the list of violent crimes under California law, thereby limiting early parole for certain crimes under Proposition 57. Under California law, such crimes as domestic violence, human trafficking of a child, rape of an unconscious person and assault with a deadly weapon are considered non-violent. As such, inmates convicted of these crimes can be released after serving a fraction of their sentence despite many having violent criminal records.

2021: The Sacramento District Attorney's Office filed two lawsuits against CDCR. The first lawsuit objects to the so-called "emergency" regulations which would significantly reduce inmate sentences. More than 40 elected District Attorneys across California have joined this lawsuit.

CDCR filed an additional emergency re-adoption of the early release credits in December 2021. The Sacramento District Attorney's Office filed a Temporary Restraining Order to prevent CDCR from awarding those credits. Twenty-seven elected District Attorneys joined that second lawsuit and a majority of the original 44 elected District Attorneys are also seeking to join that lawsuit, which is currently in the 3rd District Court of Appeal.

The Sacramento District Attorney's Office will continue to inform the public about early prison releases and other policies that impact public safety.