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Menu

[/ B.C.'s criminal justice system](#) / [/ Understanding criminal justice](#) / [/ How the](#)

Release from Custody - An Overview

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When an [adult](#) or [youth](#) sentenced to custody has completed all or part of their sentence, they may be released back into the community.

The transition from custody back to community can be very challenging, especially if the person has been in custody for a long time. Some offenders may return to previous criminal behaviour as they seek out familiar people and places during a stressful time. For this reason, arranging for the offender to receive supervision and support can be better than releasing them directly from a [correctional centre](#) into the community.

Many offenders are released before the end of their sentence to allow them to be supervised in the community. This can be through [parole](#) or a [statutory release](#). Once an offender has served their full sentence, they cannot be subject to supervision in the community unless a court specifically orders [probation](#) after they are released.

Parole

Parole and day parole are forms of release for adults in [federal](#) and [provincial](#) custody. When [parole is granted](#), the offender is supervised by a parole officer until their sentence is over. Parole decisions are made by the [Parole Board of Canada](#).

Visit [Parole \(Adult Offender\)](#) for more information.

Statutory and Supervised Release



Most offenders are not released from custody on parole. But many offenders are released before the end of their sentences.

Most offenders in federal correctional centres are released after serving about two-thirds of their sentence. This is called statutory release. They are supervised for the rest of their sentence. But if an offender serving a federal sentence is considered extremely dangerous, they may be denied any form of release before the end of their sentence. While they must be released on the last day of their sentence, Crown counsel may ask for a court order to allow them to be supervised in the community after their sentence.

Most offenders in provincial correctional centres are released sometime after serving two-thirds of their sentence. When they are released depends on how much remission (or time off they receive for good behaviour) they earn by their behaviour in custody. Because sentences served in provincial jails are shorter and involve less serious offences, these offenders are not supervised after their release unless the judge has given a probation order. Probation follows time in custody.

Release Planning

When an offender is nearing the point when they will be released from custody, federal or provincial corrections staff will work with them to prepare a release plan. A release plan is intended to help the offender readjust to moving back into the community. Corrections staff start the work of preparing the offender to go back to the community before they leave custody. For this work to be successful, it is important to continue the efforts in the community. Research and experience shows gradual release, with supervision, can be successful in helping offenders settle back into society.

More Information

Visit: [Release Planning \(Adult Offender\)](#) for more information.

Related Links

- [Parole](#)

- [Attend a Hearing](#)
- [B.C. Corrections](#)
- [Correctional Service Canada](#)
- [Corrections and Conditional Release Act](#)

Jury Duty

A jury is a group of people who decide if an accused person in a criminal trial is guilty or if a claim in a civil trial has been proven. Learn more about [jury duty](#).

Criminal Justice Glossary

Check our alphabetical list of [criminal justice terms](#) along with their definitions.

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