

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2023 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

**House Bill 2472**

By Delegate Fast

[Introduced January 11, 2023; Referred to the  
Committee on Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §62-12-12 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to adding additional members to the West Virginia Parole Board.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 12. PROBATION AND PAROLE.**

**§62-12-12. Parole Board generally.**

1 (a) The West Virginia Parole Board is continued as part of the Division of Corrections and  
2 Rehabilitation. The board shall consist of ~~nine~~ 12 members, each of whom shall have been a  
3 resident of this state for at least five consecutive years prior to his or her appointment. ~~No more~~  
4 ~~than five of the board members may at any one time belong to the same political party, except as~~  
5 ~~provided in subsection (b) of this section~~ The board shall be appointed by the Governor, by and  
6 with the advice and consent of the Senate and shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Governor.

7 (b) The Governor shall appoint one of the ~~nine~~ 12 members to serve as chairperson at the  
8 Governor's will and pleasure. In addition to all other powers, duties, and responsibilities granted  
9 and assigned to the chairperson by law and rule, the chairperson has the following powers and  
10 duties:

- 11 (1) To provide for the management of facilities and personnel of the board;
- 12 (2) To supervise the administration and operation of the board;
- 13 (3) To delegate the powers and duties of his or her office to the vice chairperson or other  
14 members of the board, who shall act under the direction of the chairperson and for whose acts he  
15 or she is responsible: *Provided*, That if the position of chairperson becomes vacant by death,  
16 resignation, or otherwise, the vice chairperson shall assume all the powers and duties of the  
17 chairperson until such time as a new chairperson is appointed pursuant to the provisions of this  
18 subsection;
- 19 (4) To employ one full-time administrative employee, who shall be a classified exempt; and
- 20 (5) To exercise all other powers and perform all other duties necessary and proper in  
21 carrying out his or her responsibilities as chairperson.

22 (c) The board, from its membership, shall elect a vice chairperson, at least once every  
23 year, to serve as chair in the absence of a chairperson. In the absence of or at the direction of the  
24 chairperson, the vice chairperson may exercise the powers and duties of the chairperson. The vice  
25 chairperson shall, while performing the duties and responsibilities of the chairperson, have all of  
26 the statutorily authorized power and duties of the chairperson.

27 (d) Members of the board shall have at least an undergraduate degree from an accredited  
28 college or university or at least five years of actual experience in the fields of corrections, law  
29 enforcement, sociology, law, education, psychology, social work, or medicine, or a combination  
30 thereof, and shall be otherwise competent to perform the duties of his or her office: *Provided*, That  
31 at least three members initially appointed after July 1, 2023, shall have five or more years  
32 experience in the fields of mental health, social work, or inmate reentry services. All members  
33 currently serving on the board shall continue the terms they are currently serving, unless otherwise  
34 removed. The members shall be appointed for overlapping terms of six years. Members are  
35 eligible for reappointment. The members of the board shall devote their full time and attention to  
36 their board duties.

37 (e) The Governor may, if he or she is informed that a vacancy is imminent, appoint a  
38 member to fill the imminent vacancy prior to it becoming vacant: *Provided*, That the new member  
39 may be appointed no more than 30 days prior to the vacancy occurring and only for purposes of  
40 training. He or she may not assume the powers and duties of the position until the vacancy has  
41 actually occurred.

42 (f) The Governor may appoint no more than five persons to a list of substitute board  
43 members. Substitute board members shall meet the qualifications set forth in subsection (d) of this  
44 section. The persons on the list shall be used in a rotating fashion. If a full-time board member is  
45 unable to serve, a substitute board member may serve in his or her place. These substitute board  
46 members shall have the same powers and duties of the fulltime board members while acting as a  
47 substitute and shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Governor. These members shall be

48 reimbursed for expenses and paid a per diem rate set by the secretary.

49 (g) The Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall provide administrative and other  
50 services to the board as the board requires. Expenses of the board shall be included within the  
51 annual budget of the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation: *Provided*, That the salaries of the  
52 members appointed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section are to be included in a separate  
53 budget for the Parole Board.

54 (h) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, meetings of the parole board  
55 are not subject to the provisions of §6-9A-1 *et seq.* of this code: *Provided*, That hearings before  
56 the parole board shall be open to the public.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to add additional members to the West Virginia Parole Board.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.