



Arkansas Parole Board
Two Union National Plaza Building
105 West Capitol; 5th Floor
Little Rock, AR 72201-5731
(501) 682-3850 Fax: (501) 683-5381

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE: 17-04 Research and Program Evaluation

TO: ARKANSAS PAROLE BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

FROM: JOHN FELTS, BOARD CHAIRMAN

SUPERSEDES: NONE

APPROVED: SIGNATURE ON FILE EFFECTIVE: March 13, 2017

I. APPLICABILITY. This policy applies to Arkansas Parole Board (“APB” or “the Board”) members, staff, and individuals/organizations outside of the agency that request and/or conduct research.

II. POLICY. The Arkansas Parole Board permits, encourages and utilizes internal research as well as external research conducted by qualified individuals. Members and designated staff will participate with researchers in deciding which questions should be addressed and which data should be gathered and how that data should be reported. When approving projects by researchers, the Chairman will ensure that the privacy interests of offenders and other parties under study are protected.

III. GUIDELINES.

A. The Board will encourage, permit and use research and evaluation activities conducted by qualified individuals.

B. All members and staff will cooperate with approved research efforts and bring to the attention of the Board Administrator any research activity that may adversely affect offenders or agency operations.

C. Research Proposal Requirement. A research plan is required unless one of the following exceptions applies:

1. **Employees Conducting Research.** Research proposals are not required when employees perform research activities within the normal scope of their job duties.
2. **Employees Conducting Program Evaluation.** When employees collect data for APB approved reports (such as the Annual Report) or approved business systems (such as eOMIS), a research proposal is not required.
3. **Research on the Board's Behalf.** Research proposals are not required when entities are performing research activities on the Board's behalf. Examples are the Department of Correction, Arkansas Community Correction, or a contracted vendor.

D. Recidivism Studies and Reports. Researchers (including employees) conducting recidivism studies and reporting must conduct their studies based on the definition of recidivism in A.C.A. § 16-1-101 and comply with the reporting requirements specified in the law.

E. Research Plan Development and Implementation.

1. Researchers must work with the Board Administrator and/or other designated staff to decide what questions should be addressed, the data to be gathered, and how the data will be presented. Researchers must submit proposed research plans for review and approval/disapproval of the Board using Form 1 (attached), Request to Conduct Research, and submit the form to the Board Administrator. Research proposals must meet or exceed the review criteria outlined in agency policy. Changes to an approved research proposal must be approved by the Chairman and will require the submission of a new form. This includes any research design modifications or changes in scope, data collected, or the tools used in the collection of data. Researchers must follow approved proposals. The Board Administrator will request review and approval by the Chairman. The Chairman will consider comments, order appropriate revisions, and will be the final approval authority for the plan.
2. The Board Administrator is responsible for establishing additional standards for the evaluation of research proposals, any additional forms necessary for completion to submit with a request to conduct research and a review of the proposals. Proposals submitted for review must be evaluated on the following:
 - a. Soundness of research design and methodology, including sampling procedures.
 - b. Duplication with other projects currently proposed or underway.

- c. Relevance of the proposal in relation to the goals and objectives of the Board.
- d. Amount and type of assistance required from agency personnel. Under no condition will the Board approve research requests that pose a significant burden on employees or significant costs that the Board would incur in assisting with the project. However, the Board Administrator may request the assistance from the Department of Correction or Arkansas Community Correction in fulfilling a research request and consider the availability, or lack thereof, of assistance.
- e. Impact on offenders and whether or not offenders will be required to participate in the study.
- f. Security of information and data collection system, to include verification (accuracy), access to, and protection of data. Any costs associated with system access, modification or collection of data shall be the responsibility of the researcher.
- g. Written description of the method for dissemination of research findings.
- h. A restatement or inclusion by reference of the information in this policy regarding protection of offenders involved in research projects. An equivalent statement may be acceptable.
- i. A statement that results will be published in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of offenders and staff. Researchers must include a signed copy of the Non-Disclosure agreement, Form 2 (attached), signed by all individuals who will have access to confidential data.
- j. For external researchers associated with an institution of higher education, any and all research tools and methodology must have been approved by that institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before any research is conducted and documentation of IRB approval must accompany the request to the Board.

F. Participation of Offenders in Research Projects. The Board will never require the participation of any offender in any research project. Research requests requiring the participation of an offender must be forwarded to the Department of Correction or Arkansas Community Correction, depending on the offender's status.

G. Review, Approval, and Dissemination of Research Results

- 1. Prior to publication or dissemination, researchers must submit a draft of internal/external research results to the Board Administrator who will obtain the Chairman's approval

2. The Board Administrator will review all research project results and will forward the reviewed results to the Chairman with a recommendation to approve, disapprove, or approved with specific revisions.
3. Researchers are responsible for the dissemination of their findings to the public and shall provide copies of their reports upon request to any person or entity requesting a copy.
4. Researchers shall provide at least nine (9) copies of any publication derived from the research to the Board for retention and internal distribution.
5. The Board Administrator will work with staff and researchers to conduct a cost and feasibility assessment of any request and report results to the Chairman. Upon approval, the Board Administrator will ensure the development and implementation of appropriate computerized data-gathering systems to facilitate data collection and analysis.
6. Board Members, Senior Staff, and supervisors must make appropriate use of research results and program evaluation data. Uses for such information include analyzing duty assignments and agency policy or proposing changes in State law to the Governor and General Assembly.

H. Online Publishing of Relevant Research Studies & Reports. The Board Administrator shall ensure that relevant research studies and reports concerning the following topics generated by the Board or by third-party contractors on behalf of the Board, when applicable, are posted on the Board's website for no less than five (5) years following their approval:

1. Population projections;
2. Recidivism; and
3. Evaluation of the cost-benefit of evidence-based practices of:
 - a. Adult prisons;
 - b. Community corrections facilities;
 - c. Probation; and
 - d. Parole.

V. FORMS.

Attachment 1: Request to Conduct Research
Attachment 2: Non-Disclosure Agreement
Attachment 3: Employee Acknowledgement

Arkansas Parole Board
REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO: Arkansas Parole Board
Attn: Board Administrator
Two Union National Plaza Building
105 West Capitol, Suite 500
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
(501) 682-3850
Fax (501) 683-5381

FROM:
RE:
DATE:

I request your consideration and approval to conduct research of information within the Arkansas Parole Board (APB) as described below and in any attachments. This research is being conducted on behalf of the following agency/organization:

Printed Name of Requestor Title e-mail address + phone number

Researcher: On a separate sheet(s) if necessary, describe the types of records and information you wish to access and the nature of the research activity, purpose, and procedures to be followed. Provide copies of any Institutional Review Board authorizations for tools and/or methodology to be used in the project.

I will manage and protect your agency information according to the terms in the attached Non-Disclosure Agreement (AD ___ Form 2).

Signature of Requestor Date Requestor Printed Name

Researcher's Request:

THE SECTION BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR APB USE

Recommend Approval Recommend Denial

Signature of Board Administrator Date

Request Approved Request Denied

Signature of Chairman Date

**Arkansas Parole Board
NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT**

This agreement is entered into between the Arkansas Parole Board (APB), hereinafter referred to as the Agency, and:

Hereinafter referred to as the Researcher, whereby the APB agrees to provide information or access to information for research, evaluation, or statistical activities to the researcher.

1. The Researcher will not use Agency information to the detriment of the Agency or the subjects of the research, or for any purpose other than those stated in the research plan, and will abide by the confidentiality, security, and dissemination provisions of the Agency.
2. The Agency will provide access to offender records or other information as requested in the approved research request. The agency reserves the right to suspend immediately furnishing information under this agreement and to require the return of information already furnished when any rule, policy, procedure or law is violated or appears to be violated.
3. The Researcher will use secure destruction methods for any copies of source documents obtained when they are no longer needed for the purpose for which they were provided.
4. The Researcher will allow only the persons identified in the Research Request access to confidential Agency information and will not disseminate, further disclose, nor allow the persons listed to further disseminate or disclose the information.
5. The Researcher will implement procedures that will effectively protect Agency and offender information from unauthorized access, alteration, or destruction.
6. The Researcher will abide by the laws and regulations of this State, the agency, and the federal government and any present or future rules, policies, or procedures adopted by the same, to the extent they are applicable to information provided under this agreement. This includes complying with accepted professional and scientific ethics and issues of legal consent and release of information. The Researcher agrees to be subject to any civil or criminal penalties applicable to the use of confidential information accessed under this agreement under Arkansas or federal law.
7. If the agreement is to provide offender record information on a continuing basis, the Agency reserves the right to immediately suspend furnishing information under this agreement should any rule, policy, procedure, regulation, or law be violated or appear to the Agency to be violated.
8. The Researcher agrees to indemnify and save harmless the State of Arkansas, the Agency, other signatory agencies and their employees from and against any and all causes of actions, demands, suits, and other proceedings of whatsoever nature; against all liability to others, including any liabilities or damages by reason of or arising out of any files, arrest, or imprisonment or any cause of action whatsoever; and against any loss, cost, expense, and damage resulting there from, arising out of or involving any negligence on the part of Researcher in the exercise of enjoyment of this agreement.
9. The Agency or Researcher may, upon written notice, terminate this agreement at any time.

_____ Researcher's Company Name	_____ Phone Number	_____ Address
_____ Signature of Research Representative	_____ Date	_____ Name of Research Representative
_____ Signature of Chairman	_____ Date	

Attachment 3

TO: Parole Board Employees
FROM: John Felts, Chairman
RE: Acknowledgment of the Administrative Directive on Research & Program Evaluation
DATE: _____

I understand that the policy referenced above is located on the APB web site and is available for my review or printing during business hours. My supervisor and I have reviewed and discussed this policy.

I understand it is my responsibility to read it thoroughly and ask questions of my supervisor if I don't understand it. I understand that my signature on this document indicates that I have read and fully understand the prohibited activities and my professional ethical conduct responsibilities as an employee of the Board as described herein. I understand that nothing contained in the Board's policies, handbooks, applications and other documents, or the granting of any interview, or the placement in a probationary status, or any other administrative act, creates a contract between myself and the Board for either employment or the provision of benefits.

I have signed and dated this acknowledgment and understand it will be maintained in my personnel file in the HR/Fiscal Section.

_____ Employee Printed Name	_____ Employee Signature	_____ Date
_____ Supervisor Printed Name	_____ Supervisor Signature	_____ Date