# NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

# PAROLE OF PRISONERS ACT

As in force at 15 February 2012

# Table of provisions

# Part 1 Preliminary matters

1	Short title	1
2	Commencement	. 1
3	Interpretation	1

# Part 2 Administrative matters

Division 1 Parole Board

3A	Parole Board established	2
3B	Membership of Board	3
3C	Chairperson of Board	3
3D	Appointment of persons to act as appointed members	
3E	Resignation of appointed members	4
3EA	Removal from office of appointed members	4
3EB	Constitution of Board for different matters	4
3F	Meetings of Board	4
3G	Chairperson may require attendance of prisoner	5
3GA	Expert advice or opinion	
3GB	Release on parole of prisoner serving life imprisonment for	
	murder	6
3H	Board to prepare annual report	6
3HA	Exclusion of rules of natural justice	
3J	Actions not to lie against members or parole officers	7
3K	Secretary to the Board	7

Division 2 Parole officers

3P	Appointment of parole officers	7
3Q	Resignation of parole officers	7
3R	Functions of parole officers	3

# Part 3 Parole orders

5	Release of offenders on parole	8
6	Cancellation of parole by court	
7	Issue of warrant where parole order revoked or cancelled	
8	Remand of person	11
9	Release of person on bail	11
10	Appeal from decision to cancel parole order	12

11	Service of term of imprisonment	12
13	Release of person on parole after revocation or cancellation of	
	previous parole order	12
14	Effect of parole order on sentence	
15	Remission already earned before parole order revoked or	
	cancelled	13

# Part 4 Miscellaneous matters

16	Exercise of Royal prerogative of mercy and operation of other	
	Commonwealth laws or Territory laws	14
17	Regulations	14

## ENDNOTES

# NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

This reprint shows the Act as in force at 15 February 2012. Any amendments that commence after that date are not included.

## PAROLE OF PRISONERS ACT

An Act relating to sentences of imprisonment imposed on, and the release on parole of, certain persons found guilty of offences

## Part 1 Preliminary matters

#### 1 Short title

This Act may be cited as the Parole of Prisoners Act.

#### 2 Commencement

This Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by the Administrator by notice in the *Gazette*.

#### 3 Interpretation

(1) In this Act:

*appointed member* means a member of the Board appointed under section 3B(2).

*Chairperson* means the Chairperson of the Board under section 3C.

*court* means the Supreme Court or a court of summary jurisdiction.

*minimum term of imprisonment* means that part of a term of imprisonment to which a person has been sentenced by a court that is fixed by the court as the period during which the person is not eligible to be released on parole.

*offence* means an offence against a law (other than a Commonwealth Act or regulations under a Commonwealth Act) in force in the Territory.

*offender* means a person convicted of an offence against a law (other than a Commonwealth Act or regulations under a Commonwealth Act) in force in the Territory.

*parole officer* means a parole officer, or honorary parole officer, appointed under section 3P.

*parole order* means an order made under section 5(2) and, if such an order has been amended, means the order as amended.

*police officer* means:

- (a) a member of the Police Force of the Territory; or
- (b) a member of the Australian Federal Police.

*prison* includes any place where a person who has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment may be detained to undergo that imprisonment.

*the Board* means the Parole Board of the Northern Territory established under this Act.

*the parole period*, in relation to a person who has been released from prison on parole in pursuance of section 5, means the period that:

- (a) commences on the day on which the person is released from prison; and
- (b) ends on the day on which the term of imprisonment to which that person was sentenced expires, or, if the parole order in relation to the person is revoked or cancelled, on the date of the revocation or cancellation.
- (3) For this Act, a person is taken to have served a term of imprisonment:
  - (a) when the person is discharged from imprisonment; or
  - (b) when the person would, but for the fact that the person is serving another term of imprisonment, have been discharged from imprisonment.

## Part 2 Administrative matters

## Division 1 Parole Board

#### 3A Parole Board established

For this Act, there is a board to be known as the Parole Board of the Northern Territory.

## 3B Membership of Board

- (1) The Board must have 10 members who are to be:
  - (a) the Chief Justice or another Judge of the Supreme Court nominated by the Chief Justice; and
  - (b) the Director of Correctional Services; and
  - (c) a police officer nominated by the Commissioner of Police; and
  - (d) a medical practitioner or a psychologist who has a right of practice under the *Health Practitioners Act*; and
  - (e) a person who represents the interests of victims of crime; and
  - (f) 5 persons who reflect, as closely as possible, the composition of the community at large and include women and Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.
- (2) A member referred to in subsection (1)(d), (e) or (f):
  - (a) is to be appointed in writing by the Administrator; and
  - (b) holds office for 3 years commencing on the date of appointment; and
  - (c) is eligible for re-appointment.
- (3) The validity of a decision or direction of the Board is not affected by a vacancy in the membership of the Board.

#### 3C Chairperson of Board

The member referred to in section 3B(1)(a) is the Chairperson of the Board.

#### 3D Appointment of persons to act as appointed members

- (1) The Minister may appoint a person to act as an appointed member:
  - (a) during a vacancy in the office of the member, whether or not an appointment has previously been made to the office; or
  - (b) during any period, or during all periods, when the member is for any reason unable to perform the functions of the office.
- (2) A person appointed to act under subsection (1) during a vacancy in an office must not act in that office continuously for more than 12 months.

- (3) A person is not to be appointed to act under subsection (1) as an appointed member referred to in section 3B(1)(d), (e) or (f) unless the person is eligible to be appointed as such a member.
- (4) Anything done by or in relation to a person purporting to act in pursuance of an appointment under subsection (1) is not invalid on the ground:
  - (a) the appointment was ineffective or had ceased to have effect; or
  - (b) the occasion to act had not arisen or had ceased.

#### 3E Resignation of appointed members

An appointed member may resign his or her office by writing signed by the member and given to the Minister.

#### **3EA** Removal from office of appointed members

- (1) The Administrator must terminate the appointment of an appointed member referred to in section 3B(1)(d), (e) or (f) if the member ceases to be eligible for appointment as such a member.
- (2) The Administrator may terminate the appointment of an appointed member for inability, inefficiency, misconduct, or physical or mental incapacity.

#### 3EB Constitution of Board for different matters

- (1) For a matter relating to a prisoner who is serving a term of imprisonment for life for the crime of murder, the Board is constituted by all of the members of the Board referred to in section 3B(1).
- (2) For a matter relating to any other prisoner, the Board is constituted by:
  - (a) the Chairperson; and
  - (b) the members of the Board referred to in section 3B(1)(b), (c) and (e); and
  - (c) 2 of the members of the Board referred to in section 3B(1)(f).

#### 3F Meetings of Board

(1) The Board must meet as often as the Chairperson thinks necessary.

- (2) A meeting of the Board must be convened by the Chairperson, or by the Secretary to the Board on the direction of the Chairperson, by notice in writing to the other members of the Board, and must be held at the time and place specified in the notice.
- (3) The Chairperson must preside at all meetings of the Board at which the Chairperson is present.
- (4) At a meeting of the Board, a quorum is constituted by:
  - (a) for a matter relating to a prisoner who is serving a term of imprisonment for life for the crime of murder – the Chairperson and 7 other members; or
  - (b) for a matter relating to any other prisoner the Chairperson and 3 other members.
- (5) At a meeting of the Board:
  - (a) questions of law are to be determined by the Chairperson; and
  - (b) questions (other than questions of law) concerning the release on parole of a prisoner who is serving a term of imprisonment for life for the crime of murder are to be determined by a unanimity of votes; and
  - (c) all other questions are to be determined by a majority of votes.
- (6) The Chairperson has a deliberative vote and, in the event of an equality of votes on a question to be determined by a majority of votes, also has a casting vote.
- (7) The Secretary to the Board must keep a record of its proceedings.
- (8) Subject to this Act, the procedure at meetings of the Board must be as the Board determines.

#### 3G Chairperson may require attendance of prisoner

Where, at a meeting of the Board, a matter relating to a prisoner is to be discussed, the Chairperson may, if the Chairperson considers it necessary or desirable, require the prisoner to be brought before the Board.

#### 3GA Expert advice or opinion

In considering a matter, the Board may seek the advice or opinion of an expert on the matter.

#### 3GB Release on parole of prisoner serving life imprisonment for murder

- (1) This section applies if the Board is considering the release on parole of a prisoner who is serving a term of imprisonment for life for the crime of murder.
- (2) The Board may invite persons to make submissions on the matter to the Board, including the following persons:
  - (a) members of the victim's family;
  - (b) if the prisoner is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander who identifies with a particular community of Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders representatives of that community.
- (3) In considering the matter, the Board must have regard to the principle that the public interest is of primary importance and, in doing so, must give substantial weight to the following matters:
  - (a) the protection of the community as the paramount consideration;
  - (b) the likely effect of the prisoner's release on the victim's family;
  - (c) if the prisoner is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander who identifies with a particular community of Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders the likely effect of the prisoner's release on that community.
- (4) The Board must give reasons for any decision or direction of the Board on the matter and those reasons must be included in the record of its proceedings kept under section 3F(7).

#### 3H Board to prepare annual report

- (1) The Board must, as soon as practicable after each 31 December, prepare and give to the Minister a report of its activities during the year ended on that date.
- (2) The Minister must table a copy of the report within 10 sitting days after receiving it.

#### 3HA Exclusion of rules of natural justice

Subject to this Act, the rules known as the rules of natural justice (including any duty of procedural fairness) do not apply to or in relation to a decision or action of the Chairperson or direction of the Board under this Act.

## 3J Actions not to lie against members or parole officers

- (1) An action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, does not lie against a member of the Board or parole officer for or in respect of an act or thing done in good faith by the member or parole officer in his or her capacity as member or parole officer, as the case may be.
- (2) An act or thing is taken to have been done in good faith if the member of the Board or parole officer by whom the act or thing was done was not actuated by ill-will to the person affected or by any other improper motive.

#### 3K Secretary to the Board

- (1) The Minister may appoint a person to be Secretary to the Board.
- (2) Subject to the directions of the Minister, the Secretary to the Board must:
  - (a) act generally as secretary to the Board; and
  - (b) record minutes of meetings of the Board; and
  - (c) prepare the agenda of parole cases for each meeting of the Board; and
  - (d) prepare parole orders and other documents as directed by the Board; and
  - (e) carry out such other duties as directed by the Board or Chairperson.

## Division 2 Parole officers

#### **3P** Appointment of parole officers

- (1) The Minister may appoint persons to be parole officers for this Act.
- (2) The Board may appoint a person to be an honorary parole officer for such period as it thinks fit.

#### 3Q Resignation of parole officers

A parole officer may resign office by signed writing given to the Chairperson.

## 3R Functions of parole officers

It is the duty of a parole officer:

- (a) to supervise persons released on parole as assigned by the Board; and
- (aa) to supervise persons made subject to the supervision of a parole officer under a non-custodial supervision order within the meaning of Part IIA of the Criminal Code; and
- (b) to prepare reports as required by the Board; and
- (c) to maintain case records and statistics as required by the Board; and
- (d) to carry out the directions of the Board in relation to a parole order; and
- (e) to investigate and make reports to the Board on the employment and place of living available to each person applying for release on parole; and
- (f) to perform such other duties as directed by the Board or Chairperson.

## Part 3 Parole orders

#### 5 Release of offenders on parole

- (2) Subject to this Act, the Board may, in its discretion, by order in writing direct that a person, being a person who is serving a term of imprisonment for an offence in respect of which a minimum term of imprisonment has been fixed in pursuance of this Act or the *Sentencing Act*, be released from prison on parole at a time specified in the order, being a time that is after the expiration of that minimum term of imprisonment.
- (3) An order under subsection (2) in relation to a person is sufficient authority for the release of the person from prison.
- (5) A parole order:
  - (a) shall be expressed to be subject to the condition that the person to whom it relates must, during the parole period, be subject to supervision on parole under a person, for the time being, appointed in accordance with the order and must obey all reasonable directions of the person so appointed; and

- (b) is subject to such other conditions, if any, as are specified in the order.
- (6) The Chairperson may, at any time before the expiration of the parole period, by order in writing:
  - (a) amend a parole order by varying or revoking a condition of the order, other than the condition referred to in subsection (5)(a), or by imposing additional conditions; or
  - (b) revoke the parole order.
- (6AA) The Chairperson may, subject to subsections (6AB) and (6A), at any time after the expiration of the parole period, where the person to whom the parole order related –
  - (a) before or after the expiration of the parole period is found guilty of an offence committed during the parole period (including an offence against a Commonwealth Act, regulations under a Commonwealth Act, or a law of a State or another Territory), and as a result of the finding of guilt is sentenced otherwise than to a term of actual imprisonment; or
  - (b) before or after the expiration of the parole period was or is proceeded against for such an offence and was or is released by the court before which the proceedings were brought (whether or not the person is found guilty) on condition as to the person's future good behaviour or any other condition; or
  - (c) failed, during the parole period, to comply with a condition of the parole order;

by order in writing, direct that the parole order be revoked and the parole order is taken to have been revoked as from the time immediately before the expiration of the parole period.

- (6AB) The Chairperson must not make an order under subsection (6AA) if, before the expiration of the parole period, the Chairperson was aware of the relevant finding of guilt, proceedings or failure.
  - (6A) The Board may give directions to the Chairperson for guidance about subsection (6) or (6AA).
    - (7) An amendment of a parole order under subsection (6) does not have effect until notice of the amendment is given to the person to whom the parole order relates, being notice given before the expiration of the parole period.

- (8) Subject to subsections (8A) and (8B), where a person to whom a parole order relates is sentenced to a term of imprisonment in respect of an offence committed during the parole period (including an offence against a Commonwealth Act, regulations under a Commonwealth Act, or a law of a State or another Territory), the parole order is taken to have been revoked or, if the parole period has already expired, to have been revoked as from the time immediately before the expiration of the parole period.
- (8A) Subject to subsection (8B), a parole order is not taken to be revoked where a person to whom it relates is sentenced to a term of imprisonment but is released immediately under section 40 of the *Sentencing Act*.
- (8B) Where a person is subsequently committed to prison under section 15 of the *Sentencing Act*, the parole order is taken to be revoked when the person is so committed.
  - (9) Where:
    - (a) a parole order in relation to a person is revoked; or
    - (b) the person to whom a parole order relates has, during the parole period, whether or not the parole period has already expired, failed to comply with a condition of the parole order or there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the person has, during that period, failed to comply with a condition of that order;

a police officer may:

- (c) where the person is in the Territory without warrant, arrest that person; or
- (d) where the person is, or where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that that person is, in a State or another Territory – with a warrant referred to in subsection (9A), arrest that person.
- (9A) For subsection (9)(d), a court may, upon application being made to it by the Director of Public Prosecutions, issue a warrant authorising a police officer to arrest a person referred to in that subsection.
- (10) Where a police officer arrests a person in pursuance of subsection (9), the police officer must, as soon as practicable, take the person before a court of summary jurisdiction.

#### 6 Cancellation of parole by court

- If a police officer arrests a person in the circumstances specified in section 5(9)(b), the court before which the person is taken may, in its absolute discretion but subject to subsection (2), cancel the parole order.
- (2) The court must not, under subsection (1), cancel a parole order unless it is satisfied that the person has failed, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a condition of the parole order.
- (3) Where the court cancels a parole order and the parole period in relation to the order has already expired, the parole order is taken to have been cancelled as from the time immediately before the expiration of the parole period.

#### 7 Issue of warrant where parole order revoked or cancelled

Where:

- (a) a person has been brought before a court of summary jurisdiction in pursuance of section 5(10); and
- (b) the court is satisfied that the parole order in relation to the person has been revoked or the court cancels the parole order in relation to the person;

the court must issue a warrant for the commitment of the person to prison to serve the part of the term of imprisonment to which the parole order relates that the person has not served.

#### 8 Remand of person

- (1) Where a person has been brought before a court of summary jurisdiction in pursuance of section 5(10), the court may defer or adjourn the hearing of the matter and may:
  - (a) by warrant from time to time remand the person to a prison, lock-up or other place of custody there to be kept until the time appointed for continuing the hearing; or
  - (b) grant the person bail in accordance with the *Bail Act*.

## 9 Release of person on bail

- (1) Where:
  - (a) a warrant has been issued in respect of a person under section 7; and

(b) an appeal is instituted by the person in pursuance of section 10;

a court of summary jurisdiction may, on the application of the person, grant the person bail in accordance with the *Bail Act*.

- (2) Where an appeal under section 10 is allowed, a bail undertaking and any bail conditions entered into pursuant to a grant of bail under subsection (1) ceases to have effect.
- (3) Where a person has been released on bail pursuant to a grant of bail made under subsection (1), a warrant issued under section 7 in respect of the person must not, unless the person fails to comply with the person's bail undertaking or an agreement entered into by the person pursuant to a bail condition, be executed or further executed before the appeal is disposed of.

#### **10** Appeal from decision to cancel parole order

- (1) Where a court of summary jurisdiction, in pursuance of section 6, cancels a parole order, the person to whom the order relates may appeal to the Supreme Court against the cancellation and the Supreme Court must:
  - (a) if it is satisfied that the ground on which the parole order was cancelled has been established confirm the cancellation; or
  - (b) if it is not so satisfied order that the cancellation and any warrant issued as a result of the cancellation cease to have effect.
- (2) An appeal under subsection (1) is by way of re-hearing, but the Supreme Court may have regard to any evidence given before the court of summary jurisdiction.

#### 11 Service of term of imprisonment

Where a parole order in relation to a person is revoked or cancelled and the person is taken into custody in pursuance of this Act, the person must, during any period in which the person is in custody in pursuance of this Act, be taken to be serving the part of the term of imprisonment that remained to be served at the commencement of the parole period.

# 13 Release of person on parole after revocation or cancellation of previous parole order

A parole order may be made in relation to a person even if a previous parole order in relation to the person has been revoked or is taken to have been revoked, or has been cancelled.

#### 14 Effect of parole order on sentence

- (1) Where a parole order is made in relation to a person:
  - (a) the person is taken to be still under sentence of imprisonment, and not to have served the part of the term of imprisonment that remained to be served at the commencement of the parole period, until the parole period expires without the parole order being revoked or cancelled or until the person is otherwise discharged from that imprisonment; and
  - (b) if the parole period expires without the parole order being revoked or cancelled, the person is taken to have served the part of the term of imprisonment that remained to be served at the commencement of the parole period and to have been discharged from that imprisonment.
- (2) Where a parole order in relation to a person is, under section 5(6AA) or (8), taken to have been revoked as from the time immediately before the expiration of the parole period, subsection (1) has effect as if the parole period had not expired without the parole order being revoked or cancelled.
- (3) Where a parole order in relation to a person is, under section 6(3), taken to have been cancelled as from the time immediately before the expiration of the parole period, subsection (1) has effect as if the parole period had not expired without the parole order being revoked or cancelled.

# 15 Remission already earned before parole order revoked or cancelled

Where:

- (a) a parole order in relation to a person is revoked or cancelled under this Act; and
- (b) before the revocation or cancellation, the person had earned under the *Prisons (Correctional Services) Act* or another law of the Territory a period of partial remission of the sentence of imprisonment in respect of which the parole order was made;

the period so earned must. despite this or any other law of the Territory, be deducted from the term of imprisonment that remains to be served as a result of the revocation or cancellation of the parole order.

# Part 4 Miscellaneous matters

## 16 Exercise of Royal prerogative of mercy and operation of other Commonwealth laws or Territory laws

This Act does not affect:

- (a) the exercise of the Royal prerogative of mercy; or
- (c) the operation of any other law of the Commonwealth, or of any law in force in the Territory, relating to the release of offenders.

## 17 Regulations

The Administrator may make regulations under this Act.

1

#### **ENDNOTES**

**KEY** 

Key to abbreviations

amd = amended app = appendix bl = by-law ch = Chapter cl = clause div = Division exp = expires/expired f = forms Gaz = Gazette hdg = heading ins = inserted It = long title nc = not commenced

od = order om = omitted pt = Part r = regulation/rule rem = remainder renum = renumbered rep = repealed s = section sch = Schedule sdiv = Subdivision SL = Subordinate Legislation sub = substituted

#### 2 LIST OF LEGISLATION

Parole of Prisoners Ordinand	ce 1971 (Act No. 33, 1971)
Assent date	16 June 1971
Commenced	10 May 1972 ( <i>Gaz</i> No. 19, 10 May 1972, p 161)

Commenced

#### Ordinances Revision Ordinance 1973 (Act No. 87, 1973)

Assent date	11 December 1973
Commenced	11 December 1973 (s 12(2))

#### **Amending Legislation**

Ordinances Revision Ordinance 1974 (Act No. 34, 1974) As

Assent date	26 August 1974
Commenced	11 December 1973 (s

Ordinances Revision Ordinance (No. 2) 1974 (Act No. 69, 1974)

Assent date 24 October 1974 Commenced 11 December 1973 (s 3)

#### Ordinances Revision Ordinance 1976 (Act No. 27, 1976)

Assent date Commenced 28 June 1976 ss 1, 2 and 6: 28 June 1976 (s 6(2)); ss 3 and 4: 11 December 1973; s 5: 24 October 1974

3(2))

#### Parole of Prisoners Ordinance 1974 (Act No. 46, 1974)

Assent date	23 September 1974
Commenced	23 September 1974

#### Parole of Prisoners Ordinance 1976 (Act No. 61, 1976)

Assent date	26 November 1976
Commenced	1 December 1976 ( <i>Gaz</i> No. 48A, 30 November 1976, p 1409)

	ce 1977 (Act No. 36, 1977)
Assent date	29 July 1977
Commenced	9 September 1977 ( <i>Gaz</i> No. 36, 9 September 1977, p 4)
•	vernment) Ordinance 1978 (Act No. 54, 1978)
Assent date	1 July 1978
Commenced	1 July 1978 (s 8)
Law Officers Ordinance 197	8 (Act No. 61, 1978)
Assent date	1 July 1978
Commenced	1 July 1978
Statute Law Revision Act 19	78 (Act No. 95, 1978)
Assent date	5 September 1978
Commenced	5 September 1978
Parole of Prisoners Act 1979	9 (Act No. 100, 1979)
Assent date	3 September 1979
Commenced	3 September 1979
<b>Remuneration (Statutory Bo</b> Assent date	<i>dies) Act 1979</i> (Act No. 9, 1980) 14 January 1980
Commenced	8 February 1980 ( <i>Gaz</i> G6, 8 February 1980, p 6)
Statute Law Revision Act (N	
Assent date	
Commenced	21 September 1981
Statute Law Revision Act (N	<i>o. 4) 1981</i> (Act No. 4, 1982)
Assent date	12 February 1982
Commenced	12 February 1982
Parole of Prisoners Amendn	nent Act 1982 (Act No. 9, 1982)
Parole of Prisoners Amendra Assent date	8 April 1982
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Assent date Commenced Parole of Prisoners Amendra Assent date Commenced Law Officers Amendment Ad Assent date Commenced Parole of Prisoners Amendra Assent date Commenced	8 April 1982 8 April 1982 nent Act (No. 2) 1982 (Act No. 63, 1982) 8 October 1982 29 June 1983 (s 2, s 2 Bail Act 1982 (Act No. 57, 1982) and Gaz S19, 29 June 1983) ct (No. 2) 1986 (Act No. 48, 1986) 10 December 1986 19 December 1986 (Gaz S87, 17 December 1986) nent Act 1987 (Act No. 52, 1987) 16 November 1987 3 February 1988 (s 2, s 2 Criminal Law (Conditional Release of Offenders) Amendment Act 1987 (Act No. 53, 1987) and Gaz S2, 1 February 1988) nent Act 1989 (Act No. 37, 1989)
Assent date Commenced Parole of Prisoners Amendra Assent date Commenced Law Officers Amendment Ad Assent date Commenced Parole of Prisoners Amendra Assent date Commenced	8 April 1982 8 April 1982 nent Act (No. 2) 1982 (Act No. 63, 1982) 8 October 1982 29 June 1983 (s 2, s 2 Bail Act 1982 (Act No. 57, 1982) and Gaz S19, 29 June 1983) ct (No. 2) 1986 (Act No. 48, 1986) 10 December 1986 19 December 1986 (Gaz S87, 17 December 1986) nent Act 1987 (Act No. 52, 1987) 16 November 1987 3 February 1988 (s 2, s 2 Criminal Law (Conditional Release of Offenders) Amendment Act 1987 (Act No. 53, 1987) and Gaz S2, 1 February 1988)

Director of Public Prosecutions (Consequential Amendments) Act 1990 (Act No. 29, 1990)				
,	Assent date Commenced	11 June 1990 21 January 1991 (s 2, s 2 <i>Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1990</i> (Act No. 35, 1990) and <i>Gaz</i> G2, 16 January 1991, p 9)		
Statute	e Law Revision Act 19	94 (Act No. 50, 1994)		
	Assent date Commenced	20 September 1994 20 September 1994		
Sentencing (Consequential Amendments) Act 1996 (Act No. 17, 1996)				
	Assent date Commenced	19 April 1996 s 7: 19 April 1996; rem: 1 July 1996 (s 2, s 2 <i>Sentencing Act 1995</i> (Act No. 39, 1995) and <i>Gaz</i> S15, 13 June 1996)		
Parole	of Prisoners Amendn	nent Act 1997 (Act No. 8, 1997)		
	Assent date Commenced	26 March 1997 26 March 1997		
Parole	of Prisoners Amendn Assent date	<i>nent Act 2002</i> (Act No. 13, 2002) 7 June 2002		
	Commenced	15 June 2002 (s 2 <i>Criminal Code Amendment (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Act 2002</i> (Act No. 11, 2002))		
Sentencing (Crime of Murder) and Parole Reform Act 2003 (Act No. 3, 2004)				
	Assent date	7 January 2004		
	Commenced	11 February 2004 ( <i>Gaz</i> G6, 11 February 2004, p 2)		
Statute Law Revision Act (No. 2) 2004 (Act No. 54, 2004)				
	Assent date	15 September 2004		
	Commenced	27 October 2004 ( <i>Gaz</i> G43, 27 October 2004, p 3)		
Statute Law Revision Act 2005 (Act No. 44, 2005)				
	Assent date Commenced	14 December 2005 14 December 2005		
	Commenced	14 December 2003		
Justice (Corrections) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2011 (Act No. 24, 2011)				
	Assent date Commenced	31 August 2011 ss 3, 9 to 11, 15 to 17, 19, 20, 24, 33, 42, schs 1 and 2, sch 4		
	Commentee	pt 1 and sch 5: 31 August 2011; rem: nc (s 2)		
Statute Law Revision Act 2011 (Act No. 30, 2011)				
		31 August 2011		
	Assent date			
	Assent date Commenced	21 September 2011 ( <i>Gaz</i> G38, 21 September 2011, p 5)		
Crimin	Commenced	21 September 2011 ( <i>Gaz</i> G38, 21 September 2011, p 5) <i>Amendment Act 2011</i> (Act No. 32, 2011)		
Crimin	Commenced	21 September 2011 ( <i>Gaz</i> G38, 21 September 2011, p 5)		

#### SAVINGS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

s 5 Parole of Prisoners Ordinance 1976 (Act No. 61, 1976)

s 4 Parole of Prisoners Ordinance 1977 (Act No. 36, 1977)

s 6 Parole of Prisoners Act 1979 (Act No. 100, 1979)

s 6 Parole of Prisoners Amendment Act 1997 (Act No. 8, 1997)

pt 5 Sentencing (Crime of Murder) and Parole Reform Act 2003 (Act No. 3, 2004)

4

5

#### GENERAL AMENDMENTS

General amendments of a formal nature (which are not referred to in the table of amendments to this reprint) are made by the *Ordinances Revision Ordinance 1973* (Act No. 87, 1973) (as amended) to the following provisions: ss 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, and 16.

#### LIST OF AMENDMENTS

lt pt 1 hdg ss 1 – 2 s 3	amd No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 17, 1996, s 6 ins No. 24, 2011, s 15 amd No. 91, 1981, s 2 amd No. 61, 1976, s 6; No. 100, 1979, ss 3 and 5; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 3, 2004, s 11; No. 54, 2004, s 7; No. 24, 2011, s 15; No. 30, 2011, s 3
pt 2 hdg pt 2	ins No. 24, 2011, s 15
div 1 hdg s 3A hdg s 3A	ins No. 24, 2011, s 15 amd No. 24, 2011, s 15 ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3B	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 36, 1977, s 8; No. 54, 1978, s 3; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 37, 1989, s 4 sub No. 3, 2004, s 12 amd No. 44, 2005, s 22; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3C	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 91, 1981, s 2 sub No. 3, 2004, s 12 amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3D	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 36, 1977, s 5 rep No. 9, 1980, s 6 ins No. 3, 2004, s 12
s 3E	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 36, 1977, s 8; No. 54, 1978, s 3 sub No. 3, 2004, s 12
s 3EA	ins No. 3, 2004, s 12s 3EB ins No. 3, 2004, s 12 amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3F	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 3, 2004, s 13; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3G	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
ss 3GA – 3GB s 3H	

s 3HA	ins No. 37, 1989, s 5
	amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3J	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
<b>0</b> 17	amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3K	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
	amd No. 36, 1977, ss 6 and 8; No. 54, 1978, s 3; No. 30, 2011, s 3
pt 2 div 2 bdg	ing No. 24, 2011, p. 15
div 2 hdg	ins No. 24, 2011, s 15
s 3L	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7 rep No. 36, 1977, s 7
s 3M	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
3 0101	rep No. 36, 1977, s 7
s 3N	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
3 011	rep No. 36, 1977, s 7
s 3P hdg	amd No. 24, 2011, s 15
s 3P	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
0.01	amd No. 36, 1977, s 8; No. 54, 1978, s 3; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 54, 2004,
	s 7; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3Q	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
	amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 3R	ins No. 61, 1976, s 7
	amd No. 13, 2002, s 3; No. 30, 2011, s 3
pt 3 hdg	ins No. 24, 2011, s 15
s 4	sub No. 61, 1976, s 8
	amd No. 61, 1978, s 4; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 48, 1986, s 9; No. 52, 1987,
	s 3; No. 29, 1990, s 7
	rep No. 17, 1996, s 6
s 4A	ins No. 61, 1976, s 8
	rep No. 17, 1996, s 6
s 5	amd No. 61, 1976, s 9; No. 100, 1979, ss 4 and 5; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 9,
	1982, s 3; No. 48, 1986, s 9; No. 37, 1989, s 6; No. 29, 1990, s 7; No. 50,
	1994, s 16 No. 17, 1996, s 6; No. 8, 1997, s 3; No. 3, 2004, s 16; No. 24,
	2011, s 15; No. 30, 2011, s 3; No. 32, 2011, s 19
s 6	amd No. 100, 1979, s 5; No. 9, 1982, s 4; No. 37, 1989, s 7; No. 8, 1997, s 4;
- 7	No. 24, 2011, s 15; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 7	amd No. 100, 1979, s 5; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 8 s 9	amd No. 100, 1979, s 5; No. 63, 1982, s 4 amd No. 63, 1982, s 5; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 10	amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 11	amd No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 12	amd No. 61, 1976, s 10; No. 61, 1978, s 4; No. 100, 1979, s 5; No. 9, 1981,
5 12	s 4; No. 9, 1982, s 5; No. 48, 1986, s 9; No. 37, 1989, s 8
	rep No. 17, 1996, s 6
s 13	sub No. 61, 1976, s 11
	amd No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 14	amd No. 100, 1979, s 5; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 37, 1989, s 9; No. 8, 1997,
	s 5; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 15	sub No. 46, 1974, s 3
	amd No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 37, 1989, s 10; No. 30, 2011, s 3
pt 4 hdg	ins No. 24, 2011, s 15
s 16	amd No. 4, 1982, s 3; No. 30, 2011, s 3
s 17	amd No. 95, 1978, s 14; No. 91, 1981, s 2; No. 24, 2011, s 15; No. 30, 2011,
	s 3