



Announcements and Updates from the Office

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FROM THE OMBUDSMAN

By Lauren "Laurie" Andersen, MM, RN, CEN, CCRN

Spring is here - the signs are all around us! One day at a time to more sunshine, longer days, and warmer weather. Springtime is a time for new hope - a renewal of sorts.

It has been two long years of COVID-19 and its impact on everything in our lives. Masks over our faces, isolation from others, restrictions on our activities, and the fear/reality of illness all around us. You have been both brave and tough while facing all of the challenges of COVID-19 and its damage within the walls of Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) facilities. I am grateful to each of you for your participation in standing up to COVID-19 and for your open minds in accommodating social distancing, cleaning, masking, testing, vaccines, and quarantining. Your participation and your help matter, and it makes a difference. You have helped yourself stay healthy and you have helped others stay healthy too. Thank you.

This Office wants to help to allow DOC to return to more routine corrections operations. We will continue to follow CDC and DPH guidelines and scientific information to motivate how we move forward in the months to come. I look forward to working with you!

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FROM THE OMBUDSMAN - CONTINUED

I would like to take the opportunity to introduce you to Rob Charpentier, Regional Clinical Administrator for the Office. Rob will be helping the Office by being present at different DOC facilities at times to check in on the progress against COVID-19. He and I have had the pleasure of visiting all the DOC facilities and getting caught up on how each facility is doing after the recent Omicron COVID-19 surge. Rob and I look forward to working with all of you in each DOC facility to listen to and understand your COVID-19 concerns. We will continue to visit your facilities regularly to check in with all inmates and DOC staff on how COVID-19 is resolving.

Laurie Andersen

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Office would like to share with you a few items that have been reviewed, including:

- ✓ **Social Distancing:** The standard for “social distancing” has been changed from six feet to three feet. This change allows more people to attend essential programming and classes. This is hopefully the first step to returning to “normal” crowd capacity in the months to come.
- ✓ **DOC Corrections facilities emerge from Omicron surge:** The Office is happy to note that all of the DOC facilities have resolved the COVID-19 cases from the last variant, Omicron. We look forward to (and hope for) a stable number of COVID-19 cases this spring.
- ✓ **Mask Compliance:** DOC staff and officers have done an excellent job with mask compliance and have served as positive role models and examples for the inmates and the community. Thank you.
- ✓ **Communication:** The Office is working on this every day! We now have the website, email, and phone number. We would love to hear from DOC staff regarding concerns and questions about COVID-19 and the post-pandemic world.
- ✓ **Cleaning:** Lighthouse EIP will begin a comprehensive cleaning program for all 15 facilities. The process will take up to twelve weeks and Lighthouse EIP work with DOC staff and inmates on-site to educate them and conduct a terminal cleaning at all DOC facilities. They will also be doing air quality testing.

ABOUT THE OFFICE



Office of the Ombudsman

Independent COVID-19 Oversight to
MA Department of Correction

The independently operated Office of the Ombudsman, run by Lauren M. Andersen, MM, RN, CEN, CCRN, Director/Ombudsman, monitors and reports on the Massachusetts Department of Correction's efforts to limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) in the DOC's facilities across Massachusetts.

CONTACTING US



Website: <https://covidombudsman-madoc.org>

To reach the Office regarding a COVID-19 related inquiry or concern, please submit via our website by clicking [here](#). Inquiries can be submitted anonymously if desired. If you provide your contact information when filling out the form, the Office will use best efforts to respond within 2 business days.

We look forward to addressing your COVID-19 related questions, concerns, and inquiries.

1-800 Number: 1-833-662-8410

You may also submit your COVID-19 inquiry or concern via our telephone number. COVID-19 related inquiries may be left anonymously. If you would like a response from the Office, then please leave your contact information as instructed on the voicemail.

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE OFFICE

The Office of the Ombudsman encourages all DOC staff to provide their feedback by phone at 1-833-662-8410, or via the website, and to share how the COVID-19 experience has impacted their job, role, and responsibilities. The Office understands that the past two years have been complicated with COVID-19 infection, isolation, quarantine, masking, and social distancing. We are looking for your thoughts on the experience.