



Announcements and Updates from the Office

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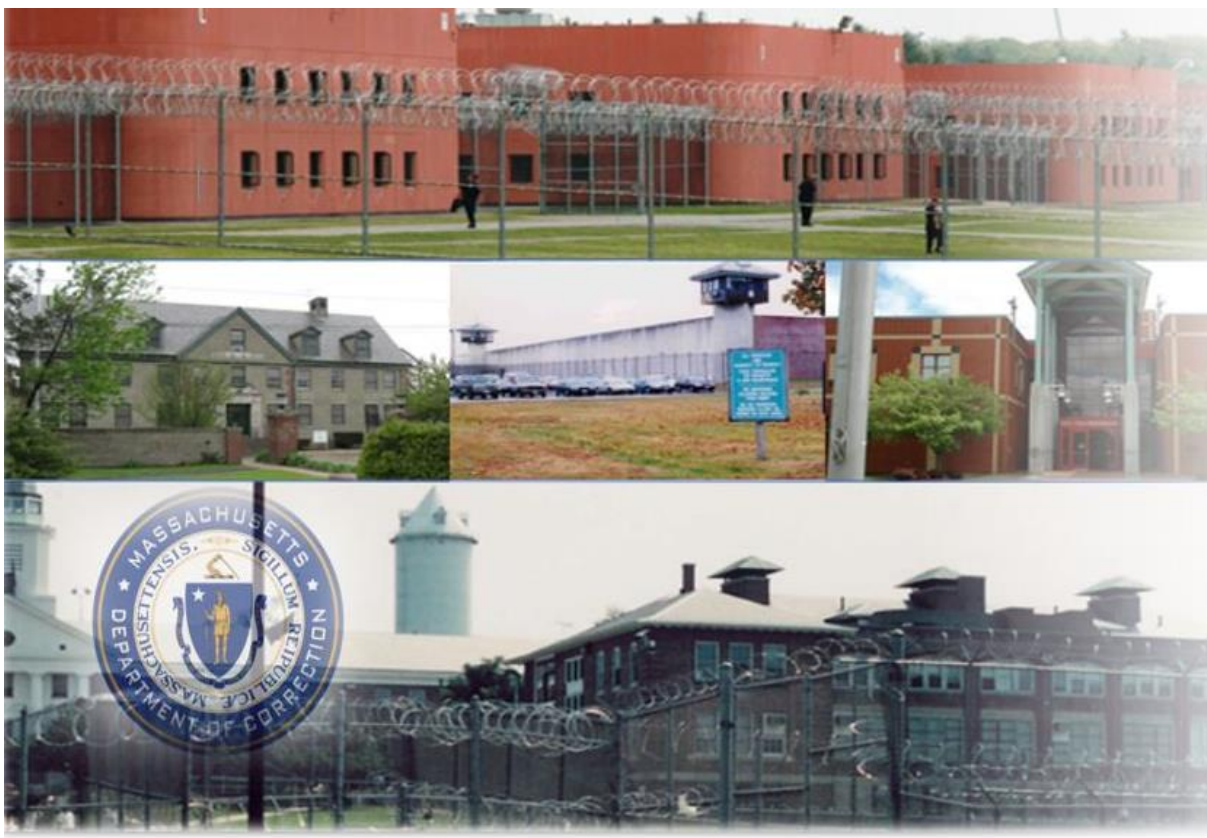
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FROM THE OMBUDSMAN

By Lauren “Laurie” Andersen, MM, RN, CEN, CCRN

Officially I believe this is called spring. It has been a chilly wet one this year! It certainly has been looking up the last week or so! We do live in New England!

Happy Corrections Staff Week! The work you do is challenging and the people you are is inspirational. The Office of the Ombudsman (Office) respects and appreciates you for working in this profession; one that is not well understood by most of the public. The safety of the men and women who work in corrections, the communities we live in, and all of Massachusetts are protected because each of you does your job well. We appreciate you! You matter!

The Office hopes you picked up one of the clear bags that we delivered to all the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) facilities. It is a small token of our appreciation for you. We wanted to provide you with something that is useful at work but good for home too.

We hope the celebration and acknowledgement of Correctional Professional week provides each of you some moment of recognition and appreciation.

Thank you!

The month of May is also “Mental Health Awareness Month”. We hope that you have watched our latest video “The Ripple Effects of Suicide” on our website or on the DOC webpage. I really believe it will connect with everyone who watches it. There are DOC staff past, and present represented in the video and the message should resonate for each one of us.

We want to also take this moment to remind each of you that seeking help or asking for help is a sign of strength not weakness. If you are struggling with anything in your life, finding support is an important first step in dealing with your challenges. We hope you have attended the *Struggle Well* one day annual training and that you take the opportunity to attend one of the two- or five-day programs. *Struggle Well* is all about you and not about work! You matter!

Thank you for the work you do every day to keep the people of Massachusetts safe and for providing a positive environment for those incarcerated in DOC facilities.

Remember to take time for things outside of corrections- family or hobbies or both. Your life’s work includes non “work” time and the more we care for ourselves or our community of people the stronger we are!

Wellness

Each of your facilities have staff that have joined a Wellness Committee. There is also a centralized Wellness Committee currently chaired by Captain John Flowers with Karen Edgar’s assistance. One or more members of each facility committee get together once a month to discuss what wellness activities or celebrations are happening at each facility and how we can improve wellness for all who work in the DOC. Glenn Doher and I sit on this committee.

The Wellness Committee members are volunteering their time and investment to support all of you and your wellness. All of these efforts are striving to provide a better workplace and more thoughtfulness for each other.

Please support these initiatives at your facilities.

- ✓ **Participate...**
- ✓ **Join the committee...**
- ✓ **Make suggestions...**

The best way to make things better is for each of you to be part of it! The correction safety staff are leaders in the facility and their support for wellness initiatives will make a difference!

The Wellness Committee is working on its next newsletter. There are some great outside activities and competitions planned for the spring and summer. Get involved!

Gym updates: NCCI Gardner, MCI-Norfolk, MCI-Framingham have renewed gym spaces. Please check the new gym space out if you are working at one of these facilities. SBCC and Milford Headquarters both have new equipment added to their gym space. MCI-Shirley training center and OCCC are working on renewing their spaces with our support now. We will be working with NECC Concord on getting them a space for a gym as well.

Wellness Quote of the Season

"Promise me you'll always remember:
you're braver than you believe, and
stronger than you seem, and smarter than
you think." - Christopher Robin

Contact the Office

The Office has updated our website and has a new Office logo. The lighthouse is a symbol of inspiration and leading with light. Please check out our website (www.ombudsman-madoc.org) and see what we have to share.

I encourage you to either use our website (<https://ombudsman-madoc.org>) to access the inquiry form (<https://ombudsman-madoc.org/submit-inquiry/>) or

Our New Website URL

<https://ombudsman-madoc.org>

call and share your ideas about how this Office can support you and your wellness. I also ask you to speak to me or any of the staff from the Office when we are visiting your facilities. You are the experts, and we want to support you in any way we can.

We care about each of you and want to support you in the important and challenging work that you do. Thank you for all you do!

You Matter!

Laurie Andersen

ABOUT THE OFFICE



Office of the Ombudsman
Independent Health & Wellness
Advisor to Corrections

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. In addition, the Office also focuses on wellness initiatives related to mental and physical health.

CONTACTING US



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

Inquiries can be submitted anonymously if desired. If you provide your contact information when filling out the form, the Office will use its best efforts to respond within two business days.

We look forward to addressing your infection control and wellness-related questions, concerns, and inquiries.

Free Call: 1-833-662-8410

You may also submit your infection control or wellness-related inquiries or suggestions via our telephone number. Infection control and wellness-related inquiries may be left anonymously. If you would like a response from the Office, then please leave your contact information as instructed on voicemail.