



PROBATION



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Office of the Commissioner of Probation

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Happy New Year:

The start of a new year symbolizes a new beginning, hope, and a chance to experience new opportunities.

As we set new goals, I would like to encourage you to share this spirit of renewal with the individuals we work with. Let's help them to chart a new course in their lives. Change is not always easy. However, taking the first step in any endeavor is one step closer to accomplishing a goal.

Let's work together to make 2015 one of the best years for the Massachusetts Probation Service, a year when we will continue our work and mission which includes enhancing our agency, addressing the needs of individuals who are under our supervision, and working with affiliate agencies to improve public safety.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Edward J. Dolan



Edward J. Dolan

A New Beginning



"As soon as you give in and do the right thing, the right things will happen," said Kevin Bourque advising other Fatherhood Program participants. Turn to page 2 to read about Bourque who is entering the new year with full custody of his son.

Photo, left to right: Bourque and his son, Kevin Bourque Jr.

NEW SUFFOLK COUNTY SPLIT SENTENCE INITIATIVE TO DEBUT IN 2015

The Suffolk Community Corrections Center and Suffolk Sheriff's Department will introduce a new initiative in January that will create a seamless approach to integrating recently released offenders into the community. These offenders were sentenced to jail time followed by probation supervision in the community when their prison term ends.

"This pilot program calls for offenders with before and after probation supervision to be escorted by sheriff's personnel to the center where they will be placed with Probation Officers In Charge (POIC's) at the Community Corrections Centers," said Patricia Horne, Deputy Director of the Office of Community Corrections.

Offenders will be assessed at the center to determine their risk to the community and need for services. They will initially meet with the POIC's as they transition back into the community. The offenders, contingent on their individual needs, will return to the court where their cases originated for supervision by a Probation Officer.

Deputy Commissioner-Programs Michael Coelho and Renee Payne, Regional Supervisor for the Boston Municipal Courts, contributed to the development of this pilot program.

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A New Beginning: Fatherhood Program Graduate Enters New Year With Son

Kevin Bourque, 32, and his seven-year-old son, Kevin Jr., are entering 2015 together living under the same roof. Bourque, who was granted full-custody of his boy, said the Fatherhood Program helped prepare him for this role.

“The last couple of years we have not been together and last year was really kind of rough,” said Bourque who recently graduated from the Fatherhood Program offered at the Essex County Community Corrections Center where Francis “Frank” Audy is the Probation Officer In Charge (POIC).

Bourque of Lowell credits the program for making him a better father and role model for his son. Bourque said it has also taught him the importance of remaining cordial and respectful to his son’s mother.

This is Bourque’s ninth graduation from the program over the last three years which he has voluntarily enrolled in “over and over again,” he said. “I learn something new every time.”

“It is the best class that I have taken. It teaches me to appreciate my son more and it keeps me in check. Because of it, I am setting a proud example for my son, teaching him to become a good man, and to have a good life,” Bourque said.

“After being in the Fatherhood Program, I realized my son needs both of us because he will only have one mother and one father,” he said. “Other fathers who have to participate in the program should realize that as soon as they give in and do the right thing, the right things will happen.”

Probation’s 2014 Highlights

- 1- All Chief Probation Officer positions are filled in all 105 courts for first time in nearly seven years.
- 2- First Probation Officer Exam is administered. Statewide Regional Supervisors interviewed 591 candidates over three-week period.
- 3- The number of offenders monitored by GPS bracelet exceeds 3,000 for first time since program was introduced in Massachusetts in 2009.
- 4- Nine new Specialty Courts—five Drug, two Veterans, and one Mental Health— are added.
- 5- Probation hosts first Road Race in Clinton, MA.
- 6- Worcester HOPE/MORR Program makes its debut.
- 7- More than 90 Probation employees statewide are recognized for their work.
- 8- Probation staff completes ORAS conversion from Legacy cases.
- 9- Probation’s Record Unit processes Governor’s first pardons and commutations.
- 10- Newest version of Need/Risk Tool to measure probationer’s need for services and risk to community is introduced.

Indigency Verification Is Enhanced

A new statewide protocol to conduct indigency verification — a method used to determine whether an individual qualifies for court appointed counsel—has been implemented in courts across the Commonwealth.

The protocol, a more efficient approach to verifying income, began as a pilot in 10 selected courts: Wareham District, East Boston District, Plymouth District, Middlesex Superior, Hampden Probate & Family, New Bedford District, Lawrence District, Malden District, Boston Municipal Court-West Roxbury, and Norfolk Juvenile.

The pilot included a new computer application which allows the Massachusetts Probation Service access to Department of Revenue (DOR) data, including employer-reported wage data or annual self-reported tax return information.

Probation also draws on the resources of the Department of Transitional Assistance, and the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Approximately 550 Probation staff received training in 11 regional sessions last fall.

This new DOR application is rapid response which means it takes only minutes to verify an individual’s information.

Rapid Response: Minutes vs. Days



The DOR allows Probation access to its Help Desk. Probation also has a Memorandum of Understanding with the DOR.

“The new protocol makes verification work a more efficient and expedient process for the court,” said General Counsel Crispin Birnbaum.



Probation will work with a Supreme Judicial Court committee formed to review proposed changes to SJC Rule 3.10 which governs indigency verification.

DC Corner

Welcome to the new Deputy Commissioners' (DC) Corner— penned by Dianne Fasano, Deputy Commissioner-Field Services and Michael Coelho, Deputy Commissioner-Programs—where you will find the most up-to-date information on what is happening in the field and programs of the Massachusetts Probation Service.

In an effort to make the community corrections centers responsive to the needs of the community and the courts in which they are located, a pilot initiative has been introduced in the Worcester Juvenile Resource Center (JRC). The Worcester JRC pilot features a change in programming hours, expansion of eligible population, creating a track for female juveniles, implementing new after-school programming and extending hours of operation to 7 p.m. which also includes providing dinner for the children. There are 20 juveniles enrolled in the program.

A promotional exam for the positions of Assistant Chief and Chief Probation Officer will be held Saturday, March 21st, at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, 415 Summer Street, Boston. Details on the exam time will be released at a later date.

Probation Officers, do you have questions about ORAS (Ohio Risk Assessment System)? Check out the newly-posted ORAS Frequently Asked Questions Bulletin Board on the Trial Court intranet.

Joseph Jackson, manager of Probation's Electronic Monitoring Program, was recently appointed manager of Mass-Courts by District Court Chief Justice Paul Dawley. Jackson, a 20-year Probation employee, will leave his Probation position this week.

Community Chronicle

Community Service Assists With Statewide Toy Collection

The Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program collaborated for the first time with the Trial Court Facilities Department in the collection and delivery of toys and bicycles for the Toys for Tots Program. Probationers collected 33 large boxes of toys at 62 courts last week. "The Community Service Program is excited to be part of this truly rewarding collaboration to help families in their time of need. This project equally impacts our participants by giving them a renewed confidence in justice and a feeling of good will," said Community Service Statewide Supervisor David Skocik.

New Community Service Pick-Up Site Meets Probationers' Transportation Needs

A community service pick-up site, located at Marlboro District Court, has been re-opened for probationers, some who lack access to transportation. The court was one of the first Middlesex Courts to serve as a pick-up site but was closed due to past fiscal challenges, according to Statewide Supervisor David Skocik. The site, which re-opened in the fall, services the surrounding rural areas of western Middlesex and eastern Worcester counties. Probationers are picked up every Tuesday, at 8 a.m. and returned to the site at noon. Skocik credits Chief Probation Officer Geoffrey Shooshan and Assistant Chief Probation Officer Felipe Romero. "Re-opening this site greatly assists with reducing their probation officers' load to place and monitor court-ordered community service participants."

Community Corrections Hosts Open Houses With More Planned

Recent Open Houses at the Brockton and Taunton Community Corrections Centers drew more than 70 members of the legal community, including judges, probation officers, District Attorney's office, parole officers, and community-based service providers. Attendees were taken on a tour of the facilities. Two former clients of the Taunton Center shared their OCC experiences with guests.

An Open House for the Worcester Juvenile Resource Center, which will feature the art work of clients is on Tuesday, January 13, 3:30—5 p.m.



Trial Court and Community Service employees load Trial Court truck with toys for donation to the Toys for Tots Program. Photo submitted by Christopher Canata.



Taunton Community Corrections Open House. Photo submitted by Vincent Lorenti.

Patricia Horne, Deputy Director, Office of Community Corrections (OCC); David Skocik, Statewide Supervisor, Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program; Lisa Hickey, Assistant Statewide Supervisor—Dukes, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Worcester counties; Christopher Cannata, Assistant Superintendent—Essex and Suffolk counties; Daniela Lopes, Clinical Manager, OCC; and Vincent Lorenti, Regional Program Manager, contributed to this report. Written by Coria Holland, Communications Director, Office of the Commissioner of Probation (OCP).

Probation Plays Important Role At Third Annual Fatherhood Summit

Fatherhood Program facilitators attended the 3rd Annual Massachusetts Fatherhood Leadership Summit at the Marriott in Marlboro on December 12th. The Massachusetts Probation Service was part of the planning committee. Essex Community Corrections Probation Officer In Charge (POIC) Francis Audy, Essex Probate & Family Assistant Chief Probation Officer Brian Monaghan and Lawrence District Court Probation Officer Primitivo Concepcion were panelists for the "Programs for Fathers: Choosing the Right Program for Their Needs" workshop.

"The Fatherhood Summit validated the importance of system collaboration to better identify fathers who are having difficulty or experiencing obstacles in developing and maintaining relationships with their children," said Richard O'Neil, Probate & Family Statewide Regional Supervisor.

There are currently 14 Fatherhood Programs throughout the state in nine counties. To view a full listing and information about the program, check out the new Fatherhood Program brochure and fact sheet available on the Probation website and Probation Bulletin Board.



Nominate A Colleague For A Probation Service Ovation Award

Beginning in January, the Office of the Commissioner of Probation (OCP) will acknowledge the exemplary work of Probation employees with the new Massachusetts Probation Service Ovation Awards. Any Probation employee can nominate a candidate for this award. The calendar year will be divided by Regional/Statewide departments, ELMO/Central Office and Community Corrections/Community Service. Nominees must be in good standing; well-regarded by his/her colleagues as a leader; dependable, creative, innovative and willing and able to serve when called upon; individual efforts are aligned with the priorities of the MA Probation Service and further the goals/objectives of the Service; and efforts go beyond the written job duties and responsibilities.

For nomination forms and more details, check under "Announcements" on the Probation Bulletin Board.

Probation Snapshots



Suffolk Probate & Family Probation employees, left to right: Kelly Imbriano, Tyaisha Abdul Aziz, Valerie Taylor, Patrice O'Brien, Camille Niedzwiecki, and Scott Goldberg. Employees collected 80 pounds of food for Boston Food Bank during holiday season.



Middlesex Superior Court Probation Department employees who were among staff who contributed to the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Holiday Wish List. Front row, left to right: Maureen McEachern, Ana Couto, Drahan Joseph, DCF employee: Jen Cermenio. Back row: Paula Miele, Charlene Williams, Barbara Kerrigan, Vanessa Banks, Rick St. Onge, and Maria Simone.

SHARE A STORY

Story Submission and Event Calendar forms are available through your Regional and Statewide Supervisors or go to the Probation Bulletin Board. The submission deadline is the 20th of the month prior to publication.

New Massachusetts Probation Service Directory Is Now Available

Kudos to Joyce Higgins, Administrative Secretary, in the Office of the Commissioner of Probation (OCP), who created the new Massachusetts Probation Service statewide directory which includes a listing and contact information for 1,750 Probation employees throughout the Commonwealth.

This directory reflects the most up-to-date information on recently hired employees. You may view it in the Probation section of the Judicial Branch website:

www.mass.gov/courts/probation



Joyce Higgins holds newly created Probation Directory.

Probation Update is an internal publication featuring the current news of The Massachusetts Probation Service.

Please forward comments or Newsletter story suggestions to:

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