



PROBATION

"BE THE CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY"



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Office of the Commissioner of Probation

A Letter from the Commissioner

Dear Colleagues:

The more I learn the more I appreciate the scope, volume, complexity and importance of the work of Probation.

Each and every role is critical. Every day, every case is critical. Our work impacts the lives of individuals before the court or on Probation and their families. Our work impacts the victims of crime. Getting it right in each and every case impacts the safety and welfare of their communities and the public at large.

It is amazing what the Service has accomplished in spite of all that has been thrown at it in the past year. We have completed MassCourts conversion in Superior Court, Brockton District, Barnstable District and the Boston Municipal Courts. Probation employees have developed, piloted, trained and are currently implementing a new indigency verification system. There has been the implementation of expanded access to sealed records for law enforcement purposes and Triple I checks. ORAS (Ohio Risk Assessment System) is fully in place with the conversion of 16,000 legacy cases to an evidence-based risk/needs assessment in six months.



Edward J. Dolan

Our employees have completed a HOPE/MORR National Institute of Justice evaluation project with outstanding results and to great acclaim in Salem Superior and District Court. The Essex HOPE/MORR (Honest Opportunity Probation with Enforcement/ Massachusetts Offender Recidivism Reduction) project has achieved some of the highest fidelity ratings and delivered significant increases in probationer compliance among the four experiment sites nationally. We have expanded to Worcester with additional programs scheduled to go on line this year. A child welfare-delinquency cross-over youth diversion effort has been piloted in Hampden Juvenile and now Suffolk and Essex Juvenile courts are scheduled to be added.

Training on Evidence-based Community Supervision practices has begun and we are in the process of conversion to a new CARI (Court Activity Record Information) portal. The OYAS (Ohio Youth Risk- Assessment System) is being implemented in the Juvenile Courts. New protocols and standards are being written. Expansion of specialty courts—drug, veterans, and mental health - is underway.

We have accomplished all of this in spite of challenges of staffing, space, equipment, and caseload. Through it all, the 1,778 men and women of the Massachusetts Probation Service whether in courts, Community Corrections Centers, Community Service sites, at ELMO (Electronic Monitoring Center), the Training Center or OCP (Office of the Commissioner of Probation), whether support staff, APO's (Assistant Probation Officers) , PO's (Probation Officers), POIC'S (PO's In Charge), ACPO'S (Assistant Chief PO's), CPO'S (Chief PO's), regional managers, attorneys or administrators have answered the call and done, time and again, whatever was required to accomplish the important work that is our mission.

I want to thank you for your hard work. It is a privilege to be part of this Service. I say that with a deep sense of respect for all of the staff and for the efforts of the past, an appreciation for the work getting done every day and an eye toward the potential for the future. In Probation, I see a highly-motivated team of people with knowledge, commitment, and professionalism. We are conscious of the power of that resource and we are striving to build an organization that harnesses it to move this work forward.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Dolan, Commissioner of Probation

Probation Employees Going Above and Beyond

In recent months, Commissioner of Probation Edward J. Dolan has received a volume of letters praising the dynamic work of Probation employees who not only supervise offenders but are also helping the victims of crimes and their families.

Below are a few examples:

Hampshire Superior Court Probation Officer Lori Sheehan was lauded in a letter written by the parents of a young woman who was killed in a car accident caused by a defendant under Sheehan's supervision.

"Lori's insight regarding our tragedy cannot be taught. She has a natural gift in the way she speaks to us. She is tuned into our devastation. She is patient and yet explains to her client, Mr. S. the depth to what he was convicted of—always making sure that Mr. S. realizes his actions and helps him to be accountable to the victim's family," wrote Sonia and Richard Matulewicz in a letter to Commissioner Dolan.

Norfolk Juvenile Probation Officer Erin M. Lynch was a source of strength for a young man and his family when the young man's father committed suicide this summer.

Barnstable Superior Court Probation Officer Megan Homer and Plymouth District Court Probation Officer Melissa Melia came to the aid of a developmentally-delayed seven year-old who had wandered miles from his home a month ago.

A domestic violence victim thanked Wareham District Probation Officer John Garvey who supervised her ex-husband whom she accused of stalking her. The victim said Garvey checked on her and her children regularly, helped her navigate the court system, and kept her abreast of new developments in the case.

Domestic Violence Prevention Is A Year-round Effort For Probation Officers



Graphic Illustration by Dawn Pandoliano

October is Domestic Violence Prevention Month.

Probation Officers in the Worcester, Greenfield, Cambridge, and Newburyport District courts are engaged in innovative efforts to stem domestic violence every month and each day of the year.

Worcester District Court Probation Officers Jennifer McMillan and John Fitzgibbons team up with Worcester

Police to make unannounced home visits to high-risk domestic violence offenders to ensure that they are following their terms of probation. This two-year-old initiative stems from a conversation at one of the Worcester Domestic Violence Task Force meetings and is part of a federal grant which also targets sex offenders.

Greenfield District Court's Domestic Violence Transition to the Community Program is a collaborative effort involving the Greenfield Housing Authority, Sheriff Chris Donegan's Department, the Franklin County Bar Association, Judge William Mazanec, and the Clerk's Office, according to Probation Officers Tori Wilhelm and Tammy Bales-tracci. This 40-week Batterers Intervention Program helps the offender, serving a split sentence, transition from prison to probation while continuing to participate in the program they began in jail.

Cambridge District Court Probation Officer Nancy Danforth works closely with the Emerge Program, a domestic violence prevention initiative, to discourage violence in relationships. Danforth refers many of her clients to this resource in the community and serves as a vital court community resource for the Emerge Program.

Newburyport District Court Probation Officer Janelle Russo serves on the Greater Newburyport High-Risk Domestic Violence Task Force and Jeanne Geiger Crisis Team. The Task Force identifies high-risk cases with the "greatest likelihood of re-assault and/or lethal attack against a victim. The team develops an individualized intervention plan with the goal of allowing the victim and family to remain in the community. Probation monitors offenders and information is shared by team members. Statistics, provided by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Team, show that because of this intervention, 93 percent of high-risk victims remain in the community and do not flee to shelters; 92 percent of survivors have not reported being re-assaulted.

Probation Newsflash

The Chief Probation Officers Association held its conference last week at the Cape Codder Resort and Spa in Hyannis. The Chiefs discussed Probation's role in the current and future specialty courts as well as stress management for Probation Managers, according to Association President Alfred Barbalunga.

Anthony Gully, Chief Probation Officer at BMC-Roxbury, was presented with the Jim Minton Excellence Award at the Chief's meeting.

Clerical staff have become certified by DCJIS (Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice Information Services)-certified.

The founders of the Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL) Program were presented with the 2014 Manson/Robinson Award at the New England Council on Crime and Delinquency (NECCD) conference.

An educational program for current CLTL program leaders (judges, Probation Officers, and facilitators) is scheduled for Tuesday, December 2nd, at the MIT Endicott House in Dedham.

Middlesex Superior Chief Probation Officer Maureen McEachern and Chief Probation Officer Joseph Jackson conducted a forum on GPS Monitoring of Domestic Violence Offenders this week at MOVA (Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance/ Victim & Witness Assistance Board).

Sarah Joss, a new Administrative Attorney, has been added to OCP's Legal Unit. Joss worked for 11 years in the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office and at a large Downtown Boston law firm.

Four new Chief Probation Officers have been appointed: Lorna Simmons, Hampden Superior Court; Matthew McDonough, Boston Municipal Court (BMC)-West Roxbury; Melvin A. Arroyo, Palmer District Court; and Donald Chausse, New Bedford District Court.

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School Is Back In Session With Juvenile Probation Programs



As school children settle back into the routines of the season, those who are court-involved are being introduced to new programs and successful approaches to helping them realize their full potential while staying out of trouble.

These programs include artistic ventures such as Worcester Juvenile's Worcester Arts Alternative Program, developed

by Worcester Juvenile Probation Officer Fiona Bycroft-Ryder, and Bristol Juvenile Court's new Girls Program, Saving Lives, Salvaging Dreams, created by Probation Officer Stella Ribeiro, and the long-running Shakespeare In the Courts Program offered through Berkshire Juvenile Court. Children enrolled in the Worcester Arts Alternative Program attend art lectures and create drawings and paintings. Saving Lives, Salvaging Dreams targets self-esteem and substance abuses issues among young women. Shakespeare in the Courts is a 12-week program where children attend weekly rehearsals which culminate in a performance before a live audience.

There are diversion initiatives such as the 11 O'Clock Meeting in Essex County, first introduced by Richard Kelley— former Essex Juvenile Assistant Chief Probation Officer and now Newburyport District Chief Probation Officer. The two-year-old program is now run by Essex Juvenile Probation Officer Michael Greenwald. Another program is the JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative) at Hampden County Juvenile Court managed by Chief Probation Officer Danny Baez.

Norfolk Juvenile Court offers a program for young women called SMART (Shaping Mature and Responsible Teens), which helps girls between 13 and 17 years old become productive and independent adults, by providing them with life skills and coping strategies. This program was created by Norfolk Juvenile Probation Officers Tracy Clogher and Rosemary Leoncavallo.

Thomas Capasso Is Named New Records Unit Director

Thomas "Tom" Capasso was recently appointed new Director of the Probation Records Unit by Commissioner of Probation Edward J. Dolan.



Thomas Capasso

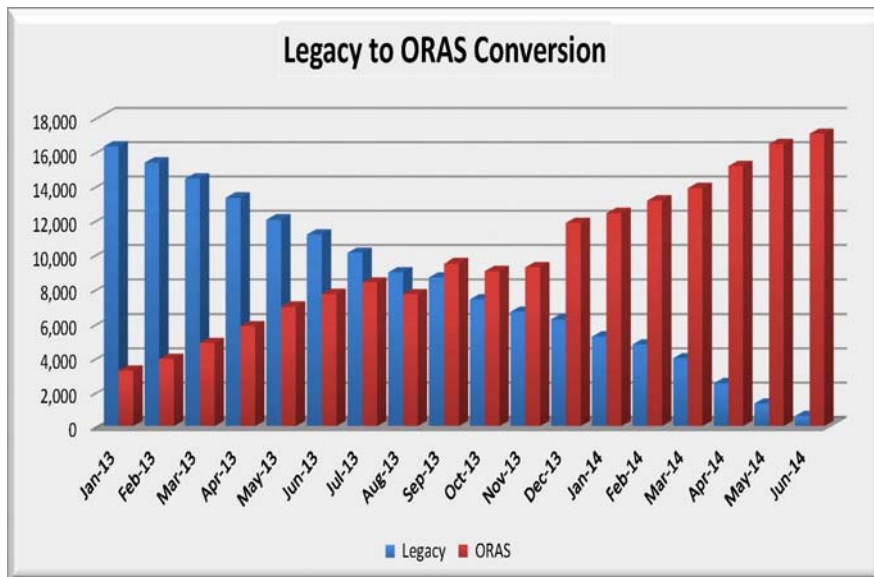
The Records Unit maintains civil and criminal records information in the CARI (Court Activity Record Information) System, which includes more than 17 million cases, and the Record Sealing Unit. He manages the two units and the Restraining Order Registry.

Capasso began his career in legal and criminal record information in 2000 as Assistant General Counsel at the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB). He was appointed Director of Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Services in 2006. Mr. Capasso was later named Director of Legal Services/Deputy General Counsel at DCJIS in 2013.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Northeastern University in 1996 a law degree from Suffolk University in 1999. Capasso was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 2000.

LEGACY CASE CONVERSION TO ORAS IS NOW COMPLETE

In a mere six months, Probation Chiefs across the Commonwealth have converted 16,000 legacy cases to the Ohio Risk Assessment System, an evidence-based risk-needs measurement tool.



Community Supervision Is Brought to Community Fairs

Probation Officers across the Commonwealth work along side police at community fairs and festivals where they maintain a presence and deter crime.

The Cape Verdean Festival in Wareham in July; the Caribbean Carnival in Boston in August; the "Big E," Eastern Exposition Fair, in September; and now Salem's "Haunted Happenings" in October are among the community celebrations where Probation Officers are on hand to identify offenders and discourage criminal behavior.

Probation Officers' presence at these events date back two decades when local police approached probation asking for their help in identifying gang-affiliated individuals who used the large crowds as a cover for planned feuds with rivals.



Probation employees at Big E Festival in West Springfield. Left to right: Springfield District Probation Officer Jen O'Donnell, Hampshire Superior Court Chief Probation Officer Margaret Oglesby; and Springfield District Court Probation Officers Ramon Guzman, Judith Santana, Elvia Castro, Bernadette Leal, Cheryl Strong, and Janet Ely.

Photo Credits: Probation Officer Sean Keane.

"We help make it possible for families and their children to enjoy the event and remain safe," said Springfield District Chief Probation Officer John Morganstern.

A Week In Probation Feature Photos: Trial Court Volunteer Effort



Middlesex Superior Court Chief Probation Officer (in pink striped shirt in back on right) poses with 20 of her court colleagues at the Greater Boston Food Bank where they volunteered. The group sorted large pallets of snack food slated for distribution at local food pantries. Left to right are: Regional Director of Security Michael McPherson; Law Clerk Rafael Munoz; Judge Laurence Pierce; Judge Bruce Henry; Judge Rosalind Miller; Judge Kenneth Desmond; Superior Court General Counsel/Associate Court Administrator Maria Pena; Law Clerk Ashley Healey; Law Clerk Jaclyn Latessa; Judge Kathe Tuttmann; Chief McEachern and her daughter, Kayla; Probation employee Jennifer Cermeno; Judge Charles Hely; Judge Brian Davis; and Judge Mitchell Kaplan. Front row, left to right: Administrative Assistant Jillian Pliwinski; Judge Peter Krup; Genevive Frison, Chief Court Officer Wayne McDaniel; and Law Clerk Karl Ching.

Photo submitted by Middlesex Superior Court Maureen MacEachern.

Probation Update is an internal publication featuring the current news of

The Massachusetts Probation Service.

Please forward comments or suggestions for future stories to:

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