



# This Week In Probation

*A Special Edition: Testing & Drug Courts — April 15, 2016*

## Probation's Plan to Strengthen Drug Testing

The Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS) has recently selected a vendor to provide drug testing services which will complement current court-based testing as contract negotiations get underway.

The plan is to establish collection sites where drug testing will be administered and samples collected. Pittsfield, Springfield, Worcester, Lawrence, Boston, and the New Bedford/Fall River area are among the cities being targeted as preliminary sites.

While the Massachusetts Probation Service works to establish the sites, new urine cups and oral swabs are being introduced that test for additional drugs. The goal of these efforts is to supply probation officers with new testing tools, establish strategically-placed collection sites for high-volume courts on a regional basis, and provide probation officers with a web-based reporting system for tracking tests and results at the collection centers, according to Michael Coelho, Deputy Commissioner-Programs Division.

"The MPS is seeking to strengthen its system of drug testing to ensure that there is a random schedule that allows for a probationer to be tested on any given day," said Coelho. "It is important that Probation Officers can access a menu of options for the appropriate test with the goal of supporting the probation client's efforts to address his or her substance abuse problem." Coelho added, "At the collection centers, we will have the ability to rotate the drugs we test for on a more frequent basis, to stay current with substance abuse trends and to limit efforts to defeat the test. We will continue to review the type of equipment purchased and distributed to the field so probation officers can access a menu of testing equipment to support randomized testing, stay current with substance abuse trends, and limit efforts to defeat the test. We will continue to review the type of equipment purchased and distributed to the field so Probation Officers can access a menu of testing equipment to support the same goals."

**Check Out Probation's  
Newest Technology:  
SCRAM on Page 3**



ELMO Statewide Manager Daniel Pires demonstrates SCRAM Breath Device with facial detection technology. Photo courtesy of **The Worcester Telegram & Gazette**.

## Commissioner Addresses Drug Court Conference

More than 120 people attended the two-day Drug Court 101 Conference where Commissioner Edward J. Dolan provided opening remarks. This conference for new Drug Court teams took place Thursday, March 24th, and Friday, March 25th, at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester.

Commissioner Dolan told the audience, "You—the judges, clinicians, Probation Officers, and treatment providers—are the ground troops on the front lines of the war on the Opioid epidemic....You represent the fruit of a three-year effort to move from 10 stand-alone Drug Courts to a 25-court network." He added, "We have moved more aggressively to improve and enhance testing—a cornerstone of risk management—but we also know a critical tool of recovery and treatment."

The conference featured the best practices for Drug Court operation, an overview of addiction and treatment, sanctions and incentives and a mock Drug Court session. Drug Court graduates also shared their stories and experiences. The Trial Court, Center of Excellence for Specialty Courts, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Mental Health were among the conference sponsors. According to Drug Court data, participants have a 27.5 percent recidivism rate compared to the 60 percent recidivism rate of high-risk offenders.

The Massachusetts Trial Court is slated to expand the number of Specialty Courts statewide to 44 drug, mental health, and veterans treatment courts. Over the past year, Drug Courts opened in Brockton, Dudley, Fall River, and Lowell District courts as well as a Juvenile Drug Court in Taunton. The establishment of eight courts is part of this year's expansion plan and will include Worcester, Pittsfield, Taunton, Springfield, and Hingham District courts as well as Salem Juvenile Court, and Franklin County Probate and Family Court in Greenfield.

The Massachusetts Trial Court requested and was granted an allocation of \$2.8 million in the fiscal 2017 budget by the state legislature for the next round of expansion. In addition, funding targeted for drug court expansion is one of the 13 recommendations made by the Special Commission on Substance Addiction Treatment in the Criminal Justice System. Other Commission recommendations include expanding pre-trial diversion programs, peer support and recovery programs in specialty courts. The integration of online treatment resources into a central navigation system is also being considered.

## Drug Court (DC) Participants At A Glance:

- **77** percent of DC participants receive substance abuse treatment from the Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS).
- **68** percent of Drug Court (DC) participants indicated Heroin and other opiates are their biggest challenge to sobriety.
- **24** percent of (DC) participants graduated from Massachusetts Drug Courts.

## A Retrospective: Massachusetts' First Drug Court



Left to right: Dorchester Probation Officer Helen Coyne; B-3 Police Officer David Lanteigne; Wyman Reentry Case Manager Ben Wade, Area B-3 Sergeant Thomas Brooks; Gavin Foundation Peer to Peer Specialist Mission Forward Cindy Stafford and John Capo; Presiding Justice Serge Georges Jr.; Substance Abuse Treatment Coordinator Michelle Tallant; Assistant District Attorney Marc Tohme; Substance Abuse Coordinator Jenni Hollihan; ADA Katherine Loftus; and Defense Attorney Jessica Tripp.

The first Drug Court in Massachusetts held sessions at a Mattapan facility where clients from the South Boston and West Roxbury District courts were served.

Twenty years later, the Dorchester Drug Court continues to help court-involved individuals who suffer with addiction. When the Drug Court first launched back in 1996, crack cocaine addiction had reached epic proportions. Opiate addiction is now the biggest challenge.

Over the years, the court has graduated approximately 160 men and women. The court also boasts of a strong team that consists of representatives from the District Attorney's office; the Gavin Foundation, and Boston Police Department-B-3 in Mattapan. Boston Municipal Court – Dorchester Probation Officer Helen Coyne, who has helped run Drug Court for nine years, works along side Presiding Justice Serge Georges Jr. The following is a Question & Answer column with Drug Court Probation Officer Helen Coyne about the state's first Drug Court.

### Question & Answer (Q&A) With Dorchester Probation Officer Helen Coyne

**1) This Week (TW): How does the level of addiction compare today to when the court first started?**

**Coyne:** We were seeing the need to help those with alcohol and crack cocaine addictions. Although we still see and treat those suffering with these addictions, Heroin addiction is the main addiction we are treating now. The use and abuse of prescription drugs has caused so many to resort to Heroin. Because of the alarming rate of fatal overdoses with Heroin, intensive and structured treatment is imperative. In the past, we could treat people with intensive outpatient services. Now, the majority needs in-patient treatment.

**2) TW: How has the focus of the court changed?**

**Coyne:** We have seen a change in how the drug and alcohol addicted are handled. Dorchester Division judges are ordering substance abuse evaluations, treatment programs and referring individuals to Drug Court. Assistant DA's and defense attorneys discuss and agree to having individuals evaluated for treatment and for Drug Court. Historically, Dorchester Probation Officers have recommended treatment for willing participants. Probation Officers continue to utilize the treatment services we have available at the court and refer cases to the Drug Court team for treatment recommendations. Our court also has the ability to get people evaluated and entered into treatment quickly because we have Gavin Foundation staff working within our courthouse. Treatment programs and courts are communicating much better than they have in the past and are working together. For example, Wyman Re-entry and Salvation Army will come to our court and interview people for their program. Both programs have saved so many people by giving them a bed or an opportunity to receive treatment instead of going to jail or the street.

**3) TW: How Important is the Drug Court Team and what do members bring to the table?**

**Coyne:** Our team is amazing, compassionate and committed. Judge Serge Georges Jr. is extraordinary and has this gift of being able to connect with every Drug Court participant. This connection encourages our participants to discuss their daily struggles. They really look forward to coming into the Drug Court reviews every week because of him. The team is equally blessed with our Defense Attorney Jessica Tripp. Attorney Tripp, who is well versed about the disease of addiction, has assisted our participants for the past three years. Every Thursday, she is here no matter what. She has a difficult job which includes handling all of the violations that happen out of the Drug Court. She represents her clients and at the same time works with the team on a treatment approach. We have had long-time support from Suffolk County District Attorney Dan Conley's office which assigned two Assistant District Attorneys (ADA's) Marc Tohme and Katherine Loftus. Tohme and Loftus have encouraged heightened treatment as a sanction instead of jail as well as Drug Court as a disposition among their colleagues. As a result, Drug Court participants get to know the ADA as a team member and not so much as "The Prosecutor." This past year, Gavin Foundation CEO John McGahan dedicated two staff members to our Drug Court team: Cindy Stafford and John Capo. Both have been instrumental in getting the participants properly assessed. Cindy does every Drug Court assessment for our program and determines if participants are appropriate for the Court or for other treatment options. Cindy and John follow up with every client and provide services through the Gavin Foundation. I have waited a long time to have this key component on our team. The team also has a grant that funds treatment coordinators. Just recently, Jenni Hollihan and Michelle Tallant joined our team. They are going to assist with placing people in treatment. It is difficult to get people into residential treatment since there is such a huge demand. Our team also has the support of Captain Haseeb Hosein, Commander of B-3, who has dedicated Sergeant Thomas Brooks and Officer David Lanteigne to our team. They are our law enforcement officers and they attend staff meetings and reviews. Our participants see that the role of these officers are to help them and not to arrest them. It is a great partnership and I am so thankful to the captain for his support.

**4) TW: After two decades of operation, why do you think the Drug Court approach is so relevant now? Coyne:** It is more relevant now due to the alarming rate of overdoses. People are dying. It is not just a quality of life issue. It's life or death.



Dorchester Drug Court Probation Officer Coyne and Judge Georges

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## New Alcohol Testing Device Has Facial Recognition Technology

The Massachusetts Probation Service is now using new remote alcohol equipment to monitor alcohol use among probationers called SCRAM Remote Breath, a product of SCRAM Systems, which identifies probationers using facial recognition software.

The device is a handheld, wireless, portable breath alcohol device and can be operated remotely by having an offender breathe into a tube to test their breath alcohol content. This device is similar in appearance to the breathalyzer used by law enforcement to test drivers for drunk driving.

The results of the test are then communicated remotely to SCRAM Systems through a cellular network. As the test is administered, the device also takes a photo of the probationer to confirm their identity. The test results, photo, and GPS location of the offender are all sent to Electronic Monitoring Center via SCRAM Systems. There are approximately 430 SCRAM devices in use across the state. Since Probation began using the device in November, the number increased from 300 active devices.

SCRAM Remote Breath replaces the Sobriety which came equipped with voice recognition software and operated on a telephone landline.

"The new technology offers a cellular solution as well as a more secure and efficient identity management system," said Daniel Pires, Statewide Manager of Electronic Monitoring.

## Probation Is Eyeing Fentanyl Use



The use of Fentanyl, an opioid narcotic used to treat chronic pain, is on the rise in a number of communities across the Commonwealth.

During the beginning of the year, Plymouth District Court and the Plymouth Community Corrections Center were among the first to report an increase in Fentanyl use. Opiate addiction and overdoses, however, remain steady. To combat this problem, the Plymouth District Court and Plymouth Community Corrections Centers have combined resources to test offenders for Fentanyl use. The Plymouth center has performed approximately 123 screens for Fentanyl to date.

"The most recent positive screens follow the pattern we are seeing of probationers who are only testing positive for Fentanyl and negative for opiates," said Plymouth Resource Center Program Manager Christine Costa.

The center began testing for Fentanyl randomly in the beginning of December following arrests that occurred in Plymouth involving the trafficking of Fentanyl. Out of the approximately 60 screens administered for Fentanyl in December, five participants at the center and one probationer from Plymouth District Court tested positive for the drug. All of the screens were negative for other substances including Opiates.

Costa said her staff is always educating themselves about new drugs and how they are "used to help the addict achieve a high." Until very recently, staff at the center were unaware that addicts were shooting straight Fentanyl, Costa said. The center began rotating Fentanyl testing into its testing panels on a regular basis. There was one positive Fentanyl screen in December, five in January and five in February. The center continues to watch for trends regarding this drug.

Seven of the 18 Community Corrections Centers use the panel system to test for drugs. One of the panel set-ups for testing contains Fentanyl as a substance. It is a five-panel test that also includes opiates, cocaine, THC, and benzodiazepines. It's randomly rotated in about 30% of the time. If a Probation Officer uses the standard equipment, generates a negative test for the standard drugs, we test for (opiates, cocaine, amphetamines, etc. If a Probation Officer suspects Fentanyl use, a test can be requested as an add on to any panel at a cost of \$2.50 (on top of what the panel already costs).

This type of testing is also available at eight of the 18 Community Corrections Centers: Dartmouth, Barnstable, Brockton, Suffolk, Taunton, Pittsfield, Plymouth (as mentioned), and the Worcester Juvenile Resource Center. Probation's Community Corrections Centers serve as an alternative to incarceration. Probation Officers In Charge are assigned to each center, a community supervision site where offenders must check in several times a week. Substance Abuse treatment, Hi-Set (formerly GED) preparation, and job training are offered at the centers.

**Probation Drug Testing By the Numbers:**

- **\$500,000** is the amount Probation pays for drug testing statewide
- **69,000** is the number of tests administered by Probation Officers at courts statewide
- **63,000** are the number of tests administered at the Community Corrections Centers statewide

**Statewide Drug Courts**

	Established		Established
<b>1) Ayer Drug Court</b> Probation Officer (PO) Jeff Phelps First Justice J. Elizabeth Cremins	2003	<b>12) Fall River Drug Court</b> PO's Brian Balestracci & Erin Foster Lanczycki Justice Christopher Welch	2015
<b>2) Barnstable Drug Court</b> PO Christine Drew Justice John Julian	2001	<b>13) Greenfield Drug Court</b> PO Tammy Balestracci Justice William Mazanec	1997
<b>3) Bristol Juvenile Drug Courts- New Bedford (NB), Fall River (FR) &amp; Taunton (T)</b> (NB) PO's Estella Rebeiro & Susan Nielsen Justice Siobhan Foley; (FR) PO's William McGowan, Andrea Valestracci, & Kim Andrade Justice John Spinale; (T) PO David Pavao Justice Lawrence Moniz	2002 2014 2016	<b>14) Lawrence Drug Court</b> PO Danielle Murray Justice Lynn Rooney	2005
<b>4) Brockton Drug Court</b> PO Michelle Rawdon-Hollien Justice Julie Bernard	2015	<b>15) Lowell Drug Court</b> PO Ethel Ryan Gomes Justice Thomas Brennan	2014
<b>5) Cambridge Drug Court</b> PO Justin Brennan Justice Roanne Sragow	2002	<b>16) Lynn Drug Court</b> PO Kelley Montgomery Justice James LaMothe	1999
<b>6) Charlestown Drug Court</b> Chief PO Michelle Williams Justice Lawrence McCormick	2012	<b>17) Malden Drug Court</b> PO Richard DeAngelis Justice Lee Johnson	2004
<b>7) Chelsea Drug Court</b> PO Judy Lawlor Justice Benjamin Barnes	2000	<b>18) New Bedford Drug Court</b> PO's Rachel Spencer/Jen Foley Justice Bernadette Sabra	2000
<b>8) Concord Drug Court</b> PO Marianne Burgess Justice Sabita Singh	2010	<b>19) Newton Drug Court</b> PO Rhonda Smith Justice Mary E. Heffernan	2013
<b>9) Dorchester Drug Court</b> PO Helen Coyne Justice Sergei Georges	1994	<b>20) Orange Drug Court</b> Chief PO Stephen Wheeler Justice David Ross	1997
<b>10) Dudley Drug Court</b> Chief PO Nilza Sylvestre Justice Timothy Bibaud	2014	<b>21) Plymouth Drug Court</b> PO James Polin Justice John Julian	2010
<b>11) East Boston Drug Court</b> PO Francine Hammersley Justice John McDonald	2000	<b>22) Quincy Drug Court</b> PO Christine Pancyck Justice Mary Beth Heffernan	2001
		<b>23) South Boston Drug Court</b> PO MaryNel Sanchez Justice Michael Bolden	1997

The Drug Court expansion will include the addition of Worcester, Pittsfield, Taunton, Springfield, and Hingham District courts as well as Salem Juvenile and Franklin County Probate and Family courts.

**Coming Up Next In Probation - April 2016**

**Earth Day Clean-Up-** The Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program will be conducting a day-long, statewide spring clean-up day in honor of Earth Day. The clean-up day will take place Thursday, **April 21<sup>st</sup>**. Probationers, sentenced to community service, will collaborate with the Department of Conservation and Recreation to clean up parks.

**National Re-Entry Week, April 24<sup>th</sup>- 30<sup>th</sup>**— Each year, more than 600,000 individuals return to neighborhoods throughout the country after serving time in federal and state prisons and another 11.4 million are released from local jails, according to Department of Justice statistics. In an effort to bring attention to re-entry, the Department of Justice is designating April 24<sup>th</sup>—30<sup>th</sup> National Re-Entry Week. Probation Departments throughout the state are actively involved with re-entry initiatives for offenders who are released from prison into the community and are placed on Probation.

**Domestic Violence Training for Probation Officers, Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** — Probation Officers will learn skills and techniques to better monitor abusive intimate partners and to intervene in domestic violence cases more effectively at this all-day training. The training will focus on the dynamics of domestic violence, legal policies and procedures, abusive partners, and risk factors. Probation Officers will learn tips and tools for effective relationship building with victims, witnesses and recanting witnesses during violation of probation proceedings. This training will be held on the 3rd floor of the Worcester Law Library, 184 Main Street. Participants will earn 7.5 Learning Credits. To register, go to the Trial Court's e-Learning Center.