



PROBATION



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The Massachusetts Probation Service

The Work of Probation: Record Sealing Petitions Increase

RECORD SEALING REQUESTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

The number of petitions for sealing records in the state has increased nearly 60 percent over the past five years.

Petitions Filed In:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
				
4,272	4,359	6,699	7,748	6,723

The Records Unit of the Massachusetts Probation Service maintains 17 million cases as well as the Domestic Violence Registry, which reflects the criminal and socio-economic trends of the Commonwealth.

The Sealing Unit is one of two departments of the Records Unit. The CIMG (Central Identity Management Group).

As the result of the CORI Reform law passed three years ago, the Sealing Unit is now the busiest it has ever been as individuals who have criminal records rush to have them sealed.

In fact, the number of petitions for sealing criminal records has jumped nearly 60 percent from 4,272 five years ago to 6,723 petitions with a slight decline between 2013 and 2014, according to Thomas Capasso, Probation Records Unit Director.

Capasso said he believes the 6,723 figure to be conservative as a petition may involve "sealing one charge or 100 charges."

"The CORI Reform bill rolled back the time frames for sealing of convictions from 15 and 10 years for felonies and misdemeanors to 10 and five years," Capasso said. "It also changed how some dispositions, continuances without a finding, are viewed when sealing cases."

He added, "The increase in petitions, may be attributed to the focus of CORI reform on the reintegration of people with criminal records into the workforce."

"The goal is to help individuals with past indiscretions gain employment. This push and change in the law brought sealing on the map on a broader scale," Capasso said.

Community Service Crews Across the State Perform 5,000 Hours of Snow Removal

Probationers, sentenced to community service across the state, have performed more than 5,000 hours of snow and ice removal during this record snowfall winter which has dumped nearly 10 feet of snow.

"Although this season's record-setting snow and bitter cold temperatures have severely impacted all operations, this has not affected the work of community service crews. I commend our employees for their dedication and hard work and for servicing these clients and the agencies that rely heavily upon the work our crews perform each day," said David Skocik, Statewide Supervisor of the Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program.

In Worcester, one of the hardest-hit regions, probationers spent more than 500 hours digging out fire hydrants and 16 abandoned and city-owned properties as part of a collaboration with the City Managers Office.

More than 600 hours have been spent shoving out fire hydrants in Barnstable, Bristol, Plymouth, Suffolk, Essex, Worcester, Hampden, and Franklin counties.

This winter, Community Service crews have also shoveled out courts, food pantries, schools, housing developments, and animal shelters.



Community Service crews shovel snow from courthouse steps at Boston Municipal Court-Dorchester.

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Juvenile Court Care and Protection Cases Jump Nearly 20 Percent

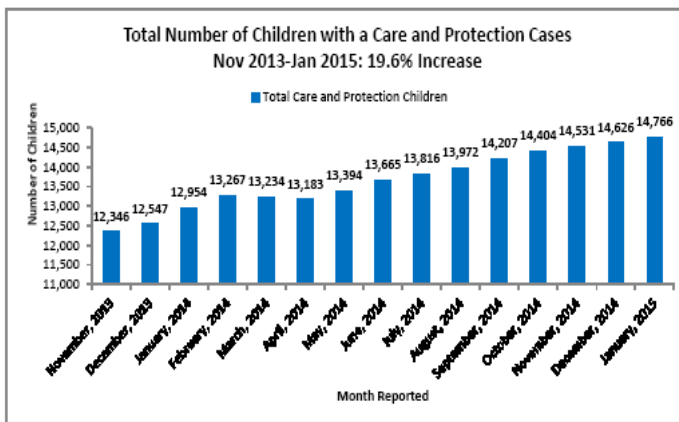
The number of Care and Protection cases, cases in which there is an allegation of child abuse and/or neglect by a parent or guardian, has spiked by 20 percent over the past 14 months.

Statistics show that the top four counties with the highest increase in Care and Protection cases are Suffolk, Middlesex, Bristol, and Barnstable respectively.

John Millett, Probation’s Statewide Supervisor for the Juvenile Court, said the spike may in part be attributed to the increased vigilance by state agencies following the tragic death of Jeremiah Oliver, a four-year-old Fitchburg boy, last year. In response to this tragedy and Probation’s review of its standards, first implemented in 2012, Probation Officers check on children and their home placements more regularly. It is during these more frequent visits where Probation Officers are able to spot abuse and neglect. The standards require a Probation Officer to visit a child following a custody order set by a judge.

“Now, each child who is not placed in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is assigned a Probation Officer who meets face to face with them in their home every 30 days,” Millett said. “In the past, a child who remained in the same placement with no changes in their case, may have been visited only once over an extended period of time.”

Each child is now assigned a level— one to four— which is determined by a child’s custody order and the length of time a child is placed in a home. Level one cases are children who are the subject of a Care and



Protection case but not placed in DCF custody. They are visited every 30 days.

Level two cases are children placed in DCF custody. Contact with DCF or a service provider is made every 90 days. Level three cases are children who are hospitalized and/or are in a long-term placement for over a year. These cases require contact with DCF or a significant service provider every six months. There is no required contact on Level four cases which are cases following adjudication, permanent guardianship, or third party custody, involving a young adult, 18-22.

New Faces in Management in The Probation Service



Sandrine Ribeiro



Patricia W. Gavin



Thomas Pasquarello

The Massachusetts Probation Service recently welcomed two new managers and promoted a third within the agency.

Sandrine Riberio was named CARI (Court Activity Record Information) Coordinator. Patricia W. Gavin was hired as Statewide Training Supervisor for the Massachusetts Probation Service and Thomas Pasquarello was appointed Electronic Monitoring Program Manager.

Ribeiro’s duties as Coordinator are to supervise the Central Identity Management Group (CIMG) staff.

The CIMG Group analyzes, updates, and maintains data contained in all court-related databases governed by the Commissioner of Probation.

A six-year Probation employee, Ribeiro previously held the position of data entry clerk in the CIMG.

Ribeiro, who served as a principal trainer during the MassCourts conversion, played an integral role in its implementation.

Gavin, former Associate Dean of Criminal Justice at Anna Maria College in Paxton, is now Probation’s Statewide Training Division director.

As Training Supervisor, Gavin will develop, manage, and implement a comprehensive program for training and professional development for Probation staff.

Gavin will also be responsible for creating training policies and protocols.

Pasquarello is the new manager of the Electronic Monitoring Program.

He is a former Somerville Police Chief and Special Agent assigned to the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency). He is responsible for the management of ELMO Center operations and oversight of staff.

In addition, Pasquarello is responsible for the development and implementation of the ELMO Center operation polices and practices.

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.

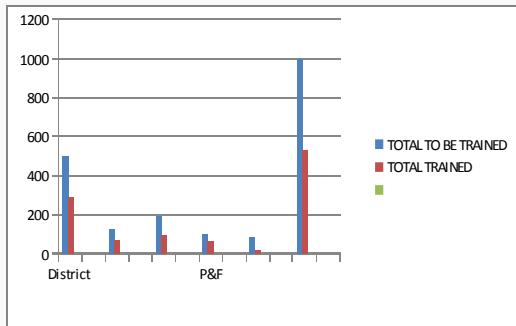
Kudos to the Electronic Monitoring Center Staff- Despite the extreme weather conditions caused by the blizzard, which closed down courthouses across the state, the Electronic Monitoring Center operated efficiently and without a break in operations. Some staff worked double and triple shifts. Others offered to come in early or adjust their schedules to assist their colleagues. Employees helped shovel out their co-workers' cars. Others used the snow blower and salted the sidewalks to make it safe for their fellow employees to come in and out of the center. Newly-appointed Chief Probation Officer Donald Wright worked an additional 15 hours without a break. Managers, who traveled to Clinton to check on staff, were essential in keeping the center operational. All staff worked together as a team, supported each other and did what it took to keep the center operating.



ELMO employees help colleague push car stuck in the snow. Photo credit: Dianne Fasano.

Launch of Three New Specialty Courts- Two new Drug Courts have opened at Fall River District and Brockton District courts. The Fall River District Court opened its doors on February 5th and the Brockton District Court launched on February 26th. A Mental Health Court is slated to open at Quincy District Court this spring.

Worcester HOPE Program Celebrates Success-The Worcester HOPE Program celebrated its success with an Appreciation Day attended by Regional Supervisor Betsy Daigneault, Judge Paul LoConto and Judge David Despotopoulos, Chief Probation Officer Maureen Chamberlain, HOPE/MORR Coordinator Sheila Flanagan, and the district court probation team.



More Than Half of Probation Officers Trained In Evidence-Based Practices

More than half of probation employees in District, Superior, and Probate & Family courts have been trained in Evidence Based Community Supervision Practices (EBCSP). In District Court, 58.2 percent; Superior Court, 55.7 percent; Probate & Family, 62.8 percent, of employees have completed the training, according to Dianne Fasano, Deputy Commissioner-Field Services. Of the 995 Probation Officers in all five court divisions, 530 have received training, accounting for a total of 52.2 percent of employees who have been trained.

Community Chronicle

Enrollment Has Increased At Community Corrections Centers Statewide

Enrollment at the 18 Community Corrections Centers across the state has increased, according to Michael Coelho, Deputy Commissioner - Programs Division. As of December 2014, there are 770 participants, an increase of 100 clients which represents a 15 percent jump in the census, Coelho said.

“The leadership from the Chief Probation Officers and the Regional and State-wide Supervisors utilizing this resource has been tremendous,” commented Coelho.

Western Massachusetts' First Batterers Intervention Program

A Batterers Intervention Program is being planned for the Berkshire Community Corrections Center and is slated to open in late June. This will be the first time this type of programming will be offered at one of the 18 Community Corrections Centers. Phoenix Houses, Inc., the vendor which will oversee the 42-week program, has applied for certification from the state Department of Public Health (DPH) to offer the program, according to Patricia Horne, acting statewide OCC Supervisor.

Promotional Exam Scheduled

Approximately 389 individuals registered to take the Promotional Exam for Assistant Chief Probation Officers and Chief Probation Officers.

The exam, for positions in the Boston Municipal Courts, District, and Superior courts will take place Saturday, **March 21st**, at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC) in South Boston. Registration is closed. The promotional exam date for Juvenile and Probate & Family courts will be announced at a later date.

SHARE A STORY

Story Submission and Event Calendar forms are available through your Regional and Statewide Supervisors or go to the Probation Bulletin Board: bb.jud.state.ma.us. The submission deadline is the 20th of the month prior to publication. If you have questions, call or email:

617-624-9319

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Robina Institute Visits Agency

Representatives from the Robina Institute of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice, a division of the University of Minnesota Law School, met with Massachusetts Probation Service Commissioner Edward J. Dolan and Trial Court officials in February to discuss the Institute's multi-year initiative to encourage a rethinking of probation revocation policy across the country.

The meeting specifically focused on the reduction of probation violations among offenders as a way to reduce non-criminal violations, according to Commissioner Dolan.

"This would give Probation the opportunity to work with the Robina Institute in adult criminal courts and explore practice, research, and more effective probation supervision. It is a way to reduce non-criminal violations and build on evidence-based practices such as ORAS (Ohio Risk Assessment System)," said Commissioner Dolan.

Chief Justice Ralph Gants, Chief Justice Paula Carey, Trial Court Administrator Harry Spence, and Linda Holt of the Sentencing Commission along with Commissioner Dolan attended the meeting.

Probation Adds New Programs

A new Womanhood Program has launched at Eastern Hampshire District Court and a Changing Lives Through Literature initiative has begun in Franklin County.

The Eastern Hampshire District Court Womenhood Program, modeled after Chelsea District Court's Womenhood Program also known as Programa de la Mujer, began its spring session on March 3rd with classes held at Belchertown Town Hall. This program was launched by Eastern Hampshire Probation Officer Gina Sanderson.

The 10-week sessions will feature a curriculum that covers nutrition and health, breast and cervical cancer, personal safety and self-defense, self-soothing skills, domestic violence awareness as well as resume writing, job search and interviewing skills.

The Franklin County Changing Lives Through Literature Program, first in the county, is now in session. In addition to being introduced to literature, graduates of the program may continue their education by registering for classes at Greenfield Community College, an initiative set up by the school which allows students to enroll upon CLTL completion.

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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Fall River Chief Silvia Receives Very First Ovation Award



Fall River Chief Probation Officer Carol Silvia poses with Regional Supervisor Pamerson

Fall River District Court Chief Probation Officer Carol Silvia is the recipient of the first Massachusetts Probation Service Ovation Award.



Silvia, a 32-year employee, was recognized for her strong work ethic and her leadership skills during the launching of the Fall River District Drug Court which opened February 5th.

"Chief Silvia is to be commended for her hard work and dedication to the Probation Service as well as her diligent efforts in the opening of Fall River's first Drug Court," said Commissioner Edward J. Dolan.

"I am so pleased to be the first recipient of the Ovation Award. There are many well deserving of this award, and I accept this on behalf of my wonderful staff, who work diligently under stressful conditions. This award means so much to me, and I am grateful to have been nominated and chosen," Silvia said.

She was nominated for the award by Chief Mary Santos who described Silvia this way: "She is organized and efficient, objective, readily available and highly respected by the judicial staff and all that have the pleasure of working with her. CPO Silvia leads by example, arriving early and staying late daily."

The award is presented to acknowledge the exemplary work of Probation employees. It will be presented each quarter. Nominations are currently being accepted.

The March deadline for nominations is the 21st. Any Probation employee can nominate a candidate for this award. You may find nomination forms on the Probation Bulletin Board: bb.jud.state.ma.us.

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.