



COMMON GROUND

APRIL - MAY 2026

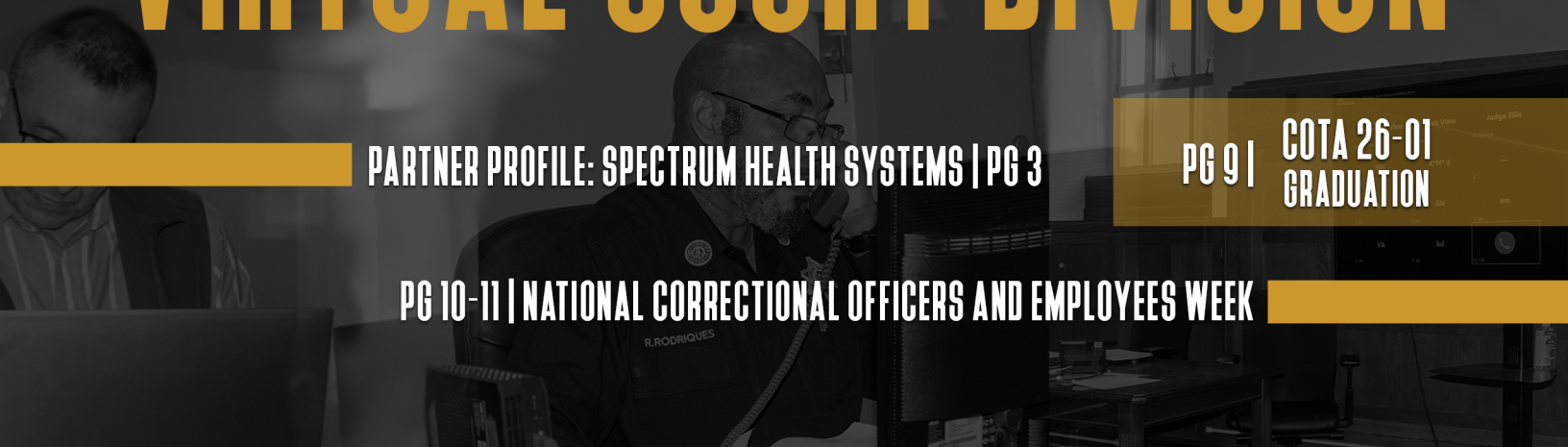


THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S VIRTUAL COURT DIVISION

PARTNER PROFILE: SPECTRUM HEALTH SYSTEMS | PG 3

PG 9 | COTA 26-01
GRADUATION

PG 10-11 | NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES WEEK





SCSD'S MESSAGE

APRIL-MAY, 2026

Greetings,

Welcome to the April–May edition of our Common Ground Newsletter. In this issue, we highlight our Virtual Court Division and our partnership with the Massachusetts Trial Court system, showcasing the evolution of virtual court proceedings, the role of technology within the justice system, and the collaboration between our Department and court personnel to better serve residents and court staff across Massachusetts.

We also feature our continued partnership with SPECTRUM, whose staff provide evidence-based recovery education and support for residents recovering from alcohol and substance use disorders. Additionally, we proudly recognize the graduates of COTA Class 26-01, welcoming twenty-two new officers to our institution as they begin their commitment to serving the Suffolk County community and our population.

Lastly, we celebrate National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, honoring the dedication and professionalism of our staff members who work tirelessly each day to keep our Department operating safely and efficiently.

We hope that you'll enjoy reading these and other stories in this issue, and we look forward to bringing you more insight and information about the form and functions of the Department in the editions to come.

~The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department

INDEX



PARTNER PROFILE: SPECTRUM HEALTH SYSTEMS

Pg. 3



INSIDE THE SCSD'S VIRTUAL COURT DIVISION

Pg. 4-8



COTA 26-01 GRADUATION

Pg. 9



NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES WEEK CELEBRATION

Pg. 10-11

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

PETER VAN DELFT - EDITOR IN CHIEF
ALEXANDRA ARIAS-PIRANIO - EDITOR
DANA C. DUQUE - DESIGNER

SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
PHONE: 617.704.6688
VISIT US ONLINE
WWW.SCSDMA.ORG

CONNECT WITH US
f X @ y
#WEARESCSD



PARTNER PROFILE: SPECTRUM HEALTH SYSTEMS

The connection between addiction and incarceration is undeniable. Research shows that alcohol and drugs are implicated in an estimated 80% of offenses leading to incarceration in the United States, and alcohol dependence consistently emerges as the most prevalent substance use disorder among incarcerated populations. Spectrum Health Systems is working to change that statistic; one conversation, one group session, one life at a time.

“Recovery isn’t just language, it’s a lifestyle,” says Diana Reed, Clinical Treatment Director for Spectrum Health Systems at the House of Correction. Reed brings over 30 years of experience in addiction treatment, including managing methadone clinics and private practice work. Over the past two years, she’s built what she calls “a motley crew” of counselors from diverse backgrounds, united by a common mission: showing up, being ready, and meeting residents in crisis with compassion and evidence-based recovery education.

Reed’s hiring philosophy centers on a simple question: “Are you teachable, coachable, and trainable? Because in order for you to stand in front of someone and teach them, you must first be able to be taught.” The result is a team that creates what visitors describe as a surprisingly peaceful environment. “When people come here, they’re pleasantly surprised,” Reed notes. “That’s a feat, and that’s certainly by design.

Her team includes Kenya, who brings emergency psychiatric expertise and has been with the program for eight months; Tony, the Lead Counselor with over a year of experience; Iris, who previously worked at DOC Framingham; and Grant, the newest addition. Together, they provide recovery-based psychoeducational groups to all detainees, addressing substance use recovery, anger management, emotional intelligence, and trauma-informed care.

“Alcohol is highly accessible, highly romanticized in culture,” explains Tony. “We talk about natural highs—go out dancing, they sell al-

cohol there. Go mini-golfing; they sell alcohol there, too. Go to a Sunday dinner with your family, they have wine.” Unlike other substances, he notes, “You can walk to almost any street here in Boston and find a liquor store.” This omnipresence creates unique recovery challenges. The team frequently hears stories of alcohol use beginning shockingly early. “We’ve heard stories of guys drinking at the age of 6 and 7 years old,” Tony shares. In the Department’s OASIS (Opioid Addiction Services Inside South Bay) Program reflections, Iris observes, “They usually start by saying the age they started drinking, and it’s usually at a very young age, due to being around their family with drinking.”

The psychological dimension runs deeper. “When I hear people talk about alcohol, they use it to numb pain, they use it to numb memories,” Tony explains. “It numbs your social inhibition. If you have social anxiety, alcohol does wonders for you in terms of being able to feel normal in a social setting.” For those with trauma-related difficulty connecting with others, alcohol becomes a substitute for human connection. Tony also describes the “marriage between alcohol and cocaine”—users alternating between substances to counteract each other’s negative effects, creating dangerous “linked or stacked habits” that complicate recovery. “That means a proper recovery plan means you can’t mess with alcohol, because that’s immediately going to lead to cocaine use.”

The consequences extend far beyond the person struggling with addiction. Iris, who has worked with incarcerated women, shares: “I’ve met females serving vehicular homicide sentences, driving drunk and killing somebody on the road. I’ve seen the impact—not just on themselves getting sentenced, but the effect on their kids, because a lot of them are mothers. Their family gets affected a lot of the time by the alcoholism.”

The team’s success lies in their willingness to adapt. “We go out of our way to cater our program to them,” Tony explains. “We’ll ask them, ‘what do you want to learn about?’ And I will bring it to your next group.” This flexibility proved crucial with the Department’s PEACE (Positive Energy Always Creates Elevation) Unit’s 18-to-24-year-olds, who were initially resistant but now actively request programming on relationships and identity. The approach is working.

Despite mandatory attendance requirements for some, volunteers now regularly outnumber required participants. “We have been getting a lot of volunteers,” Iris notes. “These are people willingly signing up for a group that’s not even mandatory. What we’re doing is getting spread across the units.” Grant, after just over a week, has observed residents’ profound gratitude: “At the end of sessions, they’re like, ‘hey, thank you for just being here, having the open ear.’” Kenya emphasizes authentic connection: “They want to know that you can relate. I ask questions to get a better view of what situation they’re in.”

Every Friday, OASIS participants complete “statements of change” after 30 days. “You could tell the ones that really grasped the information and want to do better,” Iris shares. “We’ve heard really deep trauma-based stories that touch your heart.” Tony has witnessed hardened men open up: “These really big, masculine guys—I have a one-on-one conversation, and they start opening up about abuse. The things we talked about made them want to consider therapy, consider a sober lifestyle.” He emphasizes early intervention: “It’s really hard to quit until you hit rock bottom. A lot of what we do is helping people recover from rock bottom, but also asking—how can you turn the wheel of fate around before you get there?” Reed’s philosophy guides the work: “When the student is ready, the teacher shows up.” She acknowledges recidivism happens—“that’s part of recovery”—but maintains hope for each person who walks through their doors.

Spectrum offers multiple programs: the OASIS program focusing on opioid and alcohol addiction; Building Relationships and Recovery addressing relationship dynamics and trauma; Recovery Enhancement for the three building; and Reentry Programming preparing residents for release. All programs are supplemented by Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, creating a comprehensive continuum of care extending to Spectrum’s community-based services after release.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS STRUGGLING WITH ALCOHOL ADDICTION, HELP IS AVAILABLE. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT’S ADDICTION RECOVERY SERVICES, INCLUDING ALCOHOL AWARENESS SESSIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING, AND CO-OCCURRING ADDICTION RECOVERY TREATMENT AT: WWW.SCSODMA.ORG. FOR COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES, VISIT SPECTRUM HEALTH SYSTEMS AT: WWW.SPECTRUMHEALTHSYSTEMS.ORG.

INSIDE THE SCSD'S VIRTUAL COURT DIVISION

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced courthouses across the Commonwealth to temporarily close their doors, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department was already ahead of the curve. Courts were clamoring for a solution to conduct sessions and uphold detainees' right to a speedy trial.

Enter Stacy Brown, Director of Virtual Court Communications and Technology. Before eventually establishing her role in the telecommunications court process, Brown previously served as Assistant Director of Social Services and creator of the Family Matters program. In the Spring of 2017, Brown was tasked by Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins with implementing an innovative vision to reduce the need for transporting detainees to court and to optimize the efficiency and consistency of connecting individuals on trial with their legal teams and courts.

Years before the COVID shutdown and the consequential commonplace of virtual court conferencing, Brown had developed a highly coordinated system for connecting correctional facilities and courts across all fourteen Massachusetts counties. Brown explained, "I was given a desk and a filled storage closet" to transform into multiple operating soundproof booths, holding centers, and private courtrooms. She adapted to the complexities of spotty network service by using her own cellular hotspot. At the time, the court system relied heavily on Polycom, a far more limited program than the systems widely used today. During this phase, only eight Suffolk County courts had embraced the technology and Brown's tireless efforts.

Due to the growing demand of handling more than one-hundred virtual sessions each week, along with the launch of the Massachusetts Trial Court Zoom systems in the spring of 2020, the video conference center's infrastructure had to be expanded and upgraded. To support this, Wi-Fi capabilities were installed throughout the center, allowing for breakout rooms, private attorney-client appointments, and more flexible coordination between courts and correctional facilities.

As virtual court proceedings continued to expand and the need for additional support staff increased, Assistant Clerk Manuel Lopez from the Records Division joined the VC center in September of 2020.



Dorchester District Court

By this point, Brown had already established connections with courts across Massachusetts, working closely with judges, magistrates, and court personnel. A few of the renowned court leaders Brown worked closely with included retired Clerk Magistrate Anthony Owens of the Dorchester Division and Clerk Magistrate Helen White of both the Dorchester and Charlestown Division, both a part of the Boston Municipal Court (BMC) system, with whom Brown maintains a close, professional relationship. A forty-three-year veteran of the Massachusetts Trial Court system, Owens, met Brown in 2017 after she contacted him about an idea to transform court procedure. "I found her to be extremely smart, mission-driven, and incredibly hardworking. When you have that kind of passion, you work differently. It isn't just a nine-to-five job," said Owens.

By leveraging these connections, Brown continued to advocate for the use of video conferencing in court proceedings



Left to right: Clerk Magistrate Helen White of the Charlestown Division of BMC, Superintendent Joseph Smoot, and Stacy Brown at Dorchester District Court.

and, in doing so, strengthened the position of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department as an indispensable partner in criminal justice procedures. Brown explained, "There were courts that originally refused to even try it. Now, many of those courts are some of our strongest partners."



Zoom Court Session with Chelsea District Court, Courtroom 4 at the SCSD's Virtual Court Division center



Left to right: Manuel Lopez, Retired Clerk Magistrate Anthony Owens of the Dorchester Division of the BMC, and Stacy Brown at the HOC.

To understand the significance of Brown’s efforts, it is important to recognize the complex network of professionals and the role correction agencies play to make courtroom operations possible. Within the BMC system, judges preside over hearings and legal decisions, while clerk magistrates and clerks oversee scheduling, case flow, legal filings, and procedural administration. Probation officers and court officers manage supervision and case services, and attorneys mediate between the courts and the defendant or prosecuting party that they represent. Then there’s the administrative court personnel, without which, filings, scheduling, docket movement, notices, and communication can stall. The Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department serves as a critical operational partner within this framework, with correctional staff responsible for maintaining custody, transporting incarcerated individuals, and coordinating court appearances.

In Massachusetts — and particularly within Suffolk County — court proceedings rely on extensive communication between facilities and court personnel, requiring staff to prepare and transmit records, court lists, commitment documents, warrants, attorney notifications, transportation schedules, identification materials, and case-related paperwork to ensure individuals are present and receive due process. Integrating the VC (Virtual Court) Division created a more streamlined pathway for the courts by allowing hearings, attorney consultations, bail reviews, and appearances to occur remotely when appropriate.



Video Court Officers Marquel Wilson and Robert Rodriques taking a HOC resident to his court session in the HOC’s conference center.

With respect to internal processes, the VC Division has reduced transportation costs, enhanced safety precautions, and expanded timely access to justice. Historically, incarcerated individuals were routinely transported back and forth between facilities and courthouses, often spending entire days waiting for brief hearings or continuances. The process required extensive staffing coordination and security measures, was costly and time-consuming, and created stress for residents and delays within the court system. “There were many occasions where individuals were brought to court, sat for hours, and then returned to their facility without anything being resolved.

It wasn’t a good use of anyone’s time,” Shared Owens.

Although some court officials acknowledge the incomparable nature of conducting in-person proceedings for certain cases, such as those involving witness confrontation, the option to meet virtually provides an opportunity for special circumstances where transportation is unfeasible. Brown recalled a recent instance in which a resident’s disabling trauma-induced anxiety prevented them from showing up in-person to their trial. In late 2025, recognizing that the defendant’s mental health concerns posed a threat to their physical safety, the court approved a virtual arrangement, and the Suffolk County House of Correction conducted its first full twelve-person jury trial; an event Brown described as “one of the most significant achievements for the VC Division.” The trial proceeded, and the individual’s wellbeing was ultimately protected. For Brown, moments like this remind her of her purpose in helping to create this Division and what it took to build it: “The option to conduct court virtually was an equalizer, and the pandemic made it all the more important.”

Clerk Magistrate White weighed in on how our program swiftly proved its value: “When COVID hit, it became the perfect program at the perfect time. It allowed courts to continue functioning while still giving people access to justice.” She continued, “People believed that the only proper way for someone to appear in court was in person. But Ms. Brown helped people understand the value and need for this technology. She was instrumental in easing everybody’s concerns.” Owen recalls that “it definitely wasn’t smooth in the beginning, but we kept walking through the process and improving coordination between the courts and the Sheriff’s Department.”



SCSD’s Video Court Division’s Booths at the HOC

Refining efficiency while maintaining fair due process was already a daunting task before adding to it the public health and safety concerns that COVID presented. While many non-custody staff shifted to remote work, Brown and the team remained on-site, regularly pulling extended hours to coordinate hearings, facilitate attorney-client communications, sanitize surfaces and equipment, and balance the time-conflicting schedules of various courts and proceedings during one of the most challenging periods in recent history. Even after COVID's constraints subsided, Brown, Lopez, and the escort officer team still maintain the utmost professionalism and consistent care, continuing sanitization practices, showing up promptly and sharply dressed, managing multiple court deadlines and resident demands, and greeting individuals awaiting trial with the same level of respect as they would their colleagues — all while maintaining an uplifting and eager-to-work attitude.



Clerk Manuel Lopez and Officer Robert Rodriques during video court proceedings.

Beyond Director of Virtual Court Communications and Technology Stacy Brown and Assistant Clerk Manuel Lopez, the current team for the Virtual Court Division is composed of Deputy Robert Rodriques, Officer Marquel Wilson, Officer Xavier Barthelemy, and Officer Enyel Santana, who manage a fast-paced operation equipped with eleven laptops, three iPads, and soundproof booths that allow residents to communicate confidentially with attorneys and participate in court proceedings. Together, the team is responsible for facilitating attorney-client Zoom meetings in all Massachusetts Juvenile Courts, conducting bail reviews for all fourteen county Superior Courts and handling U.S. District Court. The VC Division also supports civil hearings, mental health evaluations, speedy trials, recovery court proceedings, status reviews, plea agreements, Probate Court matters, Drug Court hearings, juvenile cases, and many other court functions.

The success of the VC Division today is all thanks to the trust, seamless communication, and cooperation between the team and court personnel. Every hearing coordinated, every attorney call facilitated, every scheduling issue resolved, and every individual connected to the court system represents years of work and dedication. Now, the Division serves as an essential extension of the courtroom itself, continuing to shape the future of how justice is delivered across Massachusetts. As highlighted by Magistrate White, “We became a full partnership. It showed what can happen when agencies truly work together to help people and improve the system.”

MEET THE TEAM: SPOTLIGHT PROFILES



STACY BROWN, DIRECTOR OF VIRTUAL COURT COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY:

Original founding member of the Chelsea HUB and the Boston HUB. Since Brown joined the Department back in 2015, she has played a major role in developing innovative programs focused on reentry, recovery, and virtual court operations. Throughout her career, she helped to create and implement initiatives within the Department, including: the Family Matters Program, the Recovery Panel, and the Virtual Court Division.

Under the leadership of Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, Brown began developing the Division in 2017, helping expand the program from a limited operation into a statewide system serving courts across Massachusetts. Today, she oversees daily virtual court operations, coordinates with judges, attorneys, probation departments, and court staff, and manages a team that keeps hearings running smoothly.

Brown credits the Division's success to teamwork and leadership support. “Although our team is small, every member of the team is hardworking and selfless,” she said. “I am proud of the work we do and the professionalism we strive for every day.” Adding, “My ability to manage the continued growth of this program is made possible through the strong support and guidance of leadership, especially my supervisor, Major Zezinha Mitchell. She is decisive, supportive, and always quick to help navigate challenges. Her expectations of efficiency, knowledge, and problem-solving inspire confidence in our work, and I know I can always rely on her guidance and support. It has been an honor to work under her supervision.”



ROBERT RODRIQUES - OFFICER:

Deputy Robert Rodriques has served with the Department for fifteen years, working in housing units, the kitchen, and a variety of assignments across the facility. In early 2025, he transitioned into the Virtual Court Division, where he now serves as Deputy Sheriff Lead for Virtual Court operations.

In his role, Rodriques helps oversee daily court schedules, coordinate resident movement, and ensure proceedings run safely. When asked to reflect on his contribution to the Trial Court Division, he emphasized, “Safety is priority here at all times; safety for officers, the clerical staff, and of course, the detainees. If detainees have issues with each other, it’s our job to organize the times that they are brought down to avoid scuffles.” Having witnessed the Virtual Court Division scale up throughout his time in the Department, he continued, “I remember when it first started as one desk, one area.”

Brown describes Rodriques as her “right arm” within the VC Division. “He’s constantly managing moving parts throughout the day. From safety concerns to scheduling logistics, he helps keep everything running smoothly.”



MANUEL LOPEZ - COURT CLERK:

Manuel Lopez has been with the Department for more than thirteen years. He began his career as a custodian before transferring to the Records Department, where he gained extensive experience handling intakes, transfers, and court-related administrative work. In late 2020, he joined the Virtual Court Division as a Court Clerk.

Today, Lopez plays a critical role in coordinating court paperwork, verifying housing locations, managing daily court lists, and communicating directly with courts regarding resident availability and scheduling updates. His professionalism and attention to detail help ensure that court proceedings remain accurate and organized throughout the day.

Brown described Lopez as a vital part of the operation. “Manny makes sure everything is accurate before court starts,” she said. “Mr. Lopez is constantly checking movements, housing changes, and updates to make sure the courts have the correct information. He has been an exceptional addition to the professionalism and decorum of this Department.”



MARQUEL WILSON - OFFICER:

Officer Marquel Wilson joined the Department in 2018 after previously working with individuals with autism in a school setting through Bridgewell.

After working various housing units and overnight shifts within the Department, he became involved with the Virtual Court Division, where he now assists as an escort officer.

Wilson helps transport residents safely to and from virtual court sessions, maintains courtroom order, and assists individuals experiencing stress or medical concerns during proceedings. He praised the teamwork within the Division, describing it as “a strong bond where everybody has each other’s backs.”

Brown commended Wilson for stepping in to support the Division during staffing shortages. “Wilson has been a great addition to the team,” she said. “He communicates extremely well with residents and understands the seriousness and responsibility of this work.”



ENYEL SANTANA - OFFICER:

Officer Enyel Santana has served with the Department for more than three years. After working in housing units and later in the Booking Division, he transitioned into the Virtual Court Division in early 2026 as one of the division’s dedicated escort officers.

His responsibilities include safely escorting residents to and from virtual court proceedings while coordinating with staff to ensure scheduling, movement, and safety precautions are upheld. Santana described the Division as a strong and supportive team environment, stating that “the chemistry and communication between the team makes the job easier.”

One of Santana’s proudest moments came from hearing Brown praise the operation, saying, “This is how I wanted my division to be run—with a good team.”



XAVIER BARTHELEMY - OFFICER:

Officer Xavier Barthelemy is a recent addition to the Virtual Court Division, having joined in January of 2026. As a Video Court Escort, Barthelemy assists with the safe movement and coordination of residents participating in virtual court proceedings. Within a given day, Barthelemy and the team can expect to transport a significant range of individuals, “between 10 and 30. When it’s really busy, we surpass that.”

He brings five years of experience across various posts within the Suffolk County House of Correction.

“It was comfortable for me. I’m used to working in a fast-paced environment,” said Barthelemy, reflecting on his transition into the role of Video Court Escort Officer. Bringing vigilance and a willingness to learn, it’s his team mentality that’s proven to be his key to success within the Division.

MEET OUR MASS TRIAL COURT PARTNERS:



Suffolk Superior Court

On April 1, 2026, Stacy Brown visited the Dorchester District Court and Suffolk Superior Court, marking a long-awaited milestone in the history of our Virtual Court Division. During the visit, Brown met face-to-face for the first time with judges, assistant clerks, and assistant clerk magistrates who had worked closely with her and the Division for nearly nine years through daily virtual coordination, yet had never officially met in person.

“All the work that we’ve done daily with the court has been through texts, emails, and phone calls,” Brown reflected. “We knew each other’s voices and built those relationships over time.

Retired Magistrate Owens explained: “It naturally worked so well that we didn’t necessarily always need to sit across the room from one another,” with Brown adding that the shared communication allowed both sides “to work out the kinks” and continuously improve the process together.



Left to right: 1st Justice Jonathan Tynes of the Dorchester Division of BMC and Stacy Brown.



1st Assistant Clerk Magistrate for Criminal Business Edward J Curley

Thoughts From Our Partners Within The Court System: For the First Assistant Clerk Magistrate for Criminal Business, Edward J Curley, the impact of virtual court sessions is impossible to overlook. A veteran of the justice system with nearly twenty-five years of experience, Curley described video conferencing as a tool that has made court operations more methodical. Curley notes that this technology has become especially valuable in busy courthouses, where safety concerns, gang-related keep-separate orders, and logistical challenges are part of daily operations. He points out that communication between court personnel and our Department is outstanding, stating, “Things are happening in real time, allowing issues to be resolved quickly and efficiently.”

He commends the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department for its statewide responsiveness and ability to expedite cases, highlighting that, “We don’t have people waiting a long time to get those warrants taken care of — they’re actually able to get it done.”



Zoom court session at the Suffolk Superior Court



Left to right: Assistant Clerk Magistrate for Criminal Business Joanne Jacquet Araujo of the Suffolk Superior Court and Judge Mary Ames at the Suffolk Superior Court.

That same appreciation was echoed by Judge Mary Ames, who called the Virtual Court Division “absolutely crucial” to the work of the homicide sessions at Suffolk Superior Court. She pointed out that before Zoom proceedings were introduced, a large number of incarcerated individuals were brought into court every week: “We’re not really structured to have an additional thirty or forty people charged with murder coming into the courthouse every day.” Judge Ames shared, referring to the safety concerns and emotional strain for victims’ families, defendants, and court personnel alike. “It’s been a win-win situation,” Judge Ames added. “It helps keep everybody safe, makes the courtroom safer, and allows us to conduct our business in a far more organized manner.” Referring directly to Stacy Brown, she remarked, “You really do the job flawlessly.”

Assistant Clerk Magistrate for Criminal Business Joanne Jacquet Araujo also reflected on the evolution of the system since the early days of the pandemic, when staff had to improvise with speakerphones and conference calls to keep proceedings on track. “I was among the first group of people to work during the COVID shutdown. I would use my cellphone to call a prosecutor, then merge the call with the defense attorney. I held my phone to the microphone so that the judge could hear what both parties were saying, and the defendant could listen through the Polycom system.”

Special Thanks To All of Our Court Partners:

The Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department is deeply honored and grateful for its longstanding partnership with the Massachusetts Trial Court and for the trust placed in our Virtual Court Division throughout the years. What began as an innovative initiative has continued to grow into an essential every-day service, all thanks to the relationships that have been strengthened through the leadership and dedication of Stacy Brown and the many court personnel who have supported the Division since its inception.



Left to right: Assistant Clerk James Oliver, Assistant Clerk Magistrate of Criminal Business James Pardi, Stacy Brown and Judge Sarah Ellis



DEPARTMENT SWEARS-IN 22 NEW OFFICERS AT GRADUATION CEREMONY



SCSD's Honor Guard

On May 1, 2026, family, friends, Department leadership, and staff gathered at Casa Lucia in Revere, Massachusetts, to celebrate the graduation of the Suffolk

County Sheriff's Department Correction Officer Training Academy (COTA) Class 26-01. The ceremony marked the successful completion of an intensive academy experience and recognized the discipline, compassion, and perseverance required to join the Department's ranks.

Throughout the proceedings, the keynote speaker, Special Sheriff Mark Lawhorne, acknowledged the heightened awareness for continued care that new classes have been especially asked to shoulder. To don the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department badge is a heavy responsibility, as much as it is a feat and an honor.



Left to right: Officer Santino Anetrella and Special Sheriff Mark Lawhorne

Lieutenant Nicholas LoPriore, who serves as head of the Training Division, reminds the new recruits to take pride in their achievements. "Academies are not easy. It takes a lot of dedication... They probably took a lot of time away from their families, and they're exhausted when they get home. We're running them at six o'clock in the morning, classes all day, then [physical training], and then they have to go home and manage their life." He continued, "It's not easy what they just went through, and they should be very proud of the effort they put in."



Lieutenant Nicholas LoPriore opening the ceremony with a speech

The event concluded with the presentation of Academy honors and awards, recognizing exceptional performance and achievement throughout training, including Officer Johann Gaston for both the Drill Instructor's Award and Physical Training Award, Officer Clive Sylvain for the Academic Award, Officer Johnny Rodriguez for the Defensive Tactics Award, and Officer Steve Sanz for the Unit Citation. Class 26-01 President and two-time award recipient, Officer Johann

Gaston, remarked on her experience on the day: "It feels really good seeing my classmates not quitting and making it to the finish line, [to see] them with me."

As COTA Class 26-01 transitions from recruits to correction professionals, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department congratulates these graduates and looks forward to the dedication and service they will bring to the Department and the communities we serve.

Please welcome the twenty-two graduates of the COTA Class 26-01: Munir Ahmed, Santino Anetrella, Davidson Beauvais, Adrian Berenguer, Robert Brooks, Andrew Calvagno, Nikendy Desarmes, Syndie Dorvil, Catheline Fils-Aime, Johann Gaston, Max Handerson, Jakeem Hypolite, Edhere Joanis, Matthew MacLeod, Elympse Octavius, Emmanuel Remeus, Sajous Richmond, Johnny Rodriguez, Steve Sanz, Matthew Severe, Clive Sylvain, and Jason Tejada.



COTA 26-01 during the Correctional Officer's Oath of Office conducted by Special Sheriff Lawhorne.

NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES WEEK:

A WEEK OF CELEBRATION & RECOGNITION

In May, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department proudly observed National Correctional Officers and Employees Week with a series of events celebrating the commitment, professionalism, and service of the men and women who keep our Department operating each day. The week is an important opportunity to pause and acknowledge the dedication of correctional officers and employees across all divisions, whose work is essential to the safety and functioning of our facilities and community.

The work performed by correctional professionals and Department staff is demanding, often requiring long hours, resilience, and a commitment that can go unseen by many outside these walls. It can at times be a thankless profession, but the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recognizes and deeply values the dedication our employees show every day. We see the work, the sacrifices, and the continued commitment to serving both our residents and the people of Suffolk County, and for that, we offer our sincere gratitude.

Suffolk County Special Sheriff Mark Lawhorne:

"Today, we stand at a time when this profession has been tested. When headlines and scrutiny have cast a shadow over the work that so many of you do the right way, it's moments like this that remind us of the truth. This profession is not defined by its worst moments. It is defined by the character of those who show up and do the job with integrity."

Suffolk County House of Correction Superintendent Michael Lally:

"Your commitment to maintaining safety, supporting one another, and upholding the highest standards make a meaningful difference every day."

Suffolk County Jail Superintendent Jose Mojica:

"I am proud to work alongside you, and I thank you for your exceptional commitment to our profession."



Wreath Laying Ceremony Tradition

Department leadership continued the tradition of honoring the careers and remembering the lives of staff members through the Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony held at both facilities.





Raffles and Staff Celebrations:

Raffle games and basket giveaways added to the week's festivities. Congratulations to all winners!

-Suffolk County House of Correction: Jessica Padilla and Winston Ramirez

-Suffolk County Jail: Officer Olivio Baptista and Officer Robert Pace



Annual Suffolk County Jail Staff BBQ Cookout

With grills fired up and staff gathered together, the Suffolk County Jail hosted its annual cookout, complete with music and basket raffle winners. Our officers manned the grills, while Superintendent office staff joined together to serve employees and help create a day of fellowship across divisions.



Local 419 BBQ Luncheon Finale

Local 419 helped close out the week with a BBQ luncheon honoring Suffolk County House of Correction staff and their continued service.



T-Shirt Giveaway and Photo Booth Moments:

Staff captured photo booth memories during the T-shirt giveaway held as a token of appreciation.



Teamsters Local 25 Appreciation Meal

Teamsters Local 25 helped celebrate the week by bringing food trucks and providing an Italian meal for staff at the Suffolk County Jail.



Officers of the Year Recognition – Suffolk County Jail

Suffolk County Jail Officers of the Year — Officer Erin Donahue, Lieutenant Brittany Carroll, and Sergeant Zachary Miller and K-9 Jak — were recognized for their professionalism and dedication.

Officers of the Year Recognition – House of Correction

Suffolk County House of Correction Officers of the Year — Officer Mark Loud, Officer David Markowski, and Officer Joy Ezike — were presented with their award certificate for going above and beyond in their line of duty.

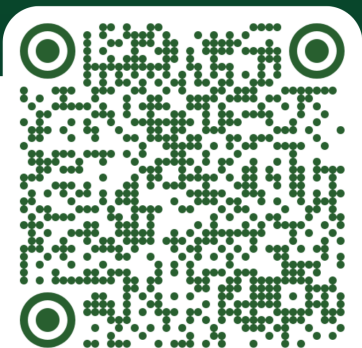


SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS &
THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



Observe & Support
**NATIONAL
MENTAL
HEALTH
AWARENESS
MONTH**

MAY 2026 | #WeAreSCSD | www.SCSDMA.org



SCAN ME

Anxiety Disorders

Depression / MDD

ADHD

Trauma / PTSD

Alcohol Use Disorder

Personality Disorder

Drug Withdrawal