



OMBUDSMAN UPDATE

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FROM THE OMBUDSMAN

By Lauren “Laurie” Andersen, MM, RN, CEN, CCRN

Winter has arrived! It is cold and blustery with some snow mixed in. The season of winter has short days and gray skies. It is a mixture of beautiful white snow and long, dark, gray days and nights! Do you like winter? The shortest day of the year is December 21st, the Winter Solstice! Now each day is a bit longer with more hours of sun and light! Stay warm and keep your spirits up with activity and learning!

“Maybe you have to know the darkness before you can appreciate the light.” - Madeleine L’Engle.

The other challenge in the winter is respiratory illness. The flu season is upon us, with respiratory illnesses, including Flu, Covid-19, and RSV everywhere. Please remember to use excellent handwashing, covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and resting when you don’t feel well. Drinking a lot of water helps to keep your system working well too! Please see Health Services if you do not feel well or if you have a fever.

We want you to have a healthy, busy winter!

Sincerely,

Laurie Andersen



REFLECTIONS

““The mind and body are not separate. What affects one, affects the other.” – **Unknown**



UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Snow and Ice and Everything Nice!

Happy New Year! 2026 has arrived!

New England winters are a little different every year! This one seems to be beginning as a cold and snowy edition. The child in each of us enjoys snow for building snowmen, making angels, and sledding. All these activities require warm clothes and protection for your hands. Snow is fun!

This time of year might be a good time for letters to your loved ones, write a story, or taking programming to self-improve while you are serving your time in prison. You could use your tablets to learn new things or ask to be part of a group meeting for shared learning.

Seasonal Mental Health Needs:

Winter can be a common time of year to feel down or upset.

If you or anyone you know are feeling sad or depressed, please speak to someone from mental health support! They are here for you and to help you to understand your feelings and frustrations. The strongest people are the ones that seek assistance when they need it!

Contacts with the Office of the Ombudsman:

We appreciate when you reach out to the Office of the Ombudsman through our phone number **(833-662-8410)** or email system. We receive all calls and contacts. Please know that we follow up with facility leadership with your concerns and ideas. If you ask us not to share your name, **we do not!** We do share your concerns and questions to help find solutions to your challenges. We are here to support your wellness and will do all we can to have facility resources address your concerns.

Please be advised that the Corrlinks system is not set up for us to respond personally to your emails. What we will always do is forward your concern to the appropriate people at the DOC or VitalCore.

Wellness:

The Office is invested in the wellness of everyone within the DOC. Our goal is to offer support and share ideas that can enhance the well-being of all incarcerated individuals.

Your investment in your own health, as well as the health of those around you, plays a key role in building a better, more positive community. The Office is here to support you in your wellness journey and appreciates your collaboration in finding ways to improve it.

ABOUT US:



Office of the Ombudsman
Independent Health & Wellness
Advisor to Corrections

The mission of the Office is to promote a healthy environment for everyone living or working in DOC facilities. Initially responsible for monitoring and reporting on the DOC's COVID-19 mitigation efforts, the role of the Office has since expanded. Post-pandemic, the Office advises the DOC on infection control and wellness initiatives by developing comprehensive health and wellness programs, along with training and education initiatives. In collaboration with the DOC, we implement these programs to positively influence the DOC's culture and environment for the benefit of all.

GET IN TOUCH:



Website: <https://ombudsman-madoc.org>

Free Call: 1-833-662-8410

Inquiries can be submitted anonymously through the website. If you choose to provide your contact information when filling out the web form, we will make every effort to respond within two business days. We look forward to addressing your infection control and wellness-related questions, concerns, and inquiries.

You may also submit your inquiries or suggestions via our telephone number. Infection control and wellness-related inquiries can be left anonymously. If you would like a response, please be sure to leave your contact information as instructed on the voicemail.