

Supervision of Sex Offenders is a high priority for the Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS) both from a public safety perspective and a treatment perspective. MPS supervises approximately 1,400 sex offenders across the Commonwealth daily. We have several evidence-based, well established models that vary by local resources and supervision/treatment partners. A critical challenge for MPS is sufficiency of resources. Sufficient probation officer staffing, access to certified treatment and other ancillary resources are a challenge across the system. Increasingly, treatment, although provided by certified sex offender treatment providers, is court based. This allows for drug testing, probation officer contact and support on collateral issues with each offender. The common theme among the various models is a multi-dimensional or wraparound approach. As a part of this approach MPS acts as the hub coordinating the wraparound of services, treatment, support, information sharing and accountability combined with active engagement of the client that is the key to both safety and change with this population. Supervision plans, although adhering to these general principles, are individualized based on the nature of the behaviors associated with an offender's specific conduct and history, specific identified risks, overall risk level and current life circumstance.

Two models were presented to illustrate the approaches that are mirrored in many of the 101 Probation Offices across the state. The two highlighted presentations were:

### **Worcester Superior Court**

*The Worcester Superior Court Probation Office's Intensive Sex Offender Supervision Program is made up of two components. Intensive treatment, the first component, consists of a probationer reporting to the probation office to partake in in-office sex offender treatment delivered by certified providers. The treatment is built on evidence-based principles of effective intervention and includes polygraph testing and Transition to Community groups. Intensive supervision and surveillance, the second component, consists of a collaboration with the Worcester Police Department. Probation officers, joined by Worcester Police Department officers, conduct frequent visits to the homes of sex offenders on probation at Worcester Superior Court. The home visit collaboration with the Worcester Police Department, which predates the Worcester Superior Court Probation Office's Intensive Sex Offender Supervision Program, has resulted in 1,350 joint probation-police visits to the homes of sex offenders since 2010. These home visits are in addition to traditional probation officer home visits. Since the Intensive Sex Offender Supervision Program's inception in 2012 there have been 63 participants. The program has resulted in a sex-offense specific recidivism rate of approximately 3% and an overall recidivism rate of approximately 11%.*

### **Dudley District Court**

*The Dudley District Court Probation Office's Sex Offender Containment Program is a collaboration between multiple criminal justice agencies including six local police departments, the Massachusetts State Police, District Attorney Early and the Dudley District Court Probation Office. The Sex Offender Containment Program, made up of Dudley District Court probationers involved with a sexual offense, takes a victim centered philosophy and includes intensive*

*community supervision, risk assessment, mandatory sex offender treatment, GPS monitoring, restriction of travel patterns and practices specifically designed to limit aspects of privacy and access to victims. Over the past 10 years, the Sex Offender Containment Program has consisted of approximately 115 probationers and has resulted in a sex-offense specific recidivism rate of less than 1% (one new sexual related arraignment) and an overall recidivism rate of approximately 9%.*

Currently, probation officers throughout the Commonwealth are required to have a minimum of two face-to-face contacts with sex offenders placed on risk/need probation per month (30 calendar days). At least one of these contacts every two months is mandated to be a home visit for the duration of the court ordered term of probation. Additionally, this group of probationers is required to provide verification of address and income every 14 days over the course of their probation supervision. Probation officers are required to refer this group of probationers to court ordered programming during their first face-to-face contact as well.

In the future, MPS would like to select and implement a validated, sex offender specific risk/needs assessment to supplement the general risk/needs assessment, the Ohio Risk Assessment System-Community Supervision Tool (ORAS-CST), already being used by probation offices across the state. To support such a sex offender specific assessment, MPS would also like to develop and implement supervisory protocols for specific typologies of sex offenders grounded in evidence-based practices.