



Office of the Ombudsman

Independent COVID-19 Oversight to
MA Department of Correction



What is an Ombudsman?

An Ombudsman works to protect individuals' rights and freedoms by independent supervision.

What does the COVID-19 Office of the Ombudsman do?

The Office of the Ombudsman independently monitors and reports on the Massachusetts Department of Correction's (DOC) efforts to limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) in the DOC's facilities across the state.

How will the Office of the Ombudsman work?

The Office aims to protect the health and safety of DOC employees, inmates, and their families. The Office will work independently of the DOC to inspect and monitor the DOC's compliance with public health standards. This will make sure that the DOC is doing everything possible to limit COVID-19 in its facilities.

How will the Office of the Ombudsman monitor the DOC?

The Office will create a set of public health standards (Standards) using best practices and guidance from public health experts. These Standards will be used to check the DOC's efforts to lower COVID-19 virus rates in DOC facilities.

Who will the Office of the Ombudsman report to?

The Office of the Ombudsman is **NOT** a part of the DOC. As an independent team, the Office will report on the DOC's COVID-19 work to limit the spread of COVID-19 to the Massachusetts Legislature's *Joint Committee on the Judiciary and Joint Committee on Public Health*.

Who makes up the Office of the Ombudsman staff?

The Office includes a director/ombudsman, two (2) regional administrators, an administrative coordinator, and a business intelligence analyst. They work together to fulfill the duties of the Ombudsman. In addition, the Office gets help from UMass Chan Medical School advisors who have expertise in correctional health care, infection prevention, and business intelligence.

What are the main duties of the Office of the Ombudsman?

- Meeting and talking with DOC employees, inmates, and their families;
- Looking into complaints and answering questions about COVID-19;
- Watching how changes in public health standards can affect the Standards created by the Office;
- Doing audits and DOC site reviews to check COVID-19 compliance; and
- Giving reports to the *Joint Committee on the Judiciary and the Joint Committee on Public Health* every other week and recommendations, if asked.



How can I contact the Office of the Ombudsman?

Email them at ombudsman@umassmed.edu. You can also send in a question or an anonymous inquiry through the website: <https://covidombudsman-madoc.org> or call 833-662-8410.

