

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **New Roadmap for Reentry: Emerge Technology-Driven CDL Program Equips Incarcerated Individuals for In-Demand Careers**

The Hampden County Sheriff's Office will host a **Celebration Event** highlighting the achievements of participants in the Emerge Tech-driven CDL Training Program on **Monday, June 2, 2025, at 10 a.m. at the All-Inclusive Support Services (AISS) facility in Springfield.** This milestone event will honor the progress of justice-involved individuals who have advanced through their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training as part of a groundbreaking reentry initiative designed to bridge the gap between incarceration and meaningful employment.

**Sheriff Nick Cocchi, founders of the reentry and workforce development company Emerge Career, regional elected officials, Commonwealth Corporation, and Sheriff's Office staff** will attend to recognize the graduates' achievements and spotlight the transformational power of second chances.

The Emerge CDL program stands out as one of the few in the nation that provides incarcerated individuals with fully accredited commercial driving instruction while still in custody, preparing them to step directly into jobs upon release. Participants often secure employment offers with starting salaries between **\$65,000 and \$85,000** annually—sometimes higher—due to the demand for licensed CDL drivers in logistics, delivery, and construction industries.

***"The Emerge Tech-based CDL Program is proof that when you invest in people and believe in second chances, the results are transformative—not just for the individuals, but for our entire community. These graduates are leaving with more than a license—they're leaving with purpose, opportunity, and a path to long-term success," said Sheriff Nick Cocchi. "When someone walks out of our care and custody with the skills and certification to earn a solid, honest living—often upwards of \$70,000 a year—it fundamentally changes the trajectory of their life. It breaks the cycle of incarceration by replacing desperation with stability and pride. That's how you reduce recidivism. That's how you build safer, stronger communities."***



Since its inception, Emerge has graduated **more than 200 individuals** across several states, with over **94% gaining employment within 90 days of completion**. This program reduces recidivism, strengthens families, and fills critical labor shortages, thanks to public-private partnerships.

***“This partnership, funded by Governor Maura Healey’s Commonwealth Corporation, is about harnessing innovation and collaboration to deliver real second chances for our justice-involved citizens. One in three Massachusetts residents has a criminal record. Even after fulfilling their legal obligations, they continue to face steep barriers to employment and economic opportunity—barriers that cost the state hundreds of millions in lost productivity and wages annually.***

***The Emerge model demonstrates how AI- and software-powered vocational training, paired with supportive coaching, transparent processes, and direct job placements, can transform lives and build sustainable careers at scale.***

***Emerge Career’s AI-powered workforce development model is not just a response to today’s challenges—it’s a blueprint for the future of effective, scalable, and outcome-driven reentry and workforce systems,”*** said Zo Orchingwa, co-founder of Emerge Career.

**WHAT:** Emerge Career Technology-Driven CDL Program Celebration Ceremony

**WHEN:** Monday, June 2, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** All-Inclusive Support Services (AISS), Springfield, MA

**WHO:** Sheriff Nick Cocchi, Emerge program founders, elected officials, graduating CDL trainees

Media are invited to attend. Interview opportunities will be available with graduates, program participants and coordinators, and public officials.

**Media Contact:**

Robert Rizzuto

413-858-0022

[robert.rizzuto@SDH.state.ma.us](mailto:robert.rizzuto@SDH.state.ma.us)