



Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi to Honor Correctional Officers at CO Week Ceremony

LUDLOW – At a time when correctional professionals across Massachusetts are being asked to do more with less, the Hampden County Sheriff’s Office will recognize the dedication, courage, and lifesaving work of its staff during its 2026 National Correctional Officers Week Main Ceremony on **Thursday at 10 a.m.**

The ceremony will take place at the Sheriff’s Office Main Institution, 627 Randall Road in Ludlow, and will serve as the capstone to a weeklong observance honoring the men and women who work on the front lines of public safety and rehabilitation across Hampden County.

Throughout the week, Sheriff Nick Cocchi and his administration have visited facilities across the region to thank staff for their service. Thursday’s ceremony will spotlight officers whose actions went far beyond the call of duty — including eight staff members receiving **Level One Commendations** for responding to life-threatening emergencies both on and off duty.

Among those being recognized:

- **Melissa Hughes, Elizabeth Davis, and Marisol Arzola** for reviving an unresponsive man suffering a suspected opioid overdose in Holyoke through coordinated Narcan administration and CPR.
- **Corporal Joshua Bartlett** for assisting in the apprehension of a fleeing suspect following a court transport in Lowell.
- **Officers Seth Kozlik and Bianca Ortiz-Cordero** for extinguishing a tractor-trailer fire at the MassPike Ludlow Service Plaza before it could spread.
- **Sergeant Thomas Capobianco** for performing CPR and helping save a man’s life while off duty.
- **Officer Aiden Perry** for successfully performing the Heimlich maneuver on a choking inmate during a routine housing unit check.

“These are the moments people don’t see,” said Sheriff Cocchi. “In an environment that demands constant vigilance and professionalism — especially during challenging times

— our staff continue to rise to the occasion and save lives. This week is about recognizing that commitment.”

The ceremony will also include presentation of the department’s highest honors, including the **Edward P. Boland Challenge of Corrections Award, Thomas V. Brosnan Enduring Warrior Award, Major Mike Dodson Award, William M. Curley Excellence in Security Award, Toni Atmore Leadership Award, and the Champion of Change Award.**

National Correctional Officers Week was established in 1984 by Ronald Reagan to recognize the vital — and often overlooked — role correctional professionals play in maintaining public safety while supporting rehabilitation.