

Questionnaire for 2016 Mass. candidates for sheriff

Candidate: Please answer these questions in whatever format is most convenient for you. You can insert your answers in this document electronically and e-mail it back to Lois Ahrens at lois@realcostofprisons.org OR you can mail a hard copy to Lois Ahrens, 5 Warfield Place, Northampton, MA 01060. However, please note that on page 3, we ask you to **sign and date** your responses to ensure their authenticity. If you respond to the questionnaire by e-mail, please either 1) scan the signature page and e-mail it to us, or 2) send a hard copy by mail. Finally, **please respond by August 3, 2016.**

1. What is your corrections philosophy?

People are sent to us “as punishment, not for punishment” to quote Sheriff Robert J. Garvey.

Our mission is to help those that are sent by the Criminal Justice System to develop skills to live in harmony with free society. Stepping clients through a process where they can end back in the community.

I believe we should continue life skills training, addiction control practices, anger management and education/vocational education training to prepare individuals for re-entry to society.

2. What are your qualifications for being sheriff of your county?

I love my job. When I started in the department I did not realize how many lives I may touch along the way. I have worked in many parts of the department within this agency over my career and understand how the pieces have to work together to get the job done.

I have the training and education required in managing the facility. Over thirty years’ experience in corrections dedicated to this facility in managing people safely and humanely. I am the only American Jail Association Certified Jail Manager in Western Massachusetts. I believe in a treatment philosophy which is in line with the philosophy of most people in Hampshire County. “Re-enter people into society hopefully better than how they came to the facility.” I have been committed to this philosophy and the goals of this department for over thirty years.

I have worked with legislature and their staff addressing budget issues. I have written grants for public safety projects. I have audited facilities in other states to broaden my correctional knowledge and experience. I believe in community partnerships to help more clients return back to society safely with the goals of continued freedom.

I am an educator at Westfield State University part time where I keep connections with the next generation of employees entering the workforce.

I am committed to making every effort to run good rehabilitation programs to ensure public safety. I will continue my hard work to ensure employees and clients have a healthy and safe environment to work and live in.

3. *[For candidates other than current sheriff]* What policies of the former/current sheriff would you change and why?

I have no specific policy changes at the present, but I will be including staff in possible changes moving forward. The present policies are based on sound correctional and community principles. They are based on the American Correctional Association standards and the Massachusetts Code of Regulations. Any policy changes will follow these standards.

4. What are your views on building a new county House of Correction (HOC) or jail? Expanding the existing HOC or jail?

The present philosophy of moving people to community based programs makes sense for those who can be classified to such programs.

I am opposed to prison expansion but I have to continue to pursue upgrading the present facility.

This facility is home to over 200 clients and those who work there. Therefore, like our own homes, we have to upgrade to prevent it from becoming unhealthy and unsafe.

If the opportunity comes for the expansion of Pre-release Programming in the interest of the community at large, I would consider this type of program. This flows with the philosophy of easing clients back into the community.

5. Your views on transparency: If elected/re-elected, will you issue annual reports that include information on public accreditation findings, Prison Rape Elimination Act audits, suicides and lawsuits against the sheriff's department (whether filed by prisoners, employees, attorneys or family members)?

Audits of facilities in Massachusetts are public documents and are the property of the auditing agency.

Prison Rape Elimination Act Audits are required to be placed on the Sheriff's Department web site.

We can produce an annual report but would not be able to comment on ongoing litigation.

6. Impact of legislation or statewide administrative policies:

- a. Do you support legislation or policy changes that could result in fewer people sentenced to incarceration at your county HOC? If so, please give examples.

I favor treatment for mentally-ill, drug addicts and all nonviolent offenders in the least restrictive environment that meets their needs and protects the community.

- b. Do you support legislation or policy changes that could result in fewer people held pre-trial at your county jail? If so, please give examples.

Pre-trial detainees should only be held if they are dangerous or a flight risk. I would favor legislation that allows sheriffs to decide which restrictions are necessary for detainees and possibly allow them day passes to work, visit family, attend support groups, 12 step programs.

- c. Do you support legislation or policy changes that could result in more people sentenced to incarceration at your county HOC? If so, please give examples.

No.

- d. Do you support legislation or policy changes that could result in more people held pre-trial at your county jail? If so, please give examples.

No.

7. For people who have not been convicted of any offense, do you think it is appropriate to lock them up for drug or alcohol treatment at a county HOC, instead of being sent to a community-based healthcare facility? Why or why not?

No. This is a societal problem. There is a need for more regionally located treatment facilities.

8. Your views on the basics of incarceration:

- a. How do you think pre-trial and sentenced prisoners should primarily spend their time?

Pre-trial detainees should have input into how they spend their time and such decisions should be honored when possible. For clients, I think how they spend their time should be directed towards recovery and education programs based on their abilities.

- b. What educational opportunities currently exist at your county HOC? At the jail? Are there waiting lists to participate? Do you support increasing or decreasing those opportunities?

At the House of Corrections: All levels of education are offered from remedial learning, special education to Hi-Set. We also offer courses from Amherst College's "Inside out" program.

Minimum security clients have the opportunity to attend some community college programming if they meet the criteria for admission.

Pre-Trial inmates have the opportunity for some educational programming based on their testing level.

Educational and vocational training opportunities should be an essential component of incarceration. From Day 1 of sentence, the client should be preparing for post-release employment. The job sought should be based on length of sentence, client choice, skills, aptitude and market need. I believe any client upon release should be offered tuition-remission enrollment at public community colleges or vocational schools if they can meet enrollment criteria. There should be a formula based on length of sentence. All information points out that the higher the education level the less likely you are to be incarcerated.

- c. What employment/job training opportunities exist at your county HOC? At the jail? Are there waiting lists to participate? Do you support increasing or decreasing those opportunities?

Vocational Programming- Woodwork, Caning, OSHA, Certification of Culinary arts and serve safe certification. Yes to increasing these programs. I would like to expand a tutoring program using community volunteers – particularly retired senior citizens. Example: If client wants to be an auto mechanic, house painter, furniture maker we should provide such training by a community member with such experience.

- d. What mental health/substance use disorder services exist at your county HOC? At the jail? Are there waiting lists to participate? Do you support increasing or decreasing those services?

All clients pre-trial and sentenced have access to mental health services based on their individual needs. There is a full time clinician based at the facility as well as mental health trained staff to address needs on an ongoing basis.

- e. What personal growth programs (parenting, anti-violence, etc.) exist at your county HOC? At the jail? Are there waiting lists to participate? Do you support increasing or decreasing these opportunities?

I favor introducing meditation into HOC and scheduling two 20 minute periods a day for meditation, prayer, yoga, reflection, reading, etc. for everyone- all could participate in such a program.

9. What are your views on isolating prisoners (sometimes called solitary confinement) as punishment for violating HOC/jail rules?

I do not favor involuntary separation of clients as punishment but this is a secure facility where sometimes issues escalate. Client violence can occur in such facilities. It is necessary sometimes to have people take a "time out" when they create a disturbance that endangers the safety of staff or others that have to exist together in the facility. It needs to be used as a last resort.

Staff are trained on de-escalation techniques to calm situations.

Most staff would tell you it is easier to manage people if they work together and get along with each other.

10. Your views on re-entry and recidivism:

We start this process on Day One. Case managers are assigned to develop a written plan for a client's success if/when the choice is to move to re-entry. Clients should be helped to understand our joint goal is to serve time preparing for post-release. This means having desire to remain free; to choose self-control and discipline to remain free; to learn skills and plans for combating addiction, anger, depression, disappointment and possessing the motive, skill, education etc to find and keep a job.

I want to convey to clients that their period of incarceration is an opportunity for change.

- a. If elected/re-elected, how would you ensure that prisoners leaving your county HOC have the best chance for successfully returning to their communities?
- a. I will continue what was started with our Bridge to the Future House which moves clients from our Minimum Security Facility to a home that we started running in the community 18 months ago. We have a place where the client can start to plan for life after incarceration under supervision. Bridge to the Future clients are required to find employment with our assistance and expected to become involved in community based programming (A.A./N.A./Anger Management etc., and have to find a sponsor who will assist in determining and maintaining the right track for a successful re-entry.
- b. What is the current rate of recidivism for prisoners leaving your county HOC? What would you do to reduce that rate?

- c. Our rate of recidivism is 19% for those who successfully complete all phases of our program including the Bridge to the Future. The overall rate fluctuates around 25% due to client choices to not participate in programming.

11. Your views on incarcerated women:

Hampshire County does not hold incarcerated women.

- a. Should gender-specific medical care and education be provided?

Yes.

- b. Should women be forced to buy their own feminine hygiene products or should the HOC/jail provide them?

Feminine hygiene products should be provided.

- c. Should the HOC/jail promote or facilitate meaningful contact with a woman's children? If so, how?

Yes. Institutions should have visitors' playroom with toys and library with kids' books and recreational area and programs to play with kids. Music room too. And these should be also available in male institutions.

12. Your views on pregnant/post-partum women prisoners:

- a. Are you familiar with the 2014 legislation on pregnant and post-partum prisoners (M.G.L. chapter 127, section 118)?

Yes. I fully support M.G.L. Ch 127 S118.

- b. Is your county HOC/jail in compliance with that law?

Yes. We have no women clients.

- c. Do you support House bill, H.3679, "An Act to Ensure Compliance with the Anti-Shackling Law for Pregnant Incarcerated Women"?

Yes

13. What are your views on videotaping strip searches of prisoners?

Video strip searching is not required and not necessary if searches are performed correctly by properly trained staff.

I support the reforms mandated by the courts.

14. If you are now or were previously employed as a corrections or law enforcement officer, has a complaint or lawsuit ever been filed against you for excessive force, a civil rights violation, discrimination, or abuse of your authority? If so, please provide details and the outcome of the complaint/lawsuit.

As the Assistant Superintendent of the Hampshire County Jail and House of Corrections for 14 years, I have been named in several lawsuits regarding claims of violation of civil rights. Those who filed the suits were bringing claims of some type of negligent treatment or failure to protect them from other inmates. All those cases were dismissed against me and the facility.

There was one Class Action Lawsuit that named me as a defendant - this was a strip search lawsuit. Our policy was not in line with the decisions from the 1st Circuit Federal Court. We revised our policies to bring us into compliance with the court.

Thank you for participating in our candidate's questionnaire!

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AUTHORIZATION

This signature attests that the above questionnaire answers accurately represent the views of the candidate. I would request that full statements of all the candidates be used and made available to the public so that no meaning is lost in the translation of these documents.

Patrick J. Cahillane
Candidate's Signature

8-3-2016
Date

Candidate's name: print or type: PATRICK J. CAHILLANE

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