

# **Training and Staff Development**

**The Hampden County Sheriff's Department (HCSD) oversees an eight-week Western Massachusetts County Correctional Officer's Basic Training Academy.**

**New Correctional staff are indoctrinated into a paramilitary team-building environment. During these eight weeks of intensive training, recruits are instructed in the best correctional practices. Some of the trainings included within the 320 hour curriculum are Civil Liability, Defensive Tactics, Ethics/Professionalism and Communication Skills. The Academy is designed to challenge recruits both physically and intellectually with measurable progress obtained through weekly written and physical examinations. The goal of the academy is to achieve professional excellence by molding well-rounded correctional staff, who embody the Sheriff's motto of: Strength reinforced with decency, firmness dignified with fairness.**

**Our department is committed to the development of successful career opportunities for all employees. We offer a Mentorship program for all new Correctional Staff, which is based on a positive peer role model. Upon completion of the academy all new Correctional Staff are assigned a mentor. This Mentorship program is designed to help staff adapt to the culture of a jail, adapt to shift work, assisting them with problem solving, to be a sounding board and to help them stay motivated. The Mentorship program continues to be a successful addition to the development of our staff.**

**All full time employees of the HCSD are required to complete yearly in-service trainings. The curriculum is based on the standards set forth by the Department of Corrections (DOC), the American Correctional Association (ACA) and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC). The in-service training program consists of 16 hours of training and encompasses many topics. Within the 16-hour block of in-service instruction, an employee can look forward to classes that will enhance their knowledge in Suicide prevention/awareness, Use of Force, Prison Rape Elimination Act, Restraints and Disorder Management.**

**In addition to the 16 hour In-service training, annually the Training department offers 26 one-hour Biweekly training topics. This provides staff with current and updated information on a biweekly basis to enhance job performance. Additionally, the Training department certifies and re-certifies Officers in firearms safety and handling. Firearms training is offered on a monthly basis and participants complete a two-day intensive training program.**

**The Training department offers five professional development Supervisory trainings annually. The goals of the Supervisory meetings are to provide information, enhance managerial skills, and maintain an esprit de corps throughout the department.**