

The Office

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MASSCOP



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Welcome!

By Bobby Murphy,
Secretary/Treasurer

MassCOP members,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to our Newsletter. This will be your place for the latest MassCOP updates and information regarding our office, memberships, life insurance, dues updates and more.

If there is anything you would like to see added to our next installment, or if you have any questions regarding the content of this newsletter, please email Lauren at lw@masscop.org.



A Message From the President

By Scott Hovsepian

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

It would be an understatement to say that these past five weeks have been difficult. As law enforcement professionals, we have experienced an unprecedented series of events. These events have stunned the world and touched the lives of every human being from every possible walk of life.

For a great majority of the population, this has meant long periods of isolation with only brief moments of hiatus to go out and procure necessities. Many professions have resorted to working remotely, while others have had no choice but to lay employees off and hope to recover their business when this crisis finally comes to an end. *(Continued on Page 4.)*



Lighthouse Health & Wellness was designed to provide our first responders, public safety agencies and those that support them anonymous access to existing health and wellness programs, along with a growing library of the latest educational health and wellness information and tools that have been tailored to the unique needs of those working in public safety.

MassCOP's new PEER Support app created in collaboration with Lighthouse Health & Wellness

In a collaborative effort and partnership with PEER Support Services, LLC, Counselor Sgt. Brian Fleming, Lighthouse Health and Wellness and MassCOP, we are pleased to announce the creation of a **new APP** with a library of additional services/references accessible by your cell phone and available to MassCOP Members in good standing.

Download the
Lighthouse app

HERE

Let the Countdown Begin!



By Julia Pisegna

What's happening in just 136 days . . . MassCop's Direct Deposit!

As of **August 31st**, all Locals will be required to be on direct deposit for the payment of their dues! Account information for direct deposit can be found [HERE](#). If I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at jmp@masscop.org.

DON'T FORGET!

August 31,
2020

All Locals must begin
direct deposit for
payment of dues!

Contacting the Office

For any questions, comments
or concerns, please contact any
member of our office team:

By Email:

Julia: jmp@masscop.org

Lauren: lw@masscop.org

Bobby: rwm@masscop.org

By Phone:

(508) 581-9336

Thank You

TO ALL OUR POLICE OFFICERS

Continued - A Message From The President

For police officers, dispatchers, firefighters and all of our medical professionals, working remotely is not an option. We have been tasked with working the front lines of this battle, fighting the COVID-19 virus from all angles. The men and women who work for varying law enforcement agencies across this great Commonwealth have been answering the call, without question or regard for their own safety. The EMS workers have tirelessly and fearlessly been going into homes and transporting sick patients to area hospitals where the nurses, doctors and other medical professionals have been doing their best to treat the overwhelming number of COVID-19 patients brought to them on a daily, sometimes hourly basis, also without question and without regard for their own safety.

The one concern that we all share that we are now compelled to ask after watching our brothers and sisters fall victim to this virus is to be PROTECTED. Protected from this invisible enemy we are doing our best to take on. Unlike most of the situations that we deal with on a daily basis with this enemy, we are unable to establish a search pattern. We cannot use overwhelming force and we cannot defend ourselves with the tools on our belts. There is no level of tactic that we can employ that will be effective in defeating this. So we have to adapt and overcome, and ask that our leaders give us NEW TOOLS. In this battle, we need PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT. We need proper masks, eye protection, gloves and effective disinfectants and sanitizers. We ask for these things to not only protect ourselves, but also to protect the members of the community who we unwittingly come into contact with on a daily basis. We have a duty to protect THEM as well. We also have a duty to protect our own families from the exposures we are subjected to daily without the proper equipment.

I have spoken with dozens of MassCOP's Local presidents in an effort to keep apprised of how cities and towns are handling the various intricacies surrounding the fight against this virus. I have been in constant communication with the members of the Executive Board who represent each and every one of you. We are working with our attorneys and legislators to ensure that all of the police officers in this State are afforded all of the protections that they are entitled to, including proper treatment for COVID-19 positive officers, as well as appropriate PAID quarantine periods for their co-workers. This has proven to be more of a challenge in some areas.

Thank You

TO ALL FIRST RESPONDERS

Continued - A Message From The President

I have received reports of varying levels of cooperation in both regards. Some departments have been very proactive and have agreed from the onset to follow all of the CDC recommendations and guidelines, and have without hesitation placed officers who test positive onto 111F status, and those in quarantine on paid administrative leave. I have seen proactive measures taken where local unions and their administrators have worked together to set up creative scheduling to limit the cross contamination of shifts. In some departments, officers and dispatchers are rotating between working and being on call for two-week intervals to again limit exposure and maintain staffing levels. I have heard of departments where a shortage in safety equipment is not an issue, and other departments who are detrimentally struggling. It really is a different chapter of the same story as you move from one agency to another.

Regrettably, there are some Chiefs and Administrators whose behavior is simply abhorrent. Clearly there is still some margin of denial regarding just how serious this issue is. It goes beyond the virus itself and expands into the far-reaching web of disaster being spun by these so-called "leaders". Leaders who refuse to take care of their first responders who are being exposed and are getting sick and in some cases are dying. Refusing to place police officers testing positive for COVID-19 on 111F status and/or refusing to pay officers who are in quarantine is outrageous behavior that simply cannot be tolerated. Refusing to quarantine exposed officers until they are "symptomatic" should be criminal. There was one Chief who actually demanded his officers continue to follow the departmental policy on "park and talks", requiring officers to park their cruisers and "talk to the people" in direct conflict with Governor Baker and President Trump's order for distance. This Chief believes his asinine mandate is more important than the safety of his officers and by default, the very community he's sworn to protect. You really can't make this up.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Issues and Concerns

By Bobby Murphy, Secretary/Treasurer

Ken Grace, Esq.

It is extremely important that we are all operating on the same page concerning the times we are in. The goal is for us to have a clear and simple process in getting this information and assistance out to our members.

- As we continue progress into these uncharted waters, any questions from our members on this issue or any issues concerning the coronavirus WILL be handled by Attorney James Racine. We will be addressing more issues, such as police equipment, enforcement, etc. in the near future. Attorney Racine will be our "expert" on this issue for all our members moving forward. This is the most efficient and clear way of handling these fluid issues on a day-to-day basis.

Contact information for Attorney James Racine:

Via email: [jraccine@sandulligrace.com](mailto:jracine@sandulligrace.com)

Office Phone: (617) 523-2500

Cell phone: (202) 725-3244

Continued - A Message From The President

Some of these city and town managers have gone so far as to send letters to their union leaders notifying them that they are “EXCLUDING their health care workers and emergency responders” from federal benefits afforded to them by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, (FFCRA) signed into law by the POTUS. Then to add insult to injury, they close out these letters with “The Town appreciates the work of all our emergency responders during this Coronavirus State of Emergency”. If you have received one of these letters, please reach out to your Area Vice President, as we have developed a demand to bargain for a response in this regard.

The truth of the matter is that we took an oath, and we have not wavered. We have risen to this challenge, as we have every other, and we will get through it together. Please know, as we navigate through the difficult days ahead that you are not alone. The Massachusetts Coalition of Police will continue to fight to protect you, my brothers and sisters, and will continue to be a source of information and support for each and every one of you. You can be confident in the fact that we have the absolute best law firms working day and night to provide you with the best legal advice and are standing at the ready to defend each of you throughout the duration of this crisis. I would like to take this opportunity to particularly thank Attorney James Racine and Attorney Ken Grace for their hard work and guidance throughout this crisis. Their collective work throughout this time has been nothing short of remarkable.

During this crisis, “normal” business still needs to be attended to, and we will continue to be here for you. First Vice President John Nelson and In-House Counsel Tim King continue to work with the State representatives on a daily basis and provide written testimony to get legislation passed that will help us deal with this pandemic, in spite of some of the shortfalls by our administrators. Secretary/Treasurer Bobby Murphy has been helping to track the positive COVID-19 cases amongst our members and is vigilant in distributing all of the pertinent correspondence to the Area Vice Presidents and our individual local presidents. If you have not received approximately ten emails from the MassCOP office, please contact Bobby Murphy to ensure that your contact information is accurately on file.

In closing, it continues to be an honor and a privilege to be your President. Rest assured that John, Bobby, and the entire Executive Board will continue to work hard on your behalf to ensure that you continue to receive the best representation in the State. And as always, stay safe out there.

In Solidarity,

Scott A. Hovsepian

Thank You

TO ALL OUR DISPATCHERS

New Legislation - COVID-19

By John Nelson, First Vice President
Tim King, In-House Council

The Massachusetts Coalition of Police Legislative Team has been working non-stop during the Covid-19 Crisis to bring first responders the protections that they deserve. Police officers have been at the front lines of this crisis since its inception. We have been working with the legislature on bills to create 111F presumptions as well as attempting to increase wages for police officers who have been on the front line. In addition, we have been seeking reimbursement for cities and towns for overtime relating to the crisis.

The following is a list of the bills that we have been most focused on:

SB-2602 Senator Moore - *An Act Relative to Emergency Hazard Health Duty* - Referred to Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security.

- Mass Cop is a Co-Sponsor Supporter of this bill. (This bill has an Emergency Preamble on it.)
- April 6, 2020: MassCOP and Sandulli Grace submitted favorable written testimony.
- April 21, 2020: Bill held in abeyance at the Joint Committee on Public Safety until May 1st when it will be forwarded to the House and Ways Committee.

HB-4611 Representative Arciero - *An Act Relative to Emergency Hazard Health Duty* - Referred to Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security.

- Mass Cop has signed on as a Co-Sponsor of this bill. (This Bill has an Emergency Preamble on it.)
- April 6, 2020: MassCOP and Sandulli Grace submitted favorable written testimony.
- April 21, 2020: Bill held in abeyance at the Joint Committee on Public Safety until May 1st when it will be forwarded to the House and Ways Committee.

HB-4613 Representative Chan - *An Act Relative to State Employees Performing Core Functions* - Referred to Joint Committee on Public Service.

- Mass Cop has signed on as a Co-Sponsor of this bill.
- No hearing date posted.

SD-2886 Senator Moore - *An Act Providing Emergency Assistance for Municipal Public Safety Overtime* - Referred to Joint Committee on Rules.

- Mass Cop is a Supporter of this bill. (No bill number assigned.)
- No hearing date posted.

HD-4977 Representative Kane - *An Act Providing Emergency Assistance for Municipal Public Safety Overtime* - Referred to Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security.

- Mass Cop is a signed Co-Sponsor of this bill. (No bill number assigned.)
- No hearing date posted.

Membership Updates

By Lauren Willand

Now, more than ever, It is important to ensure we are maintaining an accurate contact and membership information for your Local. The more information we have about each Local, the better we can assist our members. We are asking each and every Local to provide our office with the most current contact information for their President and current member roster.

In early April, an email was sent out with a link to a form where you can easily fill out this information. If you did not get a chance to fill out this form, you can do so [HERE](#).



Our office strives to maintain up-to-date information on each Local. In times like these, it is imperative that each Local and their respective President is receiving each and every piece of communication from the MassCOP office.

We look forward to continue bringing you the most up-to-date MassCOP information. If there are any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at lw@masscop.org

Thank You
FOR ALL YOU DO



Contact Information

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CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM:

(508) 581-9336

***Follow recorded instructions for immediate
response**

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