

Massachusetts State Police mourns loss of long-time dispatcher Lisa O'Brien

"The Massachusetts State Police is saddened by the loss of active Dispatcher Lisa M. O'Brien (Tobin).

O'Brien was a 35-year employee of the Department. She was assigned to Troop-H Communications in South Boston and passed away on February 25, 2021.

The obituary for Lisa Marie O'Brien at MacDonald Funeral & Cremation Care Services can be found here:
<https://www.macdonaldfuneralhome.com/obituary/lisa-obrien>"

Boston Police Department seeks the public's help in finding missing 33-Year-Old Keyla House

"Missing Person Alert: The Boston Police Department is seeking the public's help and assistance in efforts to locate 33-year-old Keyla House of Florida.

It is believed that Ms. House's travel plans brought her to the Boston area on Friday, February 19, 2021. Ms. House is described as 5'3" tall and weighing 135 lbs. She was last seen wearing a blonde wig, a green jacket, dark blue jeans and in possession of a black suitcase.

Anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of this missing person is advised to contact District A-1 Detectives (Downtown) at (617) 343-4248."

Message from Acushnet Fire Chief Gallagher after tour of City of New Bedford's COVID Vaccine clinic

"Yesterday morning, the Council on Aging Directors, Health Agents and Fire Chiefs from Acushnet and Fairhaven toured the city of New Bedford's Covid Vaccine clinic on Hillman Street. This tour followed several Zoom meetings where officials from both communities came together to plan for the local distribution of vaccines by sharing the resources of both towns. We agreed that a joint effort would be more effective and more efficient for both populations.

"Unfortunately, before we got back to our respective towns, the state pulled the rug out from under us.

"Instead of going to an Acushnet or Fairhaven building and receiving vaccine shots from local Paramedics and having the administrative work done by local Health Departments, residents from the two towns must now work against thousands of others to secure a spot at Gillette, Fenway, Circuit City, or some other state run mass vaccination site.



Acushnet Fire & EMS photo.

"We were ready to do it locally. Both towns filed for and received approval from the state to order, receive and store vaccine. Both towns worked on plans, stepped-up training, and even started to make lists of eligible residents. We were ready, very ready, to pull the trigger.

"Unfortunately, in a decision very much like that to limit state-run Covid testing to the big cities, smaller municipalities have been shut out. With testing, we could go it alone. With vaccination, we can't.

"And that is regrettable.

"Please know that both communities wanted to do this. We planned. We toured. We met. We discussed. We fine-tuned. Simply put, we were ready.

"Please also know that when the state admits that their new policy failed, we will, once again, be ready."-Kevin A. Gallagher.

New Bedford Fire Department receives generous donation

"Our staff met up with Mike Reardon from Ocean State Job Lot yesterday to receive a very generous donation of protective masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes to be distributed to our first responders.

Keeping our members and community safe is our #1 priority. A special thanks to Mike and to all who made this donation possible!"

New Bedford Police Department seize Fentanyl, Percocets, cocaine and cash after traffic stop

Yesterday NBPD Narcotics and Gang Unit Detectives seized 40 grams of fentanyl, 40 Percocet pills, 4 grams of cocaine, and \$960 in the area of Tinkham St. and Acushnet Ave. after stopping a vehicle involved in a drug transaction.

Yamil Velazquez Acevedo, 25, Providence, and Candido Delgado, 45, 72 Adams St., Apt. #2, were both arrested and charged with multiple trafficking offenses. Detectives located narcotics concealed in a soda can improvised to act as a hide container.

Candido Delgado has previous narcotics distribution convictions and was last convicted of distributing Class A substance in 2018.

Detective Samuel Algarin-Mojica was the arresting officer in this case.

OPINION: Police reform advocates call for meaningful action from Massachusetts House Speaker DeLeo and MA State Rep. Cronin

“Police reform advocates from across the Bay State released a powerful, new video today calling upon top leaders in the Massachusetts House of Representatives to advance key racial justice measures in the state legislature’s pending police reform package. That package is currently under negotiations between the two chambers, and advocates say they want to be sure it includes two key “litmus test” measures that will determine in their eyes whether or not the bill represents progress or a punt.

Reverend Maria White-Hammond, who has played a leadership role in the coalition and helped to organize the new video message, said in a statement:

“This is a crucial moment for our state. Thousands of Bay Staters called for racial justice and accountability for police violence and misconduct this summer – but the

Legislature has yet to make good on its promise for real reform. Time is running out. We need real action now.”

Meanwhile, the legislature only has 36 days left to pass reform legislation before the end of the current session, which is slated for Saturday, January 2, 2021.

The video urges MA House of Representatives Speaker Robert DeLeo and House Judiciary Chair Claire Cronin to ensure a final police reform package that includes meaningful limits on qualified immunity and a police oversight commission that is inclusive of racial justice advocates.

“We can’t wait for another tragedy, or for Massachusetts to be a national headline,” the message says. “Speaker DeLeo, [House Conference Committee Chair] Representative Cronin, and the rest of the Legislature’s conference committee members need to stop dragging their feet. It’s time to lead.”

The legislative package, S.2820/H.4886, has been stuck in a conference committee since July, when both the House and Senate passed different versions of a police reform bill following widespread protests across the state in the wake of George Floyd’s death at the hands of police.”

Police Reform Now (MA) is a grassroots coalition of civil rights, religious, labor, and other grassroots organizations that advocate for legislative solutions to address the concerns of overpoliced communities and to ensure there is greater transparency in policing.

For more information: www.policereformnowma.org

Massachusetts mandates flu vaccinations for students

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has mandated required flu shots by Dec. 31 for all students 6 months or older who attend child care, pre-school, school and college throughout the state.

Officials stated concern for the high risk to the public if they were to catch both COVID-19 with its respiratory impact combined with also having the flu.

Dr. Larry Madoff, the medical director of the department's Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences explained "Every year, thousands of people of all ages are affected by influenza, leading to many hospitalizations and deaths. It is more important now than ever to get a flu vaccine because flu symptoms are very similar to those of COVID-19 and preventing the flu will save lives and preserve health care resources."

However, there are exemptions for religious or medical reasons and those children who are homeschooled. In addition, the exemption extends to any higher education students who are completely off-campus *and* engaged in remote learning only.

Haverhill Education Association makes symbolic gesture on potential loss of

students or teachers from COVID

The following message was posted by the Haverhill Education Association on Facebook:

"The students and teachers we may lose to COVID are gathering on the steps of City Hall for their class of 2021 photo. How many empty shoes will there be if we go back to school too soon? Even one is too many. #OnlyWhenItsSafe

All the shoes have been collected and will be donated to local families in need. #WereInThisTogether."



Haverhill Education Association photo.



Haverhill Education Association photo.



Haverhill Education Association photo.

Massachusetts State investigating fatal crash in Sharon

Yesterday at approximately 3:30 p.m. Troopers assigned to State Police-Foxboro responded to reports of a single vehicle crash, with serious injuries, on Route 95 northbound in the area of Exit 9 in Sharon.

Upon their arrival they observed a 2002 Chevrolet Silverado, operated by Christopher Smith, 54, of Waltham, that had struck a guardrail then continued into the woodline, where it struck a tree. Smith was the sole occupant of the vehicle.

Sharon Fire and EMS responded to the scene and pronounced Smith deceased at the scene. Members of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner responded to the scene as well.

The cause and circumstances of the crash remain under investigation by Troopers assigned to State Police-Foxboro, State Police Troop H Detective Unit, Collision Analysis Reconstruction Section, and Crime Scene Services. Troopers were assisted on scene by MassDOT, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and Concord Fire & EMS.

Massachusetts State Trooper rescues dog wandering

breakdown lane of I-90

Shortly after a shift change, Trooper Edward Brunton and Trooper Elliot Scibelli, assigned to the Lee Barracks, received a call large older canine wandering in the breakdown lane of I-90 around the 16-mile marker in Becket.

Trooper Brunton got there within a minute along with Trooper Scibelli. A Good Samaritan trucker stopped and provided a leash for the two Troopers to gain control of the hot and tired dog. Trooper Brunton made quick use of the leash and, using his former rodeo skills, quickly had the furry beast in custody. The dog did not have a collar.

Trooper Scibelli provided transport for the dog and relayed him to members of the Washington Police Department who brought him to an animal shelter in the hopes the owner is Identified.