

PLS' Mission

"PLS' mission is to **challenge the carceral system** through litigation, advocacy, client counseling, partnership with impacted individuals and communities, and outreach to policymakers and the public in **order to promote the human rights of incarcerated persons and end harmful confinement.**"

The organization's primary efforts are focused on its 5 priority areas being:

- health care,
- staff assaults,
- conditions of confinement,
- solitary confinement,
- and racial equity in corrections.



Remote/Hybrid Environment

My co-op was hybrid optional, as **most of the staff lived well outside of the city.** As a result, I only met a limited number of them which was unfortunate.

While I did forge multiple meaningful relationships, **I'd prefer a mandatory hybrid environment.**

In-person prison visits we're both eye opening and fruitful!

My Role

As an intake intern,

- **I spearheaded the Intake Quality Control project** where I combed through and cleaned out our or intake database powered by Empower.
- In addition to that, I **interacted with attorneys, paralegals, Department of Corrections (DOC) staff**, as well as prisoners daily. Another integral part of my position was drafting advocacy letters on behalf of our clients and working on **medical parole.**

CSSH Mission Integration

Research

Conducted in-depth **research of clients' medical conditions** as well as DOC and county correctional facility policy.

Education

Actively listened to clients' stories, issues, medical history, etc. learning much about the MA carceral system.

Outreach

Combined the fruits of my research and education, **culminating in advocacy on behalf of our clients on a myriad of issues.**



The Medical Parole Project

The most significant project I was a part of was the medical parole project where I **assisted an attorney with drafting medical parole petitions.** Under M.G.L. a prisoner can be released on the grounds of medical parole if they're terminally ill (with 18 months or less to live) and/or physically/mentally incapacitated.

While this may seem cut and dry, it's ultimately up to the DOC Commissioner to evaluate our petition and supplemental records, along with any other information she might have, to determine if the prisoner will be released. I was fortunate enough to work on 2 petitions, in both of which our clients were granted parole!

Skills Cultivated

- Time management,
- effective communication,
- sensitivity, & research

The Future

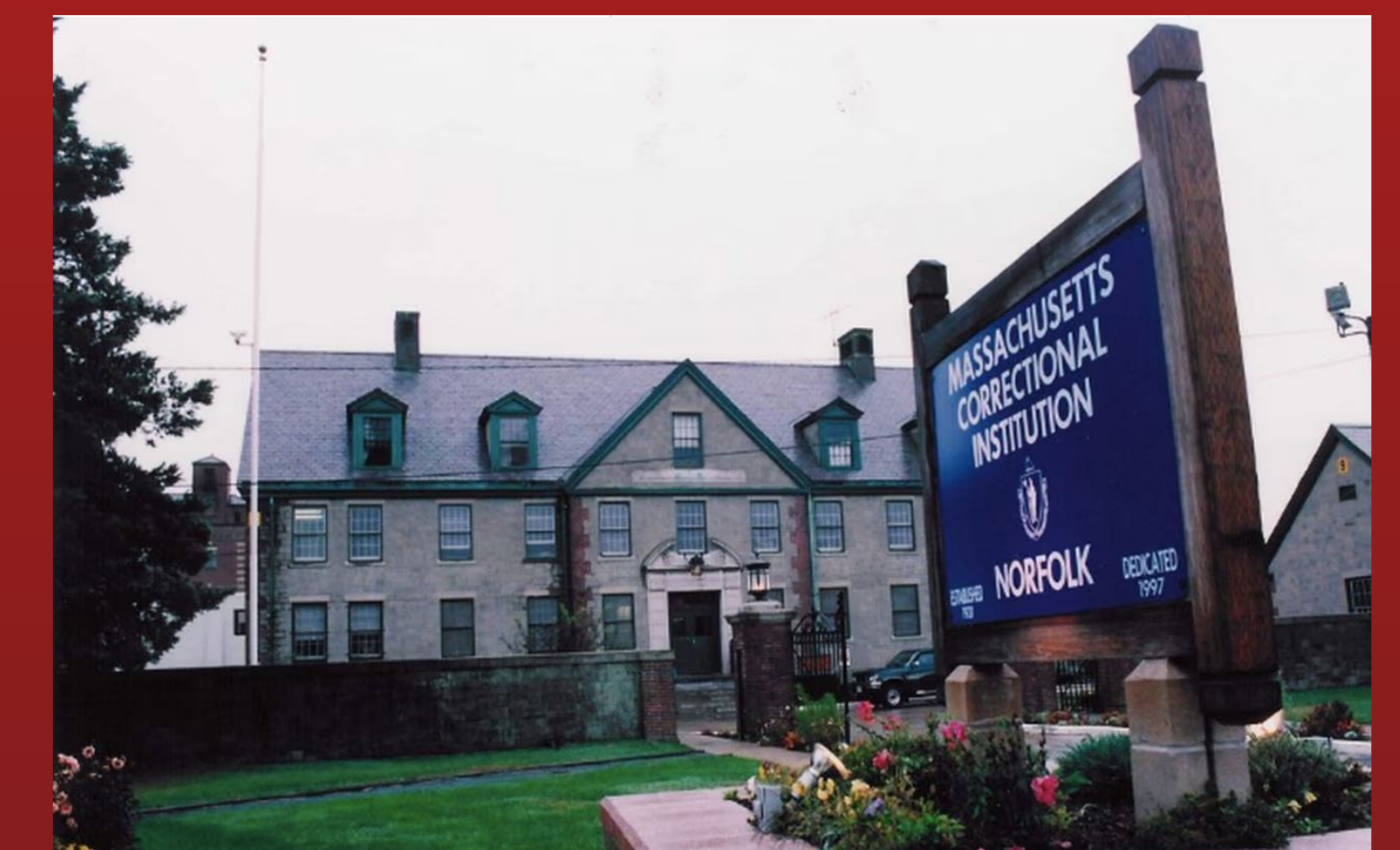
This co-op has brought me closer to finalizing my aspirations

- **of attending law school.**
- I now wish to **become a full-time paralegal immediately following graduation**, to solidify my decision.

While it didn't finalize my law school decision, **it did positively affect my undergraduate studies.** Working with individuals involuntarily committed to prisons under Section 35, due to drug addiction, has prompted and interest in studying addiction, causing me to **enroll in CRIM 3540 Addiction and Recovery** in the fall.

Lessons Learned

- The **Dept. of Corrections can be very unreasonable** as the Commissioner gets complete discretion over the med. Parole process.
- Oftentimes when working with incarcerated people, **it truly is the thought that counts.** Even if the petition fails, the client truly understands that you care and did everything in your power to attempt to help them.
- **The most important lesson I learned was how to deal with death.** My favorite client, and the first one who I helped get granted medical parole, **passed away shortly after being paroled. He had terminal cancer and seeing how the disease affected him in real time over the course of 3 months was a lot.** He was also the first person in close proximity to me who passed away so **learning to cope with death was very new to me.**



Institution where my favorite client was released from on medical parole!