

MAINE

Rental Housing Guide



The mission of MaineHousing is to assist Maine people in obtaining and maintaining quality affordable housing and services suitable to their housing needs.



MaineHousing
MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

MAINE RENTAL HOUSING GUIDE

The Maine Rental Housing Guide provides information about subsidized housing, housing-related resources, and Maine rental housing laws.

MaineHousing (Maine State Housing Authority) is Maine's housing finance agency. We fund affordable rental housing development. We also fund rental assistance programs, emergency shelter, home repair, and fuel assistance.

For more information about our programs, please visit our website at mainehousing.org.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Sometimes it is hard to find help when it comes to finding housing or heating your home. You're not alone. 211 Maine can help.

Contact with 211 Maine is free and private. They are available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. They can help you find help and connect you or someone you know to local programs and services.

You can connect with 211 Maine specialists a few different ways. You can:

- call them by dialing 211
- text them your zip code at 898-211
- email them at info@211maine.org
- visit their online directory at 211maine.org.



Maine Housing Search

This is a free, statewide online resource for renters and property managers in Maine. The search options allow you to find affordable, accessible and market-rate housing that will fit your needs.

Available online 24-7 and supported by a toll-free, bilingual call center, Monday-Friday, 9 am to 8 pm EST, 1-877-428-8844, Maine Relay 711.

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

**** The Emergency Rental Assistance Program is not currently accepting new applications. ****

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program can help Maine renters cover rent and utilities.

This program was created to help renters cover costs during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can find the most updated information about the program at mainehousing.org/covidrent. You can also call MaineHousing at 1-800-452-4668 if you have questions about the program.

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SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

Subsidized housing is rental assistance provided by the government to help people with rent and utility costs. Under some programs, people who are income-eligible pay a percentage of their income toward their rental costs and government subsidy pays the rest. Other programs provide housing which is affordable for low and moderate income families.

There are two basic types of rental assistance — *subsidized apartments* and *housing choice vouchers*. Waiting lists for both subsidized apartments and housing choice vouchers can be long, so it may be helpful to apply for both types of housing.

SUBSIDIZED APARTMENTS

Subsidized apartments are administered by four different agencies: MaineHousing (Maine State Housing Authority); the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); USDA Rural Development (RD); and Public or Local Housing Authorities (PHAs). Subsidized housing lists are available online at mainehousing.org/rentalhelp. Many subsidized apartments are also listed on MaineHousingSearch.org. Applicants should plan to share their gross household income when they contact apartment management companies. Income restrictions may apply and can vary by apartment.

Applicants may also contact their local Public Housing Authority listed on Pages 3-4 for information about their public housing.

For more information on subsidized housing, please contact:

MaineHousing (Maine State Housing Authority)

mainehousing.org

26 Edison Drive

Augusta, ME 04330-6046

Tel. 207-626-4600 or 1-800-452-4668

or Maine Relay 711

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

hud.gov

Customer Service Center, 1-800-955-2232

Maine State Office - Bangor

hud.gov/states/maine/offices

Kelsey D. Brown, HUD State Director, 207-945-0468

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

M.C. Smith Federal Building, Room D20200

202 Harlow Street

Bangor, ME 04401

USDA Rural Development (RD)

rd.usda.gov/me

Aroostook and Washington Counties

RD District 1 Office - Multifamily

735 Main Street, Suite 1

Presque Isle, ME 04769

Tel. 207-764-4157 or Maine Relay 711

Hancock, Knox, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, and Waldo Counties

RD District 2 Office - Multifamily

1423 Broadway, Suite 3

Bangor, ME 04401

Tel. 207-990-3676 or Maine Relay 711

Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, and Oxford Counties

RD District 3 Office - Multifamily

254 Goddard Road

Lewiston, ME 04240

Tel. 207-753-9400 or Maine Relay 711

Cumberland, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and York Counties

RD District 4 Office - Multifamily

306 U.S. Route 1, Suite B-1

Scarborough, ME 04074

Tel. 207-883-0159 or Maine Relay 711



SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

This program helps income-eligible tenants find and pay for decent, safe, and sanitary housing. We pay part of the monthly rent and send it to their landlord.

Both Maine's local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and MaineHousing (referred to here as Housing Agencies) administer Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Programs. MaineHousing serves areas outside of the PHAs' service areas. A PHA voucher must be used within a PHA's service area. A MaineHousing voucher must be used within our service area.

A voucher can be used for any type of private rental housing. This includes an apartment, house, or mobile home. The housing must meet certain inspection standards and the owner must accept the applicant as a tenant. Rent must be within the limits allowed by the program. A family that already is renting a suitable apartment, house, or mobile home when they get a voucher may be able to use the voucher in that unit.

Landlords keep normal management rights and responsibilities. This includes tenant selection, collecting the tenant's share of the monthly rent, property maintenance, and lease enforcement or obligations.

HOW TO APPLY - CENTRALIZED WAIT LIST

You can apply online at <https://mainesection8centralwaitlist.org> or with any participating housing agency listed on Page 3.

You can contact a participating housing agency to have an application mailed to you. Return the completed application to a participating housing agency.

You can stop into any participating housing agency and pick up an application. It can be filled out and returned onsite or you can drop it off at a later date.

You only need to complete and submit ONE preliminary application. By completing one application, you are included on the centralized waiting list and may be considered by some or all participating housing agencies.

Any application completed offline may be returned to any participating housing agency by mail, by hand, or by fax. Only one application per family will be accepted.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

1. The applicant submits a completed application to be placed on the waiting list for a voucher.
2. The applicant should respond promptly to all Housing Agency requests for updated application information. They should notify the Housing Agency in writing of any changes in address. Failure to do so will result in the applicant's name being removed from the voucher waiting list.
3. After getting a voucher, the applicant chooses a rental unit and discusses the program with the landlord. The unit *cannot* be owned by a relative (parent, grandparent, sister, brother, child, or grandchild) of any household member.
4. The applicant contacts the Housing Agency that issued the voucher so their inspector may inspect the selected unit.
5. If the unit passes inspection, the applicant and the landlord will sign a lease, and the Housing Agency will sign a contract with the landlord.
6. After the applicant signs the lease and the landlord signs a contract with the Housing Agency, the applicant can move into the unit.
7. The applicant pays their share of the rent to the landlord.
8. The Housing Agency will pay the balance of the rent to the landlord.

TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Pay the security deposit.
- Pay the rent on time.
- Keep the unit clean and safe.
- Put questions to the landlord or Housing Agency in writing whenever possible.
- Allow inspections by the Housing Agency at least once a year.
- If planning to move, give *written notice* according to the terms of the lease to the landlord and Housing Agency.
- Report changes in income and family size to the Housing Agency.
- Follow the terms of the lease and Maine landlord/tenant laws.
- Follow the tenant responsibilities listed on the voucher.

LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES

- Check references of prospective tenants.
- Collect the security deposit.
- Collect the tenant's portion of rent.
- Maintain the apartment in a safe and sanitary condition.
- Notify the Housing Agency immediately if a tenant vacates a unit.
- Follow the terms of the lease and Maine landlord/tenant laws.
- Notify the Housing Agency of a proposed eviction. The eviction process is governed by Maine law.

OTHER AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS

"Mod Rehab" apartments are private apartments that were rehabilitated with MaineHousing funds in return for the owners' commitment to affordable rents. To apply for these affordable apartments, contact one of the Mod Rehab Program Agents listed below.

Augusta Housing Authority

33 Union Street, Suite 3
 Augusta, ME 04330
 Tel. 207-626-2357; Fax 207-626-2359

MaineHousing

26 Edison Drive
 Augusta, ME 04330-6046
 Tel. 1-866-357-4853 or 207-624-5789 (voice)
 Maine Relay 711
 Fax 207-624-5713
mainehousing.org

HOUSING AGENCIES

MAINEHOUSING

MaineHousing

26 Edison Drive
 Augusta, ME 04330-6046
 Tel. 1-866-357-4853 or 207-624-5789 (voice)
 Maine Relay 711
 Fax 207-624-5713
mainehousing.org

PUBLIC OR LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES (PHAs)

Auburn Housing Authority

20 Great Falls Plaza, P.O. Box 3037
 Auburn, ME 04212-3037
 Tel. 207-784-7351; Fax 207-784-5545
auburnhousing.org

Augusta Housing Authority

33 Union Street, Suite 3
 Augusta, ME 04330
 Tel. 207-626-2357; Fax 207-626-2359

Bangor Housing Authority

161 Davis Road
 Bangor, ME 04401-2399
 Tel. 207-942-6365; Fax 207-942-6043
bangorhousing.org

Bath Housing Authority

80 Congress Avenue
 Bath, ME 04530
 Tel. 207-443-3116; Fax 207-443-8116
bathhousing.org

Biddeford Housing Authority

22 South Street, P.O. Box 2287
 Biddeford, ME 04005
 Tel. 207-282-6537; Fax 207-286-0580

Brewer Housing Authority

15 Colonial Circle, Suite 1
 Brewer, ME 04412
 Tel. 207-989-7890; Fax 207-989-7554
brewerhousing.com

Brunswick Housing Authority

12 Stone Street, P.O. Box A
 Brunswick, ME 04011
 Tel. 207-725-8711; Fax 207-729-2642
brunswickhousing.org

Caribou Housing Authority

City of Caribou
25 High Street
Caribou, ME 04736
Tel. 207-493-4234; Fax 207-376-0178
cariboumaine.org/index.php/departments/caribou-housing-agency-2/

Fort Fairfield Housing Authority

18 Fields Lane
Fort Fairfield, ME 04742
Tel. 207-476-5771; Fax 207-476-5450
ffha.org

Indian Township Passamaquoddy Reservation Housing Authority*

P.O. Box 99
Princeton, ME 04668
Tel. 207-796-8004; Fax 207-796-8019
passamaquoddy.com

Lewiston Housing Authority

One College Street
Lewiston, ME 04240
Tel. 207-783-1423; Fax 207-783-8648

Mt. Desert Island and Ellsworth Housing Authority

80 Mt. Desert Street, P.O. Box 28
Bar Harbor, ME 04609
Tel. 207-288-4770; Fax 207-288-4770
emdiha.org

Old Town Housing Authority

P.O. Box 404
Old Town, ME 04468
Tel. 207-827-6151; Fax 207-827-1502
oldtownhousing.net

Penobscot Nation Housing Department*

12 Wabanaki Way
Indian Island, ME 04668
Tel. 207-817-7370; Fax 207-817-7384
penobscotnation.org

Pleasant Point Passamaquoddy Reservation Housing Authority*

15 Elders Way, Suite 201
Perry, ME 04667
Tel. 207-853-6021; Fax 207-853-2368
wabanaki.com

Portland Housing Authority

14 Baxter Boulevard
Portland, ME 04101-1822
Tel. 207-773-4753; Fax 207-774-6471
porthouse.org

Presque Isle Housing Authority

58 Birch Street
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Tel. 207-768-8231; Fax 207-764-5614
pihousing.org

Sanford Housing Authority

17 School Street, P.O. Box 1008
Sanford, ME 04073
Tel. 207-324-6747; Fax 207-324-6870
sanfordhousing.org

South Portland Housing Authority

100 Waterman Drive, Suite 101
South Portland, ME 04106
Tel. 207-773-4140; Fax 207-773-4006
spha.net

Van Buren Housing Authority

130 Champlain Street
Van Buren, ME 04785-1339
Tel. 207-868-5441; Fax 207-868-2833

Waterville Housing Authority

88 Silver Street
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel. 207-873-2155; Fax 207-877-9429
watervillehousing.org

Westbrook Housing

30 Liza Harmon Drive
Westbrook, ME 04092
Tel. 207-854-9779; Fax 207-854-0962
westbrookhousing.org

York Housing Authority*

4 Pine Grove Lane
York, ME 03909
Tel. 207-363-8444; Fax 207-351-2801
yorkhousing.info
(York Housing Authority does not administer Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.)

*Housing Authorities marked with * are not participating in the centralized wait list.

BRIDGING RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (BRAP) AND SHELTER PLUS CARE (S+C) PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS) SUPPORTIVE HOUSING RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Tenant-based rental assistance vouchers provide the customer with choice, independence, and control over their living situation. This includes if they want services. Following a *Housing First* model, DHHS rental assistance clients are encouraged, but not required, to accept services with the voucher. All rental units must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Quality Standards and Fair Market Rents.

The *Bridging Rental Assistance Program* (BRAP) is a transitional housing voucher program designed to assist people with mental illness for up to 24 months or until they are awarded a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, or alternative housing placement. Program participants pay 40% of their income for rent.

Shelter Plus Care (S+C) is a permanent housing voucher program that helps people who are homeless with a severe and long term disability. Program participants pay 40% of their income for rent.

CONTACTS FOR BRAP AND SHELTER PLUS CARE

ANDROSCOGGIN, FRANKLIN, AND OXFORD COUNTIES

Common Ties

12 Bates Street, P.O. Box 1319
Lewiston, ME 04243
Tel. 207-795-6710

AROOSTOOK, HANCOCK, PENOBSCOT, PISCATAQUIS, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES

Community Health & Counseling Services

P.O. Box 425
Bangor, ME 04402-0425
(42 Cedar Street, Bangor, ME 04401)
Tel. 207-922-4406

CUMBERLAND, KNOX, LINCOLN, SAGADAHOC, WALDO, AND YORK COUNTIES

Shalom House, Inc.

106 Gilman Street
Portland, ME 04102
Tel. 207-874-1080

KENNEBEC AND SOMERSET COUNTIES

Kennebec Behavioral Health

67 Eustis Parkway
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel. 207-873-2136

HOUSING RESOURCES - PATH (PROJECTS FOR ASSISTANCE IN TRANSITION FROM HOMELESSNESS)

The PATH Program supports the outreach, engagement, and delivery of services to eligible people who are homeless and have serious mental illnesses and/or co-occurring substance abuse disorder. This program has a particular emphasis on:

- a. those most in need of services and engagement by an Outreach Worker;
- b. services which are not supported by mainstream mental health programs.

The primary target population of the PATH-funded outreach and engagement services is both youth and adult people who are homeless.

Enrollment into PATH-funded services begins with specific provider. For a list of providers go to: maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/mentalhealth/housing/path/#outreach.

Those who meet the PATH homeless definition and who have a mental illness and/or co-occurring substance abuse disorder may be considered to be eligible for PATH.

HELP FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS

Emergency shelters are available throughout Maine. People who are homeless may also want to contact their local town office for any local shelters that may not be listed in this guide.

MAINE EMERGENCY SHELTERS

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY

Hope Haven Gospel Mission* General
Lewiston, ME
Tel. 207-783-6086

New Beginnings* Youth
Lewiston, ME
Tel. 207-795-4077

Rural Community Action Ministries* General
Leeds, ME (mostly families)
Tel. 207-524-5095

Safe Voices* Domestic Violence
Auburn, ME
Tel. 1-800-559-2927

St. Catherine of Siena Women
Lewiston, ME
Tel. 207-241-7511

St. Martin de Porres Residence General-Adults
Lewiston, ME
Tel. 207-786-4690

AROOSTOOK COUNTY

Hope and Justice Project* Domestic Violence
Caribou, Houlton, Fort Kent, ME
Tel. 1-800-439-2323

Maliseet Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Program Domestic Violence/
Houlton, ME Sexual Assault
Tel. 207-532-6401 or 207-532-3000

Homeless Services of Aroostook – Sr. Mary O’Donnell Shelter* General & Families
Presque Isle, ME
Tel. 207-764-4125

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

City of Portland – Family Shelter* Families
Portland, ME
Tel. 207-772-8339

City of Portland – Oxford Street Shelter* General-Adults
Portland, ME
Tel. 207-761-2072

Florence House General-Women
Portland, ME
Tel. 207-699-4392

Milestone Recovery* Substance Abuse
Portland, ME
Tel. 207-775-4790

Preble Street – Joe Kreisler Teen Shelter* Youth
Portland, ME
Tel. 207-775-0026

Preble Street – Resource Center Day Shelter
Portland, ME (no overnights)
Tel. 207-775-0026

Tedford Housing – Individual Shelter* General-Adults
Brunswick, ME
Tel. 207-729-1161 or 207-725-4871

Tedford Housing – Family Shelter* General-Families
Brunswick, ME
Tel. 207-729-1161 or 207-729-4583

Through These Doors* Domestic Violence
Portland, ME
Tel. 1-800-537-6066

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Western Maine Homeless Outreach* General
Farmington, ME
Tel. 207-778-0707

HANCOCK COUNTY

H.O.M.E., Inc. – Dorr House* Mental Illness
Orland, ME Substance Abuse
Tel. 207-469-7961

H.O.M.E., Inc. – Emmaus* General
Ellsworth, ME
Tel. 207-667-3962

H.O.M.E., Inc. – St. Francis Inn* General
East Orland, ME
Tel. 207-469-7961

Next Step* Domestic Violence
Ellsworth, ME (safe homes)
Tel. 1-800-315-5579

KENNEBEC COUNTY

Bread of Life Ministries* General
Augusta, ME
Tel. 207-626-3479

Family Violence Project* Domestic Violence
Augusta, ME
Tel. 1-877-890-7788

Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter* General
Waterville, ME
Tel. 207-872-8082

Togus Veterans Affairs Veterans
Augusta, ME
Tel. 1-877-424-3838

KNOX COUNTY

Knox County Homeless Coalition* General
Rockport, ME
Tel. 207-593-8151

New Hope for Women* Domestic Violence
Rockland, ME (safe homes)
Tel. 1-800-522-3304

OXFORD COUNTY

**Rumford Group Homes –
Monier Family Center*** Families
Rumford, ME
Tel. 207-369-9439

**Rumford Group Homes –
Norway Family Center*** Women & Children
Norway, ME
Tel. 207-743-6363

**Rumford Group Homes –
Rumford Family Center*** Families
Rumford, ME
Tel. 207-369-9439

PENOBSCOT COUNTY

Bangor Area Homeless Shelter* General
Bangor, ME
Tel. 207-947-0092

Partners for Peace* Domestic Violence
Bangor, ME
Tel. 1-800-863-9909

Penobscot Community Health Center* General &
Bangor, ME Substance Abuse
Tel. 1-800-244-2555 or 207-217-6713

Shaw House* Youth
Bangor, ME
Tel. 1-888-561-7429 or 207-941-2874

Shepherds Godparent Home Women & Children
Bangor, ME
Tel. 207-949-2273

PISCATAQUIS COUNTY

Partners for Peace* Domestic Violence
Dover-Foxcroft, ME (safe homes)
Tel. 1-800-863-9909

SOMERSET COUNTY

Family Violence Project Domestic Violence
Somerset County
Tel. 1-800-890-7788

New Hope Shelter Women & Children
Solon, ME
Tel. 207-399-3348

Trinity Shelter General
Skowhegan, ME
Tel. 207-399-7538 or 207-474-8833

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Next Step* Domestic Violence
Machias, ME
Tel. 1-800-315-5579

YORK COUNTY

Caring Unlimited* Domestic Violence
Sanford, ME
Tel. 1-800-239-7298

York County Shelter Programs, Inc.* General
Alfred, ME
Tel. 207-324-1137

York County Shelter Programs, Inc.* Family
Sanford, ME
Tel. 207-324-1137

*Shelters that receive MaineHousing funding are marked with an asterisk.

For additional homeless resources contact 211 Maine Inc. at 211 or 211maine.org.

EMERGENCY SHELTER AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ESHAP)

The Emergency Shelter and Housing Assistance Program includes funding for Housing Navigator services. These services help people assess their housing needs and helps them develop a housing stability plan. Housing Navigators also link clients with mainstream and income resources and helps them get their with basic needs met. They help with housing search and placement, and support clients beyond shelter to ensure housing stability

MaineHousing also provides rental subsidies to ESHAP grantees on a first-come, first-served basis for program participants. This includes short-term vouchers and permanent rental assistance vouchers.

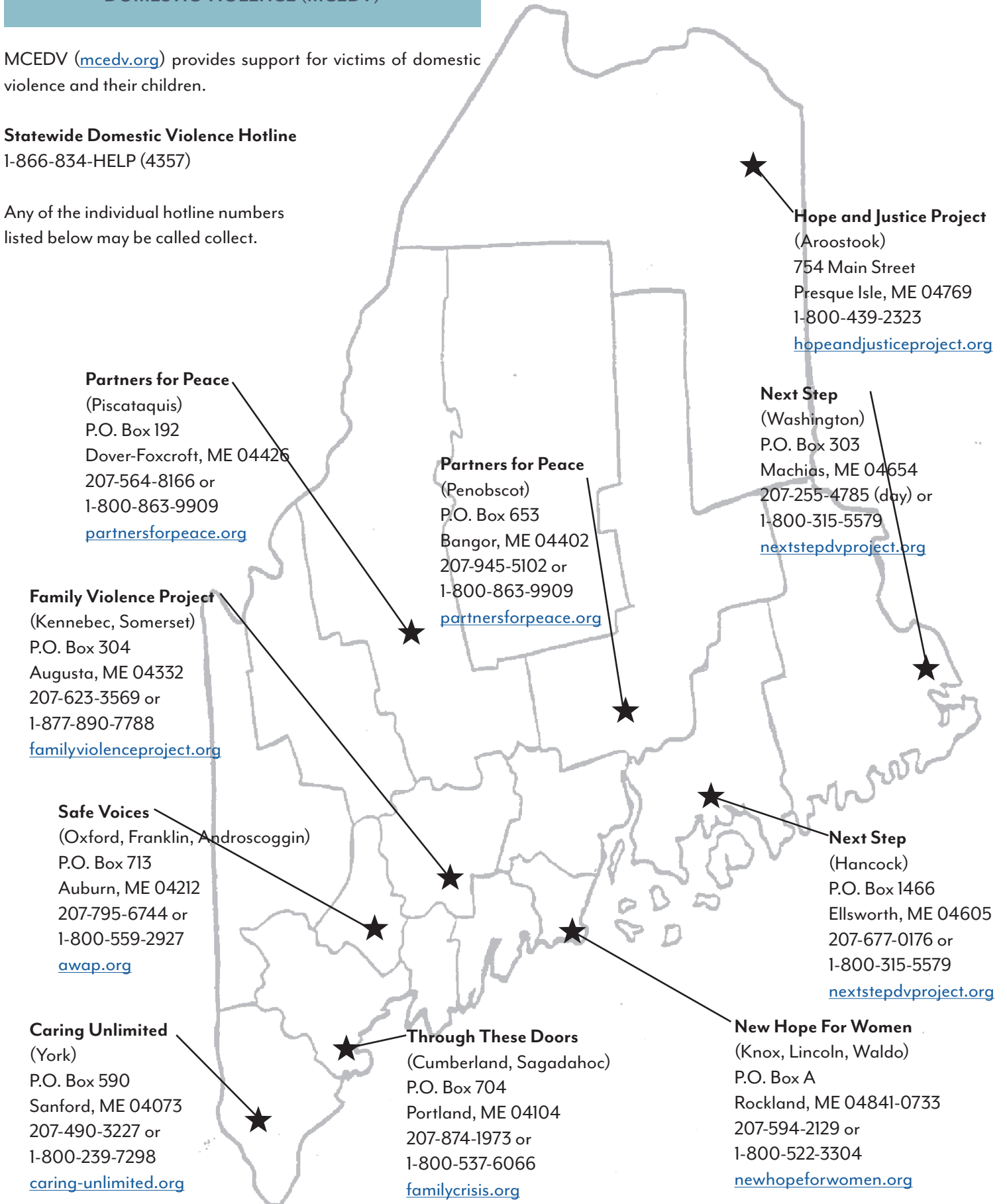
The short-term vouchers are part of the Stability Through Engagement Program (STEP). The permanent vouchers are part of the Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) program. These vouchers are available for those who meet the HUD definition of homelessness and are working with a participating ESHAP shelter provider.

**MAINE COALITION TO END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (MCEDV)**

MCEDV (mcedv.org) provides support for victims of domestic violence and their children.

Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline
1-866-834-HELP (4357)

Any of the individual hotline numbers listed below may be called collect.



HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP)

HEAP is a federally funded program that helps with home heating bills, based on household income and size.

The Emergency Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) may provide emergency fuel deliveries between November 1st and March 31st each year.

For more information, or to apply, applicants may contact their local Community Action Agency serving their area listed below.

PROGRAM AGENTS

ANDROSCOGGIN AND OXFORD COUNTIES

Community Concepts, Inc.

240 Bates Street
Lewiston, ME 04240
Tel. 207-795-4065 or 1-800-866-5588;
Fax 207-784-6882

AROOSTOOK COUNTY

Aroostook County Action Program

771 Main Street, P.O. Box 1116
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Tel. 207-768-3053 or 1-800-585-3053; Fax 207-768-3021

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

The Opportunity Alliance

222 St. John Street
Portland, ME 04102
Tel. 207-553-5900 or 1-800-698-4959;
Maine Relay 711; Fax 207-553-5976

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Western Maine Community Action

20B Church Street, P.O. Box 200
East Wilton, ME 04234
Tel. 207-645-3764 or 1-800-645-9636;
Fax 207-645-3270

KENNEBEC, LINCOLN, SAGadahoc, AND SOMERSET COUNTIES

Kennebec Valley Community Action Program

97 Water Street
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel. 207-859-1500 or 1-800-542-8227; Fax 207-872-6747

KNOX COUNTY

Penquis Community Action Program

315 Main Street, Suite 205
Rockland, ME 04841
Tel. 207-596-0361; Fax 207-594-2695

PENOBSCOT AND PISCATAQUIS COUNTIES

Penquis Community Action Program

262 Harlow Street, P.O. Box 1162
Bangor, ME 04402-1162
Tel. 207-973-3630; Maine Relay 711;
Fax 207-973-3699

WALDO COUNTY

Waldo Community Action Partners

9 Field Street, P.O. Box 130
Belfast, ME 04915
Tel. 207-338-3025 (HEAP) or 1-800-498-3025;
Fax 207-930-7324

WASHINGTON AND HANCOCK COUNTIES

Downeast Community Partners

248 Bucksport Road
Ellsworth, ME 04605
Tel. (HEAP) 207-664-2424 or 207-546-7544
or 1-800-828-7544 (from 8:00 - 12 noon);
Fax 207-664-2430

YORK COUNTY

York County Community Action Corp.

6 Spruce Street, P.O. Box 72
Sanford, ME 04073
Tel. 207-324-5762 or 1-800-965-5762; Maine Relay 711;
Fax 207-490-5023



LEAD HAZARDS

Lead poisoning is one of the most serious health issues facing Maine children and their families. Lead-based paint is found in a significant number of homes in Maine built before 1978. Lead poisoning can cause serious and even permanent health problems, and is particularly dangerous to children under 6 years old. Remodeling and repair projects may create serious household lead poisoning risks. A large number of all lead poisoned children in Maine live in homes that have been renovated, or are currently being renovated.

Half of all children poisoned by lead in Maine live in rental housing. Most of the lead poisonings that occur in rental properties are due to paint in poor condition (maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/eohp/lead/property-owners.shtml).



LEAD-RELATED REQUIREMENTS

Landlords, property management companies, real estate agencies, and home sellers are required by state and federal law to inform potential occupants of the known presence of lead-based paint in pre-1978 housing.

Before signing a lease the landlord must disclose known lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards and provide available written reports if applicable. The landlord must provide the pamphlet titled "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home." This pamphlet can be found at epa.gov/lead/protect-your-family-lead-your-home.

Any child who is identified through lead screening as having an elevated blood lead level is reported to Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC). Maine CDC then has an inspection conducted to determine the source of the lead poisoning, including an inspection of the housing unit the poisoned child lives in. If lead-based substances in "poor" condition are identified, Maine CDC will provide notice to the tenants and the landlord. After notice the landlord has 30 days to remove, replace, or securely and permanently cover the substance in accordance with rules adopted by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. Please see maine.gov/dep/rwm/lead/. Lead abatement work must be completed by a licensed lead abatement contractor. Please see www1.maine.gov/dep/waste/lead/leadcontractors.html.

A landlord may not evict a tenant because of a lead hazard in the apartment. The landlord is required to move the tenant to a substitute unit, pay for moving expenses, and pay for any rental charges in excess of the tenant's current expenses while the lead hazard is addressed.

For information about lead poisoning prevention, please contact the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, 207-287-4311 or 1-866-292-3474.

MAINEHOUSING'S LEAD PROGRAMS

MaineHousing works with Maine's Community Action Agencies to fund lead abatement work for owners of rental units and single-family households that meet specific requirements.

The programs provide up to \$30,000 to eligible owner occupied single-family homeowners, and up to \$15,000 per unit with a 10 unit maximum per landlord for lead abatement. Landlords must commit to reserving units for low-income tenants for 3 years as well as as well as prioritizing renting to to families with children under six or families with a pregnant person. For more information or to determine eligibility, homeowners and landlords may contact the organization serving their county.

Aroostook County Action Program

Tel. 207-768-3023 or 1-800-432-7881

Serving Aroostook County

City of Biddeford

(207) 284-9115 Option #6

Serving Biddeford

City of Lewiston

207-739-6575

Serving Lewiston

City of Portland

207-874-8983

Serving Cumberland County

Community Concepts, Inc.

207-743-7716 or 1-800-866-5588

Serving Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, and York counties

Penquis Community Action Program

Tel. 207-973-3500 or 1-800-215-4942

Serving Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Penobscot, Piscataquis,

Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington counties

RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD/TENANT LAWS

State law contains specific rights and protections for tenants (people who are renting housing). Tenants are protected from unsafe housing, unfair evictions, discrimination, mishandling of security deposits, and other abuses.

Tenants may need to take certain actions to be legally protected. These actions are meant to balance landlords' legal rights and tenants' legal rights.

A landlord may require a tenant sign a written agreement, called a *lease*, when the tenant rents an apartment or house from the landlord. A written lease can benefit tenants and landlords if the terms of the lease are clear and fair. Tenants should read the whole lease carefully and understand their obligations under the lease before signing it.

A tenant can request that a landlord enter into a lease, but the landlord has no legal obligation to do so. A *tenancy at will* is when there is no written lease between the landlord and the tenant. Most of Maine's landlord/tenant laws are designed to protect tenants when there is no written lease and apply only to tenancies at will.

Some of these laws apply whether or not there is a written lease. Even though tenants and landlords sign a lease that includes provisions that are different than the law, tenants cannot agree to waive certain basic protections given to them by the law, no matter what is in the lease. For example, a landlord and a tenant may agree that the landlord can terminate the lease and evict the tenant without a reason by giving less than 30 days' written notice (which is required by law for tenancies-at-will). However, the landlord cannot get rid of the tenant by changing the locks on the door or removing the tenant's furniture from the apartment, even if the tenant agrees that the landlord can take such actions in the lease. Only a law enforcement officer can force the tenant to leave. They can only do that after the tenant has a court hearing and the court orders that the tenant be evicted.

The following resources provide information on Maine's law and tenants' rights and obligations under the law:

- **Pine Tree Legal Assistance** publishes Self Help Tools for Rental Housing, an online resource of landlord/tenant laws with helpful tips for tenants. For more information, landlords and tenants may visit the Pine Tree Legal Assistance website at ptla.org/self-help/2652, or call a Pine Tree Legal Office located near them. See Page 15.
- The **Maine Attorney General's Office** publishes the *Consumer Law Guide*, a technical summary of the law with references to the specific statutes. The Guide includes chapters on consumer rights when renting an apartment (Chapter 14), consumer rights when living in a mobile home (Chapter 15), and a model landlord-tenant lease (Chapter 16). For more information, landlords and tenants may visit the Attorney General's web site at maine.gov/ag and click on *Consumer Law Guide*, or call 1-800-436-2131.

If landlords or tenants have any questions about their rights and obligations under the law or a lease, they should contact an attorney. If they cannot afford an attorney, a list of legal aid agencies is included on Page 15 of this Guide.

The following are general suggestions for tenants:

- Tenants should carefully read the whole lease and understand their obligations under the lease before signing it. If they do not understand a provision in the lease, they should ask the landlord to explain the provision, and if necessary, rewrite the provision in the lease to make it clear.
- Tenants should remember that a written lease is an agreement between the tenant and the landlord. If there is something important to the tenant, they should make sure it is written into the lease before signing it.
- When tenants move into a rental unit, they should make a list of all of the existing defects in and damage to the apartment. Tenants should provide the landlord with a copy of the list, and if possible, get the landlord to acknowledge the list by signing it. Tenants also should keep a copy of the list for their records. This will protect tenants in the event the landlord claims that any of the defects or damages on the list were caused by the tenant.
- Tenants should get a receipt from the landlord for all security deposits and rental payments and keep the receipts until they have satisfied all of their obligations under the lease, even if they are not living in the apartment (e.g., they have moved but are still obligated to pay rent under the lease). The landlord is required by law to give the tenant a receipt for all cash payments, which includes payment by check.

- All notices, agreements, understandings, changes, and complaints should be made in writing and should be dated and signed. Tenants should keep a copy of all written items given by the tenant to the landlord or received by the tenant from the landlord.
- Tenants should make sure that the landlord has their correct mailing address, including a forwarding mailing address, when they move out of the apartment. Many of the tenant protections under the laws contain notice requirements. If the landlord gives the tenant written notice at “the last known address” (which may not be the current address), the landlord may have satisfied their obligation under the law even if the tenant never received the notice.
- Tenants are responsible for their guests and their behavior. For example, tenants will be held responsible for all damage to their apartment and any disturbance caused by their guests. For example, if the tenant's guest brings a dangerous pet to the tenant's apartment or the property on which it is located and the pet threatens or harms the landlord or other tenants, the tenant will be held responsible.
- Tenants should go to Self Help Tools for Rental Housing at ptla.org/self-help/2652, an online resource published by Pine Tree Legal Assistance, for more helpful tips.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Landlords may not refuse to show or rent a unit or impose different terms or conditions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, age, familial status, or receipt of public assistance. This law does *not* apply to rental of: 1) a two-family dwelling, one unit of which is occupied by the owner; 2) the rental of 4 or less rooms of a one-family dwelling which is occupied by the owner; or 3) the rental of any dwelling owned by a religious corporation to its members, unless the discrimination is based on race, color, or national origin.

Landlords are required to allow physically disabled tenants to modify their apartments so they may fully enjoy the premises. Tenants may be required to restore the interior of the premises to their original condition when they vacate the unit.

Landlords may restrict the number of occupants based upon the size of the unit, but any restriction must be consistent with applicable local, state, and federal restrictions.

Landlords generally may not refuse occupancy because a tenant requires the aid of an assistive animal unless the building consists of two units, one of which is occupied by the owner.

For further information or to make a complaint, tenants should contact:

Maine Human Rights Commission

State House Station 51

Augusta, Maine 04333

Tel. 207-624-6290 or Maine Relay 711

maine.gov/mhrc

or

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

10 Causeway Street, Room 321

Boston, Massachusetts 02222-1092

Tel. 617-994-8300 (voice) or 1-800-827-5005 (voice)

or MassRelay 711

hud.gov/offices/fheo

Tenants may have further rights under local ordinances.

OTHER LANDLORD OBLIGATIONS

Lead Hazards - See Page 11 of this guide for information about landlord obligations concerning lead hazards.

Energy Efficiency - A tenant who will be paying energy costs has the right to get information on the last 12 months of energy use from the energy supplier(s). Before a tenant enters into a contract or pays a deposit to rent or lease a property, the landlord shall provide the energy efficiency disclosure statement, obtain a signature, and keep a copy on file for three years. The standard disclosure form is posted on the Maine Public Utilities Commission's website at maine.gov/mpuc/online/forms/EnergyEfficiencyDisclosure.html.

Radon Testing - Landlords are required to have the air in each building with rental units tested for the presence of radon. Landlords must report test results to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) within 30 days. The disclosure to tenants and DHHS must include the results of the test, the date of the test, that the tenant has the right to test, and a reference to where the tenant can get more information about radon. Tenants explicitly have the right to test for radon. If a tenant and the landlord get different results, the landlord may hire a professional and must disclose the new test results. The landlord also may choose to accept the tenant's results. The failure of a landlord to disclose test results or the falsification of records by a landlord is considered a breach of the state's Warranty of Habitability Act. A lease may be terminated within 30 days' notice in accordance with current law by a landlord or tenant if the results exceed 4.0 picocuries per liter. A landlord may not retain a security deposit for termination based on radon test results. See the DHHS website for more information, maine.gov/dhhs.

Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors - Landlords are required to provide working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors at the time a property or unit is rented. Tenants are required to keep the batteries in the detectors charged and to test the detectors. Tenants are prohibited from disabling the smoke detectors. Landlords are required to repair or replace a smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector if a tenant provides written notice to the landlord that the detector is not working properly.

Smoking Policies - Landlords are required to provide written notice to tenants and potential tenants about whether or not smoking is allowed. The notice must state whether smoking is prohibited on the premises, allowed on the premises, or allowed in limited areas. If the landlord allows smoking in limited areas, the notice must identify where smoking is allowed. A landlord may notify a tenant of the smoking policy in a written lease agreement, or provide a separate written notice. The landlord must provide this written notice before a tenant enters into a contract or pays a deposit to rent or lease the property.

Bed Bugs - Bed bugs are becoming much more common in Maine. MaineHousing has developed a fact sheet for renters, available at mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/bed-bugs-fact-sheet.pdf. For more information regarding landlord and tenant responsibilities related to bed bugs, see also Pine Tree Legal Assistance's website at ptla.org/rights-maine-renters-unsafe-or-unfit-housing. Additional information, including a link to the relevant statutory language, is available at mainepublichealth.gov/bedbugs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CODES AND ORDINANCES

Consumers should check with the local town office or city hall first for information on codes and ordinances.

For specific codes, consumers may visit maine.gov/professionallicensing or:

Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation

Tel. 207-624-8603 or Maine Relay 711

Electrical information:

Electricians' Examining Board

Tel. 207-624-8457 or Maine Relay 711

Fire, Structural Safety information:

State Fire Marshal

Tel. 207-626-3870 or Maine Relay 711

Furnace safety information:

Maine Fuel Board

Tel. 207-624-8627 or Maine Relay 711

Plumbing information:

Plumbers' Examining Board

Tel. 207-624-8627 or Maine Relay 711

PROPERTY TAX & RENT REFUND PROGRAM

Maine residents may be eligible to receive a limited reimbursement on their property tax or rent paid on their apartment. Residents may contact their local town office or city hall or:

Maine Revenue Services

maine.gov/revenue/taxrelief

Tel. 207-626-8475

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC)

The EITC is a refundable federal income tax credit for low to moderate income working individuals and families. For more information on the EITC contact your local IRS Office.

211 MAINE, INC.

2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember telephone number that helps connect people in need with the community resources available to help meet those needs. The 211 website offers an on-line searchable database of community resources available in Maine at 211maine.org (or Maine Relay 711).

MAINEHOUSINGSEARCH.ORG

If you are looking for an apartment or are a landlord with an apartment to rent, you may be interested in MaineHousingSearch.org - a free online rental listing service that links people who need housing with the housing they need.

- FREE, fast and easy to use with both simple and detailed search options
- Detailed listings can include pictures, maps, eligibility requirements (if applicable), and much more
- Available online 24-7 and supported by a toll-free, bilingual call center, Monday-Friday, 9 am to 8 pm EST, 1-877-428-8844, Maine Relay 711
- Continuously updated listings by a call center that regularly contacts landlords to verify availability status

MaineHousing, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and in partnership with 211 Maine, Smoke-Free Housing, and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), is sponsoring the website as a public service. The site is provided by Socialserve.

SMOKE FREE HOUSING

The Smoke-Free Housing Coalition of Maine offers information regarding smoke-free housing, tenant and landlord resources, and a listing of smoke-free housing in Maine. To find out more, consumers may visit their website at breatheasymaine.org.

ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

For information, services, and products that create opportunities for people with disabilities to live independently, consumers may contact:

Alpha One

alphaonenow.org

Bangor, Tel. 207-941-6553

Presque Isle, Tel. 207-764-6466

South Portland, Tel. 207-767-2189

MAINE KIDS-KIN

Maine Kids-Kin provides services for grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, and extended family who are raising relatives' children.

familiesandchildren.org/maine-kids-kin.html

Tel. 1-866-298-0896

ASSISTANCE FOR OLDER ADULTS

Area agencies on aging provide information and resources for older adults in Maine. Consumers may contact:

Maine's Agencies on Aging

maine.gov/dhhs/oads/community-support/resource-centers.html

Tel. 1-877-353-3771

maine.gov/dhhs/oads/get-support/older-adults-disabilities/area-agencies-on-aging

ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS

Veterans Benefits Administration - for questions concerning veteran benefits, compensation, insurance, and vocational rehabilitation, consumers may contact:

VAM & ROC

1 VA Center

Togus, ME 04330

Tel. 1-800-827-1000 or Maine Relay 711

Veterans Health Administration - for homeless veteran health, mental health, and domiciliary care services, consumers may contact:

VAM & ROC

1 VA Center

Togus, ME 04330

Tel. 207-623-8411 or 1-877-421-8263

Veterans Services

National Veteran's Call Center

Tel. 1-877-424-3838

va.gov/homeless/nationalcallcenter.asp

va.gov/homeless/index.asp

LEGAL RESOURCES

Legal assistance for low-income persons:

Pine Tree Legal Assistance:

ptla.org

ANDROSCOGGIN, FRANKLIN, AND OXFORD COUNTIES

95 Park Street, 3rd Floor, Lewiston
Tel. 207-784-1558 or Maine Relay 711

AROOSTOOK COUNTY

373 Main Street, Presque Isle
Tel. 207-764-4349 or Maine Relay 711

CUMBERLAND, SAGadahOC, AND YORK COUNTIES

88 Federal Street, Portland
Tel. 207-774-8211 or Maine Relay 711

HANCOCK AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES

13 Cooper Street, Machias
Tel. 207-255-8656 or Maine Relay 711

KENNEBEC, KNOX, LINCOLN, AND SOMERSET COUNTIES

39 Green Street, Augusta
Tel. 207-622-4731 or Maine Relay 711

PENOBSCOT, PISCATAQUIS, AND WALDO COUNTIES

115 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Bangor
Tel. 207-942-8241 or Maine Relay 711

Pine Tree Native American Unit, Machias

Tel. 1-877-213-5630

Pine Tree Farmworker Unit, Bangor

Tel. 207-942-0673

Additional legal resources:

Disability Rights Center

drcme.org

Statewide Hotline, Tel. 1-800-452-1948 or Maine Relay 711

HelpMELaw

helpmelaw.org

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project

ilapmaine.org

Tel. 207-780-1593

Lawyer Referral and Information Services

mainebar.org/page/attorneyrequest

Tel. 1-800-860-1460

Legal Services for the Elderly

mainelse.org

Statewide Hotline, Tel. 1-800-750-5353

Maine Equal Justice Partners

mejps.org

Tel. 207-626-7058 or 1-866-626-7059

Maine Human Rights Commission

state.me.us/mhrc

Tel. 207-624-6290 or Maine Relay 711

Maine Volunteer Lawyer's Project

vlp.org

Southern Maine

Tel. 1-800-442-4293

Monday, 1 to 3:30 pm and Friday, 9 to 11:30 am

Northern Maine:

Tel. 1-888-956-4276

Friday, 9 to 12 pm

State Attorney General's Office

state.me.us/ag

Tel. 207-626-8849 or 1-800-436-2131 from 9 AM to 12 noon and 1 4 pm M-F

or email consumer.mediation@maine.gov

For a copy of "Consumer Rights When You Rent An Apartment", "Consumer Rights When You Live In A Mobile Home", or the "Model Landlord-Tenant Lease", consumers may call 207-626-8861. Callers should leave a message with their name and address and the information needed.

To search Maine statutes on the web:

go to mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/search.htm

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
& HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS)

Augusta District Office

35 Anthony Avenue
Augusta, ME 04333-0011
Tel. 207-624-8000 or 1-800-452-1926 or Maine Relay 711

Bangor District Office

19 Maine Avenue
Bangor, ME 04401
Tel. 207-561-4100 or 1-800-432-7825 or Maine Relay 711

Biddeford District Office

407 Alfred Street, Suite A-1
Biddeford, ME 04005
Tel. 207-286-2400 or 1-800-322-1919 or Maine Relay 711

Calais District Office

392 South Street
Calais, ME 04619
Tel. 207-904-3800 or 1-800-622-1400 or Maine Relay 711

Caribou District Office

30 Skyway Drive, Unit 100
Caribou, ME 04736
Tel. 207-493-4000 or 1-800-432-7366 or Maine Relay 711

Ellsworth District Office

17 Eastward Lane
Ellsworth, ME 04605
Tel. 207-664-1400 or 1-800-432-7823 or Maine Relay 711

Farmington District Office

114 Corn Shop Lane
Farmington, ME 04938
Tel. 207-778-8400 or 1-800-442-6382 or Maine Relay 711

Fort Kent District Office

139 Market Street
Fort Kent, ME 04743
Tel. 207-834-1000 or 1-800-432-7340 or Maine Relay 711

Houlton Regional Office

11 High Street
Houlton, ME 04730
Tel. 207-532-5000 or 1-800-432-7338 or Maine Relay 711

Lewiston Regional Office

200 Main Street
Lewiston, ME 04240-7098
Tel. 207-795-4300 or 1-800-482-7517 or Maine Relay 711

Machias District Office

38 Prescott Drive
Machias, ME 04654
Tel. 207-255-2000 or 1-800-432-7846 or Maine Relay 711

Portland District Office

151 Jetport Boulevard
South Portland, ME 04106
Tel. 207-822-2000 or 1-800-482-7520 or Maine Relay 711

Rockland District Office

91 Camden Street
Rockland, ME 04841
Tel. 207-596-4200 or 1-800-432-7802 or Maine Relay 711

Sanford District Office

890 Main Street, Suite #208
Sanford, ME 04073
Tel. 207-490-5400 or 1-800-482-0790 or Maine Relay 711

Skowhegan District Office

98 North Avenue, Suite 10
Skowhegan, ME 04976
Tel. 207-474-4800 or 1-800-452-4602 or Maine Relay 711

South Paris District Office

243 Main Street, Suite #6
South Paris, ME 04281
Tel. 207-744-1200 or 1-888-593-9775 or Maine Relay 711

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

General Assistance is financial help administered by each local community. It provides funds for basic living expenses for those who cannot afford them. All communities are required by state law to provide general assistance. Communities have local laws, called ordinances, which specify program eligibility and benefits. These ordinances must be made available to the general public through the municipal office or selectpersons.

Some communities have particular days or hours for applying for general assistance. When the administrator of the General Assistance Program determines that an emergency situation exists, the applicant must be allowed to apply for assistance that same day. An applicant is entitled to make out applications in writing, have privacy during the application and interviewing process, and receive a written decision within 24 hours. Applicants are required to prove income and living expenses, so they should bring check stubs and receipts for expenses.

For more information about General Assistance, applicants may contact their local town office or city hall or the Department of Human Services, General Assistance Division, 1-800-442-6003.



For more information contact:

MaineHousing

26 Edison Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330-6046
207-626-4600,
1-800-452-4668, or
Maine Relay 711

mainehousing.org

Maine State Housing Authority ("MaineHousing") does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, age, familial status or receipt of public assistance in the admission or access to or treatment in its programs and activities. In employment, MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability or genetic information. MaineHousing will provide appropriate communication auxiliary aids and services upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing will also provide this document in alternative formats upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing has designated the following person responsible for coordinating compliance with applicable federal and state nondiscrimination requirements and addressing grievances:

Lauren Bustard
Maine State Housing Authority
26 Edison Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330-6046
Telephone Number 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only),
(207) 626-4600 (voice), or Maine Relay 711

