

Justice Assistance Council Meeting Minutes

Date: April 27, 2026

Time: 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Location: Zoom meeting

Attendees

- ❖ Francine Garland Stark - Executive Director, Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence
- ❖ Derek Gorneau- Assistant to the Commissioner, Department of Public Safety
- ❖ Brian Scott – Lieutenant Colonel, Maine State Police
- ❖ Rebecca Austin – Executive Director, Safe Voices
- ❖ Julia Bergeron - Director, Maine Statistical Analysis Center
- ❖ Tara Wheeler – Katherine Cutler Institute
- ❖ Madison Burke - Katherine Cutler Institute
- ❖ Deborah Poulin - Clinical Director, Office of Behavioral Health
- ❖ Anthony Cantillo - Deputy Commissioner, Department of Corrections
- ❖ Shira Burns - Executive Director, Maine Prosecutors Association
- ❖ Lisa Bogue - Deputy Attorney General, Chief of Criminal Division
- ❖ Michelle Morse - Senior Grants Specialist, Department of Public Safety
- ❖ Augustin Buyeye - Grants Specialist, Department of Public Safety
- ❖ Jess Bedard - Associate Director, Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- ❖ Alicia Hunter - Violence Intervention Program Manager, DHHS
- ❖ Mary Kunhardt - Special Ed Social Worker, Brunswick High School
- ❖ John Kilbride - Police Chief, Falmouth
- ❖ Lincoln Ryder - Director, Maine Criminal Justice Academy

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Francine Garland Stark after confirming quorum.

The meeting started with a round of introductions from the attendees, highlighting their roles and affiliations. Francine Garland Stark was the first to introduce herself, followed by Derek and other members, each sharing their position and contributions to the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The JAC members approved the September 8, 2025, minutes. No changes requested. Motion passed.

Agenda Overview

The primary focus of the meeting was to discuss the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors) implementation plan, which is essential for addressing violence against women through federal funding and support.

STOP Implementation Plan Overview

Francine Garland Stark led the overview.

The STOP grant, established under the Violence Against Women Act, supports efforts to enhance services, training, and prosecution related to domestic violence and sexual assault. Each state is allocated a specific amount based on population, with Maine typically receiving around \$1.3 million. The Maine Justice Assistance Council (JAC) oversees the grant distribution, ensuring funds are allocated to victim services, law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and discretionary programs.

The STOP implementation plan must be developed every four years, outlining priorities for the distribution of funds. Federal approval is required before funds are released. The current cycle is behind schedule due to staffing and timing delays. There are upcoming tasks and deadlines for drafting the implementation plan, with an emphasis on gathering data and insights.

Data Collection Strategy

Julia Bergeron, Director of the Maine Statistical Analysis Center, presented a data collection strategy, which includes:

- ❖ Implementation Plan Survey: A brief survey scheduled to be deployed, focusing on identifying funding needs and service barriers in domestic violence and sexual assault contexts.
- ❖ Interviews with Subgrantees: Conducting one-on-one interviews with selected subgrantees to gain deeper insights.

- ❖ **Secondary Data Review:** A thorough review of existing data related to domestic violence and sexual assault to inform funding decisions.
- ❖ **Tribal Engagement:** Ensuring compliance with government-to-government engagement requirements for tribal considerations in the implementation plan.

Planned Timeline

The plan is to have the draft completed by mid-August, with various preparatory meetings scheduled. Attendees were encouraged to engage in upcoming surveys and meetings to provide their insights.

Grant Updates Summary

Michelle Morse provided updates on various grants under the Department of Public Safety, including:

Stop Grant

2023 & 2024 Awards

Both awards end on 6/30/2026.

An extension for STOP F2024 will be submitted to allow subrecipients to spend down their funds.

2025 Award

The 2025 award ends 6/30/2027.

We continue to monitor subrecipients closely and have been following up subrecipients to get quarterly progress reports and to ensure cash requests are filed timely.

2026 Award

The 2026 Opportunity has not been posted

RSAT Grant

Somerset County has spent their **2020** and **2021** funds.

2022 Funds totaling \$109,067 have been spent. They have \$58,824 remaining which will need to be spent by their project end date which is 09/30/2026.

The **2025** application was submitted on 04/24/2026.

Coverdell Grant

2024 Award

The three labs (HETL, MSP Crime Lab, and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner) are currently doing project work with these grant funds.

The 2024 award ends 9/30/2026.

2025 Award

The Coverdell 2025 Grant Application was submitted in JustGrants on 10/24/2025. We haven't received the award letter for Coverdell F2025 yet.

Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) Grant

The Maine State Police Crime Laboratory was awarded \$135,786 (\$66,254 in F2023 and \$69,532 in F2024) to purchase the LEADS IBIS BrassTrax System for use with the National Integrated Ballistic Identification Network (NIBIN) to continue vital public safety operations with respect to gun crimes.

The Crime Lab completed the purchase and installation of the National Integrated Ballistic Identification Network last fall.

The Maine Gun Safety Coalition 3rd edition of Maine gun laws has been completed.

Maine Gun Safety Coalition - Salary for Nacole Palmer to work on the PSN project, personnel cost for the intern to write the 3rd edition, and printing fees have been expended.

The contract with University of Maine was closed out last fall.

JAG Grant

2023 – These funds are currently being used by subrecipients. Contracts for Counties end 9/30/2026.

2024 – JAG applications will be sent out at the end of May with a June 30th due date.

The **2025** application was submitted on 04/10/2026

Byrne SCIP

2022-2023 – Two RFAs have been posted. There is a total of thirteen subrecipients with award funds totaling \$318,929.

We are currently working on a no-cost extension GAM which will be followed by a Budget GAM as the research partner will likely have too much funding so the funds will be moved to the subaward line.

A third RFA will be submitted.

The current project end date is 09/30/2026. A no-cost extension GAM will be submitted.

The **2025** Opportunity was posted on April 15, 2026, with a due date of May 12, 2026.

Additional discussion

- ❖ Concerns raised about delays in federal grant announcements
- ❖ Department of Public Safety staff acknowledged for grant management work
- ❖ Members encouraged to raise questions and stay engaged

Adjournment

- ❖ No additional business raised
- ❖ Meeting adjourned

Next Meeting: confirmed for June 8, 2023. Additional Meeting: Proposed for July 13, 2023.