

Cabinet on Aging Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2023, 3-4 PM (by Zoom)

Commissioner Lambrew welcomed Cabinet members, recognized Cabinet staff in attendance, and reviewed the agenda for the meeting which was to discuss updates and current activities on two key statewide plans focused on improving the safety and wellness of older adults.

Maine's Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership

Judy Shaw of the Office of Securities and Jay Martin, Legal Services for the Elderly, presented on the Elder Justice Roadmap, published by the EJCP in December 2021. Some key points included:

- Maine has a rich history of collaboration in preventing and addressing elder abuse.
- Governor Mill's established the EJCP in 2019, a public-private multi-disciplinary partnership. The EJCP was benefited by grant funds that helped provide structure and support in developing the Roadmap.
- Since 2019, progress has been made on several of the priority recommendations set forth in the Roadmap, including several initiatives that were included as part of the FY 24-25 biennial budget.
- Past work has shown that the EJCP benefits from having dedicated support to move work forward. **To continue this progress, the State successfully applied for a grant funding to hire a coordinator to support robust implementation of the Elder Justice Roadmap and assist the Partnership in continuing its work.** The amount of the award is \$302,659.50 for the period October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2025, through the National Center for State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions. The grant and hiring will be managed through Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future.
- Commissioner Sauschuck expressed continued support for this work based on his role and involvement as a member of the EJCP.

The PowerPoint for this presentation will be posted as part of the meeting minutes.

Maine's State Plan on Aging

Paul Saucier, Director of the Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS), and James Moorehead, Program Manager for Health Aging at OADS, provided a status update on Maine's State Plan on Aging. This plan is submitted to the federal government every four years as a condition of receiving continued funding under the Older Americans Act.

- The current 2020-2024 State Plan on Aging has guided the development of key priorities and initiatives for aging services and programs in Maine (examples provided in PowerPoint). The emergence of COVID-19 highlighted the needs of caregivers and strengthened emergency preparedness and other planning needs.
- As part of developing the State Plan, a statewide needs assessment is conducted every four years. The needs assessment is conducted by the University of Southern Maine and consists of

statewide surveys of older adults and caregivers, virtual listening sessions, focus groups, and key informant interviews.

- Data from the needs assessment will inform the State Plan priorities as well as inform the Cabinet's strategies and priorities. Cabinet staff reviewed and provided comment on the survey questions to maximize the benefits of this study.
- OADS, the Cabinet, Area Agencies on Aging, and other community partners are helping to get the word out about the survey and listening sessions.

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Updates

Several updates and items of interest were provided by Cabinet members:

- As a reminder, effective October 25, 2023, the annual benefit under the statewide Respite for ME program is increasing from \$2000 to \$5,171. This program, funded by the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan, is designed to support caregiver needs and runs through December 2024.
- Karen Fraser of the Maine Department of Labor provided a reminder of their website that includes resources for older workers and also provided an update on a new PSA campaign highlighting opportunities, advantages, and available supports and resources for older workers and employers.
- Shiva Darbandi of the Department of Administrative and Financial Affairs provided an update on a training facilitated by Maine Council on Aging for Human Resources staff focused on addressing ageist stereotypes and practices in the workplace. A training open to all state employees will also be offered shortly.
- The Cabinet on Aging recently issued a newsletter and anyone interested in receiving Cabinet news and updates can sign up on the Cabinet's webpage.

Next meeting

The next Cabinet on Aging meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2023, from 3-4. The most current information on Cabinet meetings is posted on the Cabinet's website.