

Direct Victim Services

TOP PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Review annually the staffing distribution and capacity of Maine Adult Protective Services** statewide and at district levels, including the wrap-around support services provided through the Elder Service Connections program. *Lead partner: Maine Adult Protective Services*
- **Increase the resources directed to Legal Services for Maine Elders** that are specifically focused on supporting attorneys who will provide free legal representation to victims of elder abuse. *Lead partner: Legal Services for Maine Elders*
- **Fully implement the new statewide Elder Justice Investigator position** that supports a multidisciplinary approach to elder abuse cases and provides data collection, education, training, and mentorship to strengthen the identification, investigation, and prosecution of elder abuse in Maine. *Lead partner: Maine Department of Public Safety*
- **Provide targeted case management services**, such as the Elder Service Connections program, to victims of abuse who are not within the jurisdiction of Adult Protective Services. *Lead partner: Elder Abuse Institute of Maine*

SECONDARY PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Identify and assign an Elder Abuse Prosecutor within each District Attorney's office** to work with the Elder Service Officers in that District. *Lead partner: Maine's District Attorneys*
- **Use the Coordinated Community Response model and best practices** to support and expand the multidisciplinary groups of professionals and organizations in Maine that are focused on raising awareness and improving the coordination of the local response to elder abuse. *Lead partner: Legal Services for Maine Elders*
- **Support and require Victim Witness Advocate programs** located in prosecutorial districts across the state to develop and provide services designed specifically to meet the needs of older victims. *Lead partner: Office of the Maine Attorney General*
- **Support Public Health Nurses with the resources to ensure they have the skills and capacity to assess for elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation** during home wellness visits, provide education about resources available, and, if abuse is identified, ensure a multidisciplinary response. *Lead partner: Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention*

Public & Professional Education

TOP PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Fully develop an Elder Service Officer certification program through the Maine Criminal Justice Academy**, similar to specialized certifications that Domestic Violence Investigators receive, to be used as a best practice investigative protocol for law enforcement officers and in developing a network of elder justice-focused liaisons among departments throughout the state. *Lead partner: Department of Public Safety*
- **Develop education and training resources, including online resources, for non-mandated reporters**, including professionals, volunteers, and the general public who interact with older adults, that assist in recognizing and responding to elder abuse. *Lead partner: Cabinet on Aging*
- **Increase the knowledge, competency, and compliance of mandated reporters by including the mandated reporter training requirements of Maine State law (22 MRS 958-A, §3477(8))** in appropriate state regulations, guidance, and websites, as well as adding a requirement for appropriate licensed facilities and agencies that ensures all staff who are mandated reporters complete the required training and demonstrate competency in fulfilling their duties. *Lead partner: Cabinet on Aging with the Division of Licensing & Certification*

SECONDARY PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increase awareness of Maine's statutory requirement that all mandated reporters must complete a Department of Health and Human Services-approved training once every four years**, focusing on individuals and organizations impacted by this law. *Lead partner: Cabinet on Aging with Adult Protective Services*
- **Sustain, expand, and enhance the use of Public Service Announcements** to raise public awareness of elder abuse. *Lead partner: Legal Services for Maine Elders*
- **Expand the cadre of skilled spokespersons and trainers across disciplines** who can articulately and accurately communicate compelling messages about elder abuse and raise awareness and consciousness at local and state levels. *Lead partner: Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention*

Public Policy

TOP PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Establish a formal linkage between the Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership and the Cabinet on Aging** to ensure continued and sustainable engagement and coordination in advancing their shared commitment to improving Maine's response to elder abuse while maintaining the autonomy of the Partnership. *Lead partner: Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership Co-Chairs*
- **Convene a group to review the respective roles and responsibilities of statutorily established death review teams that encompass older adults**, including the Maine Death Analysis Review Team and the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel, to ensure appropriate communication, cross-referrals, and sharing of findings, and, as appropriate, recommended best practices. *Lead partner: Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership Co-Chairs*
- **Work with Maine Death Analysis Review Team leadership to produce an annual report summarizing the findings** of the Team that includes factors contributing to the mortality of older adults, strengths and weaknesses of the system of care, and recommendations to improve the health and welfare of older adults, such as modifications to law, rules, training, policies, and procedures. *Lead partner: Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership Co-Chairs*

SECONDARY PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Incorporate data related to facility staffing and resident acuity into the examination of residential care facility staffing** conducted by the LD 979 stakeholder group. Utilize the recommendations of the stakeholder group in the next Assisted Housing Rules Revision to ensure an evidence-based minimum standard for sufficient direct care staff to meet residents' quality of care and quality of life needs. *Lead partner: Division of Licensing & Certification*
- **Explore including substantiations from Adult Protective Services in the Maine Background Check registry** or similar public-facing registry. *Lead partner: Adult Protective Services*

Data and Evaluation

TOP PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Compile annual Adult Protective Services data** to identify trends and patterns and develop ongoing recommendations for the system, including data about the number and types of professionals completing the mandatory training for mandated reporters. *Lead partner: Adult Protective Services*
- **Gather and publish data regarding the quality of long-term care settings**, including Assisted Housing, to identify patterns and variations and to better inform the public. *Lead partner: Division of Licensing & Certification*
- **Work with the Office of the Maine Attorney General to explore options to compile and analyze data available through the Office of Medical Examiner on deaths of older Mainers** in order to identify potential trends and system issues and to inform multidisciplinary review teams, including death review teams and other interested parties, in their development of recommendations regarding specific changes to laws, training, and protocols. *Lead partner: Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership Co-Chairs*

Next steps

Elder abuse is an injustice that touches us all—our families, friends, and communities. Healthcare professionals, financial institutions, law enforcement officers, service organizations, and many other professionals contribute specialized expertise and resources that enhance Maine’s capacity to respond effectively to abuse and neglect. Equally important are the caregivers, volunteers, and concerned community members, whose vigilance and connection often serve as the first line of defense. Through the collective commitment of Mainers to remain vigilant and not look the other way, we can all make a meaningful difference and ensure that every person can age safely.

Together, we look forward to strengthening partnerships, fostering collaboration, and advancing our shared vision of a Maine where every older adult lives free from abuse, supported by communities that uphold safety, dignity, and respect.

References

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