



# The Maine Elder Justice Roadmap

JUNE 2026

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*Prepared by the Catherine Cutler Institute, Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine.*

# Preface

## **Maine's Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership (EJCP) was established in 2019 to:**

- Identify challenges to the prevention of, detection of, and response to elder abuse.
- Develop strategic priorities across the public and private sectors to prevent and respond to elder abuse.
- Make recommendations regarding direct services, public and professional education, public policy, and data collection and evaluation, including legislative changes, if any.

This report describes the progress and current priorities of Maine's Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership (EJCP), a coalition created by Governor Mills through issuance of an Executive Order in 2019. While Maine has a rich history of collaboration advancing elder justice, the EJCP, for the first time, established a leadership structure to support the public and private sectors in developing shared strategic priorities to address elder abuse.

The twenty-one members of the EJCP represent a broad, multidisciplinary approach that brings together law enforcement, social services, legal professionals, community organizations, and other experts. Convened in response to the Executive Order, the EJCP also received support from the John T. Gorman Foundation, which helped guide the development of the first Elder Justice Roadmap in 2021. The 2021 Roadmap highlighted the critical need for innovative solutions to prevent, detect, and respond to elder abuse in a society that values justice for all. Its recommendations were focused primarily on preventing and addressing elder abuse, particularly when the abuser is someone known to the victim.

Since its inception, the EJCP has remained committed to advancing these goals. Following the release of the Roadmap, EJCP members agreed to take on the ongoing task of ensuring

the implementation of its recommendations. This public-private collaboration has met regularly between 2022 and 2026, sharing updates, addressing challenges, and brainstorming solutions to overcome any obstacles in the implementation process.

This 2026 Maine Elder Justice Roadmap builds on this foundation, highlighting the progress made since 2021. It offers an updated set of recommendations to respond to elder abuse through justice-oriented approaches, protecting our right to live free from abuse and holding accountable those who infringe on that right.

# Elder Justice is Justice for All

*“Elder abuse can and does happen to people you know.”*

— EJCP MEMBER

In a society that values the just treatment of all people, elder abuse has implications for all of us. We all have the right to live free from the dehumanizing and disempowering effects of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Yet research shows that elder abuse is common, with **one in ten Americans 60 years and older having experienced abuse in the past year.**<sup>1</sup> It can include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, along with neglect and financial exploitation, and it is **most often committed by a trusted person**, including intimate partners, adult children, and other family members. The impact elder abuse can have when perpetrated by a family member or trusted friend is devastating. People thrive on relationships and community, but these can often be destroyed when those we love inflict harm on us in any form.

The World Health Organization recognizes that elder abuse is an important global public health issue.<sup>2</sup> Still, only one in 24 cases is reported.<sup>3</sup> Older adults may be reluctant to report abuse out of shame or fear of the perpetrator; of getting family members, especially adult children, into trouble; of losing a caregiver, even if they are the abuser; or of losing autonomy.

The effects of elder abuse are far-reaching and sobering. For example, older adults who experience fraud and exploitation are at risk of financial ruin, at the very time when they may need resources to pay others for care and support. AARP estimates older adults lose \$20.3 billion each year to financial exploitation by someone they know.<sup>4</sup>

The health effects of elder abuse and exploitation are no less severe and include higher rates of depression, anxiety, and self-reported poor health, as well as increased emergency department, hospital, and nursing facility use.<sup>5 6 7</sup>

Nationally, Medicare costs are over \$5,000 more per year for victims of elder abuse compared to similar adults, due to more hospital and emergency care.<sup>8</sup> In Maine, elder financial exploitation results in nearly \$14,000 more in MaineCare and Medicare spending per victim than those who are not exploited.<sup>9</sup>

The human toll is the most tragic—older adults who experience abuse are three times more likely to die within a decade compared to older adults who have not been abused.<sup>10</sup> This serious social problem costs people

## ELDER ABUSE

### BY-THE-NUMBERS

Each year...



**1 in 10 older Mainers experience abuse**



Of those abuse cases, **only 1 in 24 are reported**

### IMPACTS

Older adults who experience elder abuse...



Experience **increased rates of:**

- ▶ Depression, anxiety, poor health
- ▶ ER, hospital, nursing home use and expenditures



**More likely to die within 10 years** than those who are not abused

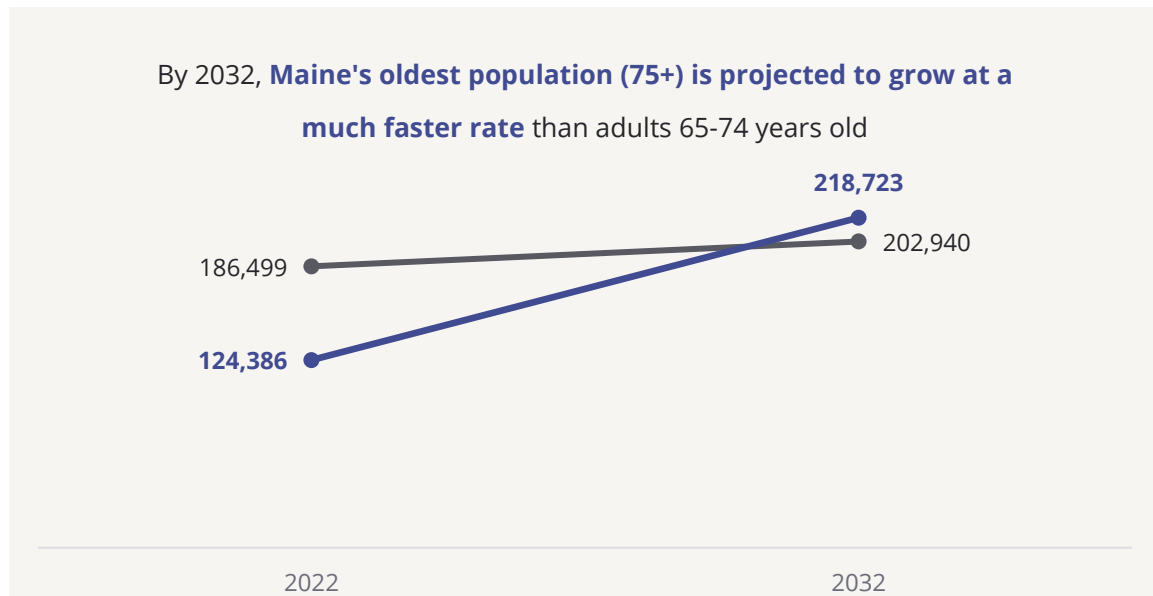
their very lives, denies families of their loved ones, and deprives all of us of valued members of our communities who might otherwise volunteer, mentor, educate, and remain productive and important members of our Maine communities.

Risk factors associated with experiencing elder abuse include having poor physical health, cognitive decline, social isolation, financial strain, and shared living situations. When these risk factors are present and we don't have the support in our families and communities to manage them, we can fall prey to others who step in to "help." It is not uncommon for victims of elder abuse to live with the perpetrator. In Maine, more than half of older Adult Protective Services clients live with the perpetrator of the abuse.<sup>11</sup> A lack of available direct care workers exacerbates these vulnerabilities, especially in rural areas where support services, as well as elder abuse response services, may be more limited, contributing to isolation.

Ageism within our culture and society may worsen the problem and interfere with the recognition and reporting of elder abuse.<sup>12</sup> For example, in U.S. Census reports, the ratio of younger adults to one older adult is often referred to as the "dependency ratio," equating older age with societal burden and implying that older adults are less worthy of care or expendable. Ageist attitudes, such as viewing older people as less competent than younger people, can result in not believing older people when they do report abuse.<sup>13</sup> Our own internalized ageism—the product of our adoption of the negative beliefs imposed by society—decreases our sense of self-worth, our ability to be and remain productive, and can cause us to feel unworthy of help or to think that the abuse is somehow our fault.<sup>14 15</sup>

## Older Mainers at Risk of Abuse

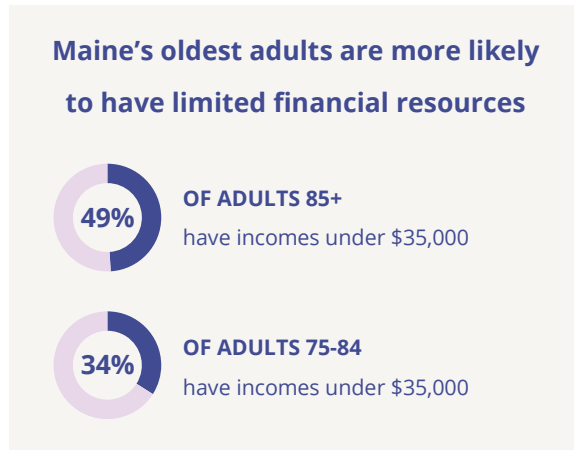
Maine's demographic trends highlight the need for the continued action of all of us to help detect, prevent, and respond to elder abuse. The Maine State Economist estimates that twenty-two percent of Mainers were 65 or older in 2022, and by 2032, they will make up nearly thirty percent of the population. With the aging of the Baby Boomer generation, the number of adults 75 and older is projected to increase by 75%, compared to only 9% growth among adults 65-74 years old.



*Maine Office of the State Economist. (2024, December 31). Demographic projections. Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services. <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/demographic-projections>*

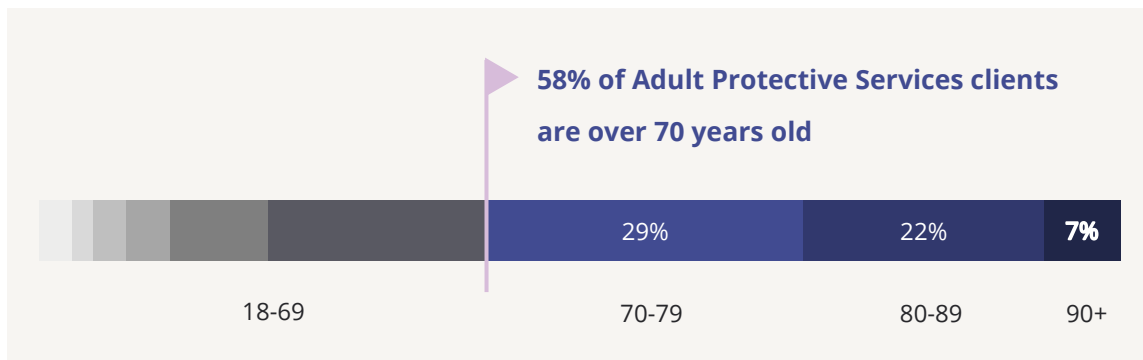
While people of any age can experience abuse, neglect, or exploitation, the risk factors often compound with advancing age. For example, as noted earlier, one risk factor for elder abuse is having limited financial resources. Maine's oldest adults are more likely to have very limited financial resources. Over one-third of older adults ages 75-84 and nearly half of those

ages 85 and above have incomes under \$35,000. This also means that for older adults with limited incomes, even small losses can prevent them from meeting their needs.



Source: Derived from the Public Use Microdata Sample of the American Community Survey 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org).

Data from the organizations and agencies that help respond to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation reflect the importance of focusing attention on interventions that serve older adults. According to the most recent [Maine Adult Protective Services Data Trends Report](#), fifty-eight percent of Adult Protective Services clients are over 70 years old, and seven percent are over 90 years old.



Source: [Maine Adult Protective Services Data Trends Report, SFY2021-2024](#)

The root causes of elder abuse are deeply connected to broader social determinants of health, and many risk and protective factors need to be addressed through systemic change in social service delivery, housing and transportation accessibility, food security, income

inequality, and other areas that advance elder justice goals. This also means there are protective factors that can help detect and prevent elder abuse, such as social engagement, caregiver supports, and community connections. There are many organizations and agencies at the federal, state, and local levels engaged in initiatives that are focused on root-cause strategies, and the EJCP recognizes and appreciates the critical nature of this work. However, for the Roadmap, recommendations are limited to those that more directly relate to elder abuse services, prevention, intervention, and response activities. While broader systemic factors remain important, the focus here is on actions and strategies that fall within the scope of elder justice programming and that can have an immediate, measurable impact on reducing and addressing elder abuse.

### Elder abuse risk and protective factors

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cognitive and physical decline</li> <li>Financial strain</li> <li>Caregiver strain</li> <li>Dependency on others</li> <li>Social isolation</li> <li>Shared living situations</li> <li>Limited social supports</li> <li>Ageism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social engagement</li> <li>Caregiver supports</li> <li>Screenings</li> <li>Community partnerships</li> <li>Ageism education</li> </ul>

# Responding to Elder Abuse through an Elder Justice Framework

**The federal Elder Justice Act defines “elder justice” from two perspectives:**

## **SOCIETAL**

Efforts to prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and to protect older adults with diminished capacity while maximizing their autonomy.

## **INDIVIDUAL**

Recognition of an older adult’s rights, including the right to be free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Elder abuse is a community problem that warrants a multidisciplinary, community-based solution. Responding to elder abuse through justice-oriented approaches protects our right to live free from abuse and holds accountable those who infringe on that right.

Maine’s responses to elder abuse have reflected this justice-oriented approach, and the state is nationally recognized for its public-private collaborative efforts. State and local government agencies, community organizations, businesses, and individuals often work together to craft solutions that stop the abuse from happening while preserving the autonomy of older adults who have experienced abuse. The EJCP members represent many of these agencies and organizations, demonstrating the effectiveness of a multidisciplinary approach.

## Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership Member Agencies and Organizations

### **PUBLIC SECTOR**

**Co-Chair:** Governor’s Cabinet on Aging

Maine Chiefs of Police Association

Maine Department of Health and Human Services, including representatives from

Adult Protective Services

Center for Disease Control & Prevention

Office of Aging and Disability Services

Office of Behavioral Health

Office of Child and Family Services

Maine Department of Public Safety

Maine Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Office of Securities

Maine Office of the Attorney General

Maine Prosecutors Association

Maine Sheriffs Association

Maine State Police

United States Attorney’s Office

### **PRIVATE SECTOR**

**Co-Chair:** Legal Services for Maine Elders

Elder Abuse Institute of Maine

Maine’s Area Agencies on Aging

Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence

Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

This approach recognizes that elder abuse is often multi-faceted, involving different types of abuse (physical, financial, emotional) and intersecting with other issues, and that no single agency or organization has all the skills or expertise required to address the diverse needs of victims across multiple systems. This approach supports increased efficiency and effectiveness, system-level prevention strategies, and improved outcomes for those who experience abuse and mistreatment.

# Key Milestones

## Reached 2021–25



*The original Roadmap provided a guide that helped steer us forward, and it shows how far we've come together.*

— EJCP MEMBER

Following the release of the Elder Justice Roadmap, EJCP members transitioned from planning to action. This section highlights the significant progress made by Maine in advancing the recommendations set out in the 2021 Roadmap. These achievements include statutory and regulatory changes, new programming development, enhanced training initiatives, and other investments in elder justice strategies.

Since the release of the Roadmap in 2021, the EJCP's work has been significantly strengthened by grant funding that supports a dedicated EJCP Coordinator position, managed through the Cabinet on Aging. Established by Governor Mills in 2022, the Cabinet brings together State government agencies to coordinate and advance efforts across a

broad range of issues—many of which, if left unaddressed, contribute to higher rates of elder abuse.

Several Cabinet on Aging members are also members of, or have staff representation on, the EJCP, including the Commissioners of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation. Recognizing elder justice as a core priority and sharing a commitment to the Roadmap goals, the Cabinet, as one of its first initiatives, supported Maine’s successful application for grant funding to sustain the EJCP Coordinator position.

In 2023, Maine was one of only eight states to receive funding through the National Center for State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions—one of just two states awarded funding for an existing coalition. This grant ran through March 2026.

To further strengthen the partnership between public and private sectors, the Coordinator of the Cabinet on Aging also serves as the EJCP’s public sector co-chair. Although these developments occurred after the Roadmap’s release in 2021, they have played a key role in advancing the coordinated work of the EJCP described in this section.

## Implemented Recommendation Highlights

The following examples illustrate the numerous collaborative efforts of the EJCP across the four different domains. They do not reflect the full scope of activities, many of which are ongoing. In many cases, the work done to date provides a foundation for further improvement and refinement of activities, as seen in the updated recommendations for 2026-2028.

### ● Direct Victim Services

**RECOMMENDATION:** Expand and strengthen wraparound support services, including case management services, for victims of elder abuse.

As part of the FY24-25 biennial budget and as proposed by Governor Mills, the [Elder Service Connections](#) (ESC) pilot program received permanent funding. This recommendation was informed by the demonstrated success of an evidence-based pilot program implemented by Maine Adult Protective Services (APS) and the Elder Abuse Institute of Maine (EAIME) in two counties, which expanded statewide in 2021. Grounded in the nationally recognized [RISE model](#) (**R**epair harm, **I**nspire change, **S**upport connection, **E**mpower choice), the program pairs APS clients with EAIME advocates who facilitate access to needed services and support meaningful, sustainable life changes that promote healing and reduce the risk of future harm. ESC serves 350-400 clients referred by APS each year and has grown its staff advocates from four in 2019 to nine in 2025. Maine has emerged as a national leader in the successful implementation of the RISE model.

*“We don’t just work with the person who has experienced harm — we also, when the person chooses, work with those who have caused harm and others involved to strengthen the relationships that matter most. Because our advocates stay engaged longer than most formal systems can, we have time to build genuine trust and lasting support around each person and family. This approach reduces the likelihood of future harm and helps build a stronger, more responsive network of support across our state.”*

— PATTY KIMBALL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ELDER ABUSE INSTITUTE OF  
MAINE

**RECOMMENDATION: Increase staffing and resources available for Maine Adult Protective Services and Legal Services for Maine Elders.**

The FY24-25 biennial budget included \$4 million in investments to reduce abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and adults with disabilities. Part of this funding supported the addition of 10 staff positions statewide within APS and increasing the capacity at Legal Services for Maine Elders to provide free legal assistance to older Mainers.

**RECOMMENDATION: Establish dedicated, statewide forensic auditing resources to support law enforcement in investigating financial exploitation cases.**

Following this Roadmap recommendation, the Legislature authorized a new, full-time Forensic Data Analyst position within the Maine Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) Investigations Division. This position was filled in September 2024 and serves as a civilian investigator and training resource for elder justice investigations and prosecutions statewide and provides access to specialized data-analysis software to support complex financial investigations.

**RECOMMENDATION: Develop a Hub and Spoke system to increase specialized investigative resources for law enforcement and improve the response to elder abuse.**

In 2025, the Maine Department of Public Safety established a new statewide full-time Elder Justice Investigator position to help address the rising and often complex crimes targeting Maine's older adults. Federal funding from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) supports a two-year pilot focused primarily on Central and Southern Maine. The role of the Elder Justice Investigator includes:

- ▶ Providing case mentorship and investigative assistance to departments handling elder crime cases.
- ▶ Offering training and education to frontline responders using current Maine Criminal Justice Academy curriculum and specialized elder justice content.
- ▶ Promoting a multidisciplinary approach to elder abuse cases, connecting agencies to tools, best practices, and community resources.
- ▶ Collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data on elder crime trends, outcomes, and needs, helping inform future policy decisions.
- ▶ Supporting statewide efforts to expand the Hub and Spoke model for elder crime investigations.

*“This type of crime is something law enforcement needs to understand in depth, and establishing an Elder Justice Investigator role will help officers do just that. In Maine, as the oldest state in the nation, it’s especially important that we embrace this population.”*

— OFFICER CANDICE SIMEONI, EJCP MEMBER  
AND ELDER JUSTICE INVESTIGATOR

## ● Public and Professional Education

### **RECOMMENDATION: Require training for all mandated reporters to Adult Protective Services.**

Mandating reporting of suspected abuse of an incapacitated or dependent adult to APS by service professionals is a first step in detecting and responding to abuse—APS can only act if a report has been made. While required training for mandated reporters of child abuse has been in place since 2016, there was no equivalent requirement for mandated reporters of adult abuse. In 2023, the Maine legislature amended the Adult Protective Services Act to include a training requirement for all mandated reporters. [22 MRS §3477](#) Maine Revised Statutes now requires all mandated reporters under that Act to complete DHHS-approved training at least every four years.

To facilitate access to training, the [APS training webpage](#) provides an online, on-demand training for mandated reporters. As of spring 2025, the webpage has been updated with a new call-out box highlighting the training requirement for mandated reporters, making the online mandated reporter training more visible, and adding FAQs on the mandatory reporter training.

In 2024-2025, a group of APS staff and EJCP members met to discuss how to raise awareness of this new training requirement and inform organizations, providers, and professionals. They launched an outreach campaign in the spring of 2025 targeting all types of mandated reporters through professional associations. It provided information about the new

mandatory training requirement and directed individuals and organizations to the APS webpage for further details.

**RECOMMENDATION: Add specific elder abuse investigator training to the Maine Criminal Justice Academy (CJA) offerings.**

To further this recommendation, in the fall of 2024 and spring of 2025, a small work group, led by the Director of the CJA and the Commissioner of Public Safety, convened to discuss expanding the older adult-focused training that law enforcement officers receive. The group researched Elder Service Officer trainings and curricula used in other states, examined what Maine currently offers, and explored available resources for curriculum development. This led to a proposal to include elder abuse training as part of the 2026 mandated curriculum required for all law enforcement officers. In summer 2025, the CJA Board of Trustees approved a mandatory training topic for 2026 on Elder Exploitation, Fraud, and Abuse to be rolled out in January 2026. The CJA will consider what additional topics they may want to create in the future.

*“Specialized training for our law enforcement officers across the state on this incredibly important topic is just one way to better protect and serve older Mainers.”*

— COMMISSIONER SAUSCHUCK, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

● **Public Policy**

**RECOMMENDATION: Add an attorney’s fee provision to the Improvident Transfer of Title Act to incentivize private attorneys to take on more financial exploitation cases.**

To further this recommendation, Legal Services for Maine Elders led efforts toward passing LD 1027, “An Act to Strengthen the Law Regarding Relief for Improvident Transfers of Title,” enacted in June 2025 (P.L. 2025 ch. 279). This new law allows attorneys’ fees to be collected

when a dependent older person's property is transferred at less than full consideration, and there is a confidential or fiduciary relationship between the dependent older person and a person who benefitted from the transfer.

*"When an older Mainer is exploited by someone they trust, the cost of legal representation should not stand in the way of justice. This law strengthens accountability and provides a practical path for older adults to seek the return of a wrongfully taken home."*

— JAYE MARTIN, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES FOR  
MAINE ELDERS AND EJCP CO-CHAIR

**RECOMMENDATION: Increase access to the Securities Restitution Assistance fund.**

A second successful policy change stemming from an EJCP recommendation was the enactment of the Securities Restitution Assistance Fund in 2021 (codified at [32 MRS §16522](#)). The fund, established within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Office of Securities, provides restitution awards for victims of securities violations who do not receive full restitution from the respondent in an action brought by the Securities Administrator. The intent is to increase the number of victims who seek and receive help in financial exploitation cases. In 2025, the Office of Securities made the first award from the fund and paid nearly \$20,000 to an older Mainer who suffered financial losses relating to an unlicensed investment advisor.

● **Data and Evaluation**

**RECOMMENDATION: Examine the capacity and resource needs to publish an annual APS data report, analyze the data to identify trends and patterns, and develop ongoing recommendations for system improvement.**

In response, the Department of Health and Human Services contracted with the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy at the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service to annually produce the [Maine Adult Protective Services Data Trends report](#). Since 2021, the annual Data Trends reports have described APS operations across all populations it serves, as well as client characteristics of adults under and over 60 who receive services for intellectual and developmental disabilities and those who do not. This data has informed planning and programmatic needs and is valuable to a broad array of audiences interested in better understanding trends and patterns at state and regional levels.

# Recommendations for 2026–2028



*It's so important that we don't view this work as done and maintain our momentum.*

— EJCP MEMBER

In 2025, the Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership began a strategic planning process to update Maine's Elder Justice Roadmap. A planning team designed a rigorous process for assessing progress and considering current opportunities and challenges. EJCP members participated in three extended planning meetings, two in-depth questionnaires, and individual interviews to provide more detailed information.

In a facilitated process, the EJCP identified 70 potential recommendations for its 2026 Roadmap update. For each potential recommendation, members assessed the ease and impact of implementation.

## **EASE**

Recommendations were evaluated based on the existing capacity to advance the recommendation over the next several years, whether the external environment, including the policy environment, is likely to support the advancement of the recommendation, and

whether there is an organizational leader with the ability to regularly engage with the EJCP and help coordinate and support implementation.

### **IMPACT**

Recommendations were evaluated on the level of impact they would have on one or more long-term objectives of the EJCP to decrease the incidence of elder abuse in Maine, increase the number of victims who seek and receive help, and improve the multidisciplinary response to elder abuse; whether the recommendation would respond to an urgent need; and whether it would help raise the profile of the need and enhance the likelihood of action being taken in response.

Using both quantitative and qualitative assessment tools, the EJCP members reached consensus on Top Priorities and Secondary Priorities. Top-priority recommendations have broad support among members, a high probability of successful implementation, and a significant impact on addressing elder abuse. Secondary Priority recommendations have wide support among members but may have a more difficult path to implementation. Secondary Priorities will be advanced as resources become available, or circumstances otherwise improve. Members agreed that leadership is critical and, therefore, a recommendation must have a lead organization to qualify for top or secondary status.

The EJCP selected 13 Top Priorities and 9 Secondary Priorities for inclusion in the 2026 Elder Justice Roadmap. The additional proposed recommendations that did not meet the criteria were set aside and archived for future consideration.

## **The Scope of the Roadmap Recommendations**

As in their work on the original Roadmap, EJCP members continued to discuss how current challenges in the health and social service systems enable abusive situations to occur and prevent people from living healthy, independent lives free from abuse. For example, when we lack adequate housing that meets our needs as we age or can't find help with daily personal care, we may become dependent on family members who may not have the necessary resources, skills, or best intentions to assist us.

Maintaining a focus on addressing the gaps in available health care, behavioral health services, long-term services and supports, accessible housing, transportation, food security, and other areas would benefit all Mainers and mitigate some of the risk factors for abuse that older people experience. For example, improving the critical shortage of direct care workers would help us stay healthy and safe in our chosen communities. Increasing accessible public transportation options and developing walkable routes through towns would help all of us maintain our independence and connection to our communities, while also reducing social isolation. These structural changes benefiting all Mainers are key to preventing elder abuse.

This 2026 Elder Justice Roadmap does not make recommendations to address the challenges in the current health and social service system as outlined above. Rather, it focuses specifically on Maine's response to elder abuse committed by persons of trust, such as family members or caregivers.

**The Roadmap provides recommendations regarding actions that the public and private sectors can take today in the areas of direct victim services, public and professional education, public policy, and data collection and evaluation to:**

- ▶ Decrease the incidence of elder abuse in Maine.
- ▶ Increase the number of elder abuse victims who seek and receive help in stopping abuse.
- ▶ Improve the multi-disciplinary response to elder abuse.

## Direct Victim Services

### Top Priority

- **Review annually the staffing distribution and capacity of 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

- **Identify and assign an Elder Abuse Prosecutor within each District Attorney's office** to work with the Elder Service Officers in that District. *Lead partners: Maine 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 of 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 and Professional Education

### Top Priority

- **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: Maine 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 §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 partners: Cabinet on Aging with Division of Licensing & Certification*

### Secondary Priority

- **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 partners: Cabinet on Aging with Maine 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

- **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 partners: 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 partners: 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

- **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 and Certification*
- **Explore including substantiations from Adult Protective Services in the Maine Background Check registry** or similar public-facing registry. *Lead partner: Maine Adult Protective Services*

## Data and Evaluation

### Top Priority

- **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: Maine 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 and 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*

# Acknowledgments

*There is no excuse for elder abuse.*

— MAINE COUNCIL FOR ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

Elder abuse is an injustice that touches us all—our families, friends, and communities. 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.

While the efforts of the EJCP and its member organizations form a crucial foundation for advancing system-level change, the Roadmap would not be complete without acknowledging the numerous other partners and individuals who contribute daily to preventing and addressing elder abuse across Maine and beyond.

Healthcare professionals, financial institutions, law enforcement officers, legal advocates, social service providers, community and faith-based organizations, researchers, policymakers, and educators each contribute specialized expertise and resources that enhance Maine's capacity to respond effectively. Equally important are the contributions of caregivers, volunteers, and concerned community members, whose vigilance and connection often serve as the first line of defense against abuse and neglect. Collectively, these partners create a robust network of prevention, intervention, and support.

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.

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