

Additional Highlights from Governor Mills' 2024-2025 Budget

Improving the Health and Welfare of Maine People:

- **Improving Child Safety Through Strong Families:** \$1 million in one-time funds to launch [the Child Safety and Family Well-Being Plan \(PDF\)](#), a new framework released by the Mills Administration to guide policymakers and community members in keeping Maine children safe by keeping families strong. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services will use the funding to launch an education campaign to encourage parents to seek information and support as well as emphasize the importance of communities' role in raising the next generation. Funding will also be provided to Maine-based organizations to develop enhanced and coordinated strategies around community-based efforts to strengthen families in Maine.

- **Comprehensive Behavioral Health Rate Reform:** \$22 million in total funding (\$5.6 million from the General Fund) for full implementation of new MaineCare rates for inpatient hospital psychiatric care over the biennium. This [builds](#) on \$230 million invested in behavioral health payment rates in the last biennium and over \$200 million included in the current services (Part 1) budget for fully implementing January 1, 2023 reforms as well as cost-of-living adjustments. The budget separately invests an additional \$22.5 million in total funding (\$6.3 million from the General Fund) in rate reform for other hospital services in FY 2025.

- **Strengthening Children's Behavioral Health Services:** Nearly [\\$20 million](#) in Federal and State funds in the 24-25 biennium to accelerate and intensify implementation of Maine's comprehensive children's behavioral health plan, including \$2.1 million in ongoing General Fund funding to establish a High-Fidelity Wrap-Around program for Medicaid-eligible youth to provide coordinated community services, training, and other supports for children with behavioral health needs and their families.

- **Provides Substance Use Disorder Services:** \$3.6 million for a treatment facility for substance use disorders in either Kennebec or Washington County. Additionally, the budget provides \$4.4 million in General Funds to support the ongoing and unprecedented demands of Maine's opioid crisis, complemented by \$3 million from the Attorney General's settlement funds, supporting activity like medication-assisted treatment programs for people who are uninsured or in jails, recovery residence expansions, and Treatment and Recovery Courts.

- **Improves Care for Residents with Disabilities:** \$37 million (\$11 million from the General Fund) to improve access to services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including funding to transform service delivery by creating a new Lifespan waiver to connect individuals with the services they need over their lifetime within a single program rather than various sections of MaineCare.

- **Tackles Food Insecurity:** \$2 million in one-time funding to create a food hub capital investment grant that will result in up to 10,000 prepared meals per day for homeless, sheltered, or other food-insecure people. It also includes \$5.5 million for home-delivered meals, enhancing existing funding to sustain delivery of nearly one million meals per year.

For more information about the budget's investments in the health of Maine people, click [HERE](#).

Strengthening Education:

- **Workforce Attraction Pilot:** \$2.75 million in one-time funding for a workforce attraction pilot program aimed at recent college graduates; expanding [the Maine Career Exploration program](#) to allow additional high school students the opportunity to have paid work experiences; and enhancing recruitment and job-related supports targeted to groups who are underrepresented in Maine's workforce, including older workers and people who have disabilities.
- **Strengthening Apprenticeships:** \$1.8 million in ongoing funding for the Maine Apprenticeship Program to support training programs designed to meet the specific needs of Maine employers through on-the-job learning and related classroom instruction. Registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships are highly effective tools for workers to build their skill set and connect to high-wage careers and for employers to recruit and retain workers. In 2022, Maine apprentices who completed their program increased their average wages by 43 percent.
- **Supporting Higher Education:** Nearly \$54 million in higher education funding to: 1) support a 4.5 percent increase for Maine's public higher education institutions, including the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System, and Maine Maritime Academy; 2) increase by \$5 million the Maine Economic Improvement Fund which provides ongoing investment for research and development; and 3) an ongoing increase of \$2 million per year for Maine Maritime Academy, permanently increasing their share of state funding.
- **Oral Health Programs in All Schools:** \$1.5 million over the biennium to expand school-based preventive oral health services (e.g., screening, fluoride varnish applications) from 219 to all 707 Maine schools by January 1, 2025. Promoting oral health among children and youth improves physical and mental health throughout their lifetimes.
- **Rebuilding and Repairing Maine's Schools:** \$20 million in one-time funding to replenish the School Revolving Renovation Fund, which provides no-

interest loans for school renovations and repairs across the state. This is Governor Mills' third investment in the fund.

Improving Maine's Infrastructure:

- **Improving Water Systems:** Adds \$16.5 million in one-time funding to the \$14 million ongoing General Fund support for a new total of \$30.5 million to improve drinking and wastewater infrastructure across Maine, preserving clean water, protecting public health, and reducing costs for taxpayers and ratepayers. The enhanced funding will allow the State to match increased Federal funding available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other Federal drinking water and wastewater programs.

- **Protecting Vital Infrastructure:** \$7.5 million in one-time funding to the Maine Department of Transportation's Infrastructure Adaptation Fund for culvert, resilience and adaptation investments through municipal grants and matching funds for Federal projects. These could include state or local culverts at risk of washout, road systems that flood during heavy storms, or coastal infrastructure vulnerable to increased storm surges due to rising sea levels.

- **Offshore Wind Advancement:** \$12 million investment in Maine's deep-water ports and other infrastructure to support the offshore wind industry and create local and regional supply chain and workforce opportunities. This funding would support planning, design, and permitting for port investments, as well as ongoing collaboration with individuals, communities, and businesses.

- **State Government Capital:** More than \$15 million for State government capital requests, including funding for the Department of Marine Resources to purchase a Marine Patrol seaplane that can also assist with Right Whale research, dam maintenance and renovations for wildlife park building for the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, as well as busses and building renovations for the Department of Education in Unorganized Territories.