



Women in Construction Executive Order

Progress Report: January 2025

Based on input from working women and industry partners, State of Maine agency partners – including the Department of Labor (MDOL), Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, MaineDOT, and Governor’s Energy Office – have identified four key strategies on which to focus over the coming year to advance the Governor’s goal of increasing the representation of women in construction: 1) Raise career aspirations, 2) develop industry-aligned skills, 3) connect to jobs and wraparound supports, and 4) retain women in respectful, safe, inclusive workplaces.

To drive forward this work, agency partners formed working groups focused on each of these respective strategies to enable cross-agency awareness and coordination on relevant initiatives, sharing updates through the broader Infrastructure Workforce Alignment Group. A full summary of key agency actions and target metrics to advance these strategies in 2025 is provided in the appendix.

The following represents a progress update of work from November 2024 to January 2025 to advance each of the four identified key strategies:

Raise career aspirations

- The Bureau of Rehabilitative Services’ Apprenticeship Navigator has elevated pathways to construction jobs as a core focus in serving **women jobseekers with disabilities**, including by:
 - Organizing a tour in January of People’s Inclusive Welding pre-apprenticeship program, which provides welding training to women and other marginalized populations. In total, 14 jobseekers registered for the tour, including 3 women.
 - Joining planning committee meetings for upcoming Trades for ME conferences (Waterville, Lewiston, Midcoast, and Presque Isle), focused on introducing girls and women to trades careers, and will inform Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) counselors to invite their clients.
 - Facilitating school field trips of the construction firm Cianbro, including one in January with the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences and another in March with Forest Hills High School.
 - Joining the Lewiston Career Exploration Workshop to talk about apprenticeship with DVR jobseekers.
 - Visiting schools throughout Regions 1-3 to speak with students enrolled in Goodwill Career Bootcamp classes through DVR, including February visits to Westbrook High School, Morse High School, and Greely High School.
 - Reaching out to 500 women DVR clients, inviting them to participate in upcoming cohorts of the 2025 AFL-CIO Pre-Apprenticeship program.
- The Augusta CareerCenter is planning an ongoing weekly **career exploration workshop series** focused on women in construction. The workshops are slated to begin in mid-February. There will be a hybrid attendance option, allowing for statewide attendance.
- The Bureau of Employment Services and Bureau of Rehabilitative Services have partnered to ensure that all front line staff are aware of the initiative and integrate construction opportunities when providing

career exploration services to women jobseekers. Going forward, we will continue to build awareness of opportunities in the sector by developing a toolkit for front line staff, hosting additional hiring events (see connections to jobs section for more details), and connecting with employers on hiring needs and training opportunities.

- MDOL connected with Robin Wood, HR Director for Reed and Reed Inc., a major construction firm in the state to discuss the Executive Order and ways to dispel cultural myths within the construction field through outreach and interactive events with school aged kids. Also in the conversation was Lisa Archer, Workforce Specialist at [New Ventures Maine](#), which offers events, classes, and individual coaching targeted at helping girls and women find success in their careers, start and grow small businesses, and gain financial stability. New Ventures are in the process of developing construction focused career events, building on their successful Trades for ME conferences, that MDOL will help promote. New Ventures Maine hosted several **Trades for ME conferences this fall with over 100 girls** between 7th and 12th grade at schools across the state. Through experiential learning opportunities and engaging speakers, these conferences encourage girls to consider nontraditional careers in the trades.
- In January, MCCS visited Long Creek Youth Development Center and offered a two-day event highlighting trade career pathways. **Seven young women** participated in events both days including an occupational career assessment on Monday and Tuesday brought welding simulators, a robotic dog, a culinary demonstration and career advising at the first annual Long Creek day of Trades with 41 total participants.
- The [MDOL Women in Construction website](#) has been added to [Maine JobLink](#) as a featured alert, further promoting the initiative and allowing us to track access and interest in it. The Women in Construction website has also been added to the employer and jobseeker e-blasts, which are distributed to over **15,000 registered members** on Maine JobLink, and we are continuing to update the page with featured resources and upcoming hiring events for the sector.
- Springvale CareerCenter staff worked with a small group of students, including two girls, at Noble High School. Staff joined Jessica Rubera’s Transition Class to conduct mock interviews. This was a culminating event which concluded a unit which focused on job search activities, completing applications, preparing resumes and trying out professional attire. The session focused on organizing succinct answers and developing questions to ask employers.
- As referenced in the last report, the Maine Apprenticeship Program has contracted with marketing partner Ethos to launch a **dedicated outreach campaign** highlighting women in non-traditional occupations in 2025. The campaign will spotlight Maine women working in construction and infrastructure sectors as apprentices and pre-apprentices, sharing testimonials about their experiences to encourage others to consider construction and other non-traditional careers. The Maine Apprenticeship Program has been working closely with marketing partner Ethos to develop the marketing materials for this work, and the social media campaign project kickoff will be in February.

Develop industry-aligned skills

- Leveraging MJRP funding, the Maine Apprenticeship Program awarded additional funds to four grantees to focus on expanding **apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for women in the trades**, and contract amendments are now complete. Grantees updates during this reporting period include:
 - *AGC Maine:*

- Applications are now open for their summer youth pre-apprenticeship programs. They have expanded to 16 locations across the state this coming year with a potential for one additional school. The first cohort starts in May, and they will all be done by mid-August.
 - They have also continued conversations with DOC and plan to host two pre-apprenticeship cohorts with the Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center by September 2026.
- *Maine AFL-CIO:*
 - Their Welding pre-Apprenticeship in partnership with People's Inclusive Welding was a success. This was focused on women and non-binary participants and wrapped up at the end of December.
 - Maine AFL-CIO is also continuing conversations with Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center to connect women to pre-apprenticeship post re-entry.
- Through a Maine Department of Corrections partnership with the Maine Community College System, **13 women** at the Southern Maine Women's Reentry Center (SMWRC) enrolled in workforce training or participated in trade careers workshop.
- Beginning in February, women at the Women's Center (WC) in Windham will begin enrolling in MCCS programs. MDOC is also working with the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program to connect women at SMWRC and WC with training and support resources.
- The Clean Energy Partnership Program out of the Governor's Energy Office supported training for women in construction and the building trades. One training was held on January 6th with **seven attendees** by passivhausMAINE, which actively reaches out to non-traditional construction and design workers, encouraging women, LGBTQ+ and racial minorities to participate in an effort to broaden the diversity on building sites. The training taught new and experienced builders about meeting new building and health codes as well as understanding and implementing the most effective and modern practices for building long-lasting, low-carbon structures.
- Maine Passive House (MPH), which specializes in constructing energy-efficient homes, launched their **new registered apprenticeship program**, created by carpenter Anna Heath in partnership with Educate Maine and MDOL. MPH's first registered apprentice, Delaney, shared how she sees the impact of their apprenticeship program extending beyond the job site, showing that opportunities in the field can be accessible: "I've met so many women who find it really difficult to get into this field," she says, "This is a very unique space because there are six of us women, which is very rare. People are noticing and realizing, 'Oh, wow, you can do that.'" Delaney's experience as a Registered Apprentice at MPH is a model for creating meaningful pathways for individuals, especially women, entering the trades. She hopes to inspire others to pursue opportunities like this one that offer accessible and supported entry into new (or familiar) fields.
- MDOL and MaineDOT continued conversations to fund **women-specific training cohorts of CDL drivers** in 2025, with a goal of training at least 40 women in key regions that are high priority to fill MaineDOT job vacancies. They are in the process of developing an RFA to fund this work, and progress will be shared in future reports.
- Coastal Counties Workforce Inc. (CCWI), which is administering "Green Jobs for ME," a sector partnership focused on connecting jobseekers to training and careers in the clean energy sector, currently is supporting **six women in the trades** through that funding, connecting them to carpentry apprenticeships through Reed & Reed and AGC, electrician training, welding training through People's

Inclusive Welding. Additionally, CCWI will have two cohorts starting this semester (March and May) with People's Inclusive Welding, and there are two women that have committed to that training.

- MCA conducted an industry survey and identified specific roles within the industry that employers are hiring for currently, and those they anticipate hiring for in the next 1-5 years due to infrastructure funding. This level of detail allows MCA to target outreach efforts around specific opportunities, and to strategize how to improve access to current training and educational opportunities where needed.
 - MCA's BEAD workforce programming features a partnership with the Maine Community College System (MCCS) and Central Maine Community College (CMCC). In the last 12 months, MCCS has hosted **seven cohorts of trainees**, with 86% of participants completing the program. The most recent three cohorts had 100% completion rates, and there is a waiting list for the next cohort. MCA continues to work to expand delivery of the program geographically and adapt training to hybrid/remote where possible.
 - MCA and MCCS have found that workforce stipend funding (provided through MCA) is paramount in recruiting program participants. In the last six months, CMCC provided stipends to the majority of enrolled students. Students shared that they depend on this funding to help offset the cost of travel and loss of wages during training.

Connect to jobs and wraparound supports

- MDOL launched the planning and execution of a **career fair blitz** focused on recruiting women into construction and other non-traditional occupations:
 - The Springvale CareerCenter held a job fair with a strong focus on the construction and manufacturing fields. Participants included Tom's of Maine, Sig Sauer, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, D+C construction, Pratt Whitney, The Landing School, Align Precision, Baker Company and Gorham Sand and Gravel, and it was held at the Sanford Community Adult Education building. The 17 participating employers highlighted their opportunities to the 49 job seekers who attended, 11 of whom were women. Satisfaction surveys averaged 4.5 out of 5 and employers saw an average of 13 visitors. Aaron White, recruiter for Tom's of Maine, was encouraged by the turnout. He was recruiting for entry level production jobs and highlighted some opportunities which were less taxing compared to other jobs, believing that they might be something appropriate for an older worker who would like a position which wasn't fast paced.
 - The Machias CareerCenter is planning a women in construction hiring event for March. The subtitle for the event will be "Building Her Future," and will similarly be promoted to women jobseekers.
 - The Greater Portland CareerCenter partnered with Fedcap to promote and host a job fair at Fedcap's South Portland office. Working with Dan Carigan, Fedcap's newly hired business development coordinator, the event set goals to serve 24 employers and 80 job seekers. The CareerCenter utilized its existing business network to recruit employers and had 24 employers registered one week prior to the event. The event was also promoted to the 149 job seekers who participated in the CareerCenter's job fair just two weeks prior. The job fair saw 109 job seekers in attendance. Judith Wynaught Harris, Fedcap's Performance Manager was enthusiastic about the event, as she described it as a "highly successful" event. The job fair offered opportunities from the technical, manufacturing, financial, healthcare and retail fields.
- In partnership with the Governor's Energy Office, MDOL hired a **Clean Energy Sector Navigator**, which will offer specialized guidance to jobseekers interested in connecting with training and employment

opportunities in the clean energy sector. The Navigator is working closely with the CareerCenters and other workforce system partners to serve participants, particularly women, in their career journeys.

- MDOL met with Emily Appenzeller of the Maine Tradeswomen Association to discuss the EO and learn more about their efforts to create a community of women workers as carpenters and other trades. As a result of this very informative session, an onsite tour was planned for February 4 at Appenzeller Woodworking LLC. Appenzeller is a cabinet maker based out of Rockport, Maine and welcomes the opportunity to share her trade and showcase her space to facilitate connections with interested jobseekers, particularly women.
- During the interviews and focus groups conducted last year with women working in construction (see October remote for more details), a major concern elevated was the availability of child care during the hours of a typical construction work day. There are additional challenges associated with ever-changing construction work sites and commute times. While this is a multi-faceted and challenging issue, we have begun to explore possible avenues to support parents in the construction industry. These include:
 - *Working with the Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC)*: Ana Hicks (GOPIF) presented existing state child care initiatives and supports to the AGC HR working group in October 2024. In follow-up to that presentation, Hicks and Elinor Higgins of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women met with AGC and Cynthia Murphy at Coastal Enterprise Inc. to develop an initial plan for a **pilot project with 1-2 AGC member companies**. The goal is to demonstrate an effective example of partnership between construction companies and child care providers to meet the need of construction workers. Next steps will be identifying interested AGC members and surveying workers to better understand specific childcare needs.
 - *Research on "after hours" care*: Hicks and Higgins conducted a scan of other state approaches and best practices for meeting the needs of working parents who require off-hour care. One example is the Massachusetts-based coalition, Care That Works, which focuses on matching providers with parents who need off-hour care due to construction work schedules. Hicks and Higgins are meeting with them to see what approaches could work in the Maine context. They are also currently exploring opportunities to provide information to parents about which child care providers that offer "after hours" care early in the morning, late at night, or on weekends.
 - The Northern Border Regional Commission [awarded](#) grant funds to **two child care projects** in Maine. These include a project to renovate the HVAC system at Buker Community Center's Child Care Center in Augusta so that the center can provide longer hours, as well as to build a new child care center in Greenville.

Retain in respectful, safe, inclusive workplaces

- The workplace safety working group is identifying opportunities to integrate gender-based violence and harassment prevention trainings into ongoing conversations and training methods advancing safety in construction workplaces. Dawn McKenney (MDOL) met with **18 members of the Construction Safety Alliance of Maine** to learn more about existing efforts to address gender-based violence and harassment. McKenney gathered input from participants about the kinds of tools, resources, and model policies that would be helpful for participating companies.
- The working group is also focusing on building interest and buy-in from industry champions of worker safety and inclusion who can help illustrate the business value of safer workplaces and improved worker retention. There is ongoing work to compile and develop resources and materials for existing safety-

focused industry groups, and the group is developing a resource library related to gender-based violence and harassment, including available trainings and template policies. Outreach in process includes:

- The National Association of Women in Construction, Maine Chapter
- Construction Safety Alliance of Maine
- Maine utilities' safety workgroups
- Women in Transportation
- AGC Maine
- Individual agencies are also advancing workplace safety initiatives through their work, including:
 - Adding additional resources on worker safety to the Maine Clean Energy Jobs Network website managed by the Governor's Energy Office.
 - MainesDOT is considering the development of an internal code of conduct focused on workplace health and safety.

Appendix: 2025 State of Maine Strategic Plan to Support Women in Construction Executive Order

Key Strategy	Key activities in 2025	2025 Targets
Raise career aspirations	Public outreach campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create workforce storytelling videos featuring women, highlighting infrastructure careers Revamp and promote dedicated women in trades webpage to share stories & connect to jobs (building on current MDOL Women in Construction landing page for this work) 	5,000+ unique visitors to campaign website
	CTE and K-12 outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to young girls in CTEs to raise awareness about broadband careers Expand MaineDOT outreach in high schools Prepare and support young women (grades 9-12) to address challenges they may face upon entering STEM fields such as CE&EE through an out-of-school leadership program supported by local mentors (MMSA) Partner with schools to bring VR clients to trades career fairs 	500+ young women reached in outreach events & programs
	CBO partnership and outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct broadband career info sessions for women's groups and community partners Expand engagement with Women in Transportation (WTS) and partnership opportunities to highlight opportunities Offer "Why The Trades?" Workshop at both women's facilities Host employer panels at Southern Maine Re-entry Center 	1,000+ adult women engaged in outreach events and programs
Develop industry aligned skills	Expanded training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the fiber optic training course to more community college campuses Launch training cohorts with Adult Ed to train women to obtain CDL Deliver short-term trainings for builders and carpenters on Maine's Uniform Building Energy Code and High-Performance Building, and other education and outreach (phME) Continue MCCS and DOC partnership to train 100+ women in re-entry in infrastructure careers Develop and support cohorts of women to gain industry recognized credentials and enter infrastructure jobs 	350+ women trainees in trades courses through community college & Adult Ed
	Pre-apprenticeship cohorts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue grant funding opportunities to launch Women in Energy Efficiency and Electrical careers pre-apprenticeship program to increase representation of women in EE and electrical careers Dedicate funding for women and under-represented populations pre-apprenticeship cohorts in trades 	250+ women pre-apprentices in trades cohorts

Connect to jobs & wraparound supports	Childcare supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide employer education through webinars and focus groups on existing child care subsidies • Explore opportunities for further child care investment, including for rural, BIPOC, and immigrant women 	<i>20+ employers provided childcare resource info</i>
	Job matching and navigation services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train career advisors to promote construction careers with women participants in vocational rehabilitation, adult education, and other workforce programming • Offer 1:1 career counseling to all fiber optic technician training graduates to connect to broadband careers • Partner with construction employers to interview and place trained women in jobs after prison release • Continue to instruct Release and Work Ready courses and workshops for women preparing for release from prison • Organize and promote regional women-focused construction job fairs featuring hands-on trade exhibitions, in coordination with seasonal training and employment opportunities 	<i>750+ adult women engaged in career advising or job fairs</i> <i>300+ women connected to jobs or apprenticeships in trades</i>
Retain in high-quality, safe & respectful jobs	Employer Education on Worker Safety & Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, create, and launch online training badge for construction employers that supports culturally responsive, safe, and inclusive workplaces • Incorporate safety training into all MCA-affiliated programs to increase retention • Develop a code of conduct for inclusion in contractor awards • Provide Windmills training on disability inclusion to top construction employers & train apprenticeship mentors at top construction apprenticeship sponsors as job coaches to support individuals with disabilities • Coach employers in using gender-neutral language for construction job postings 	<i>50+ employers / contractors participate in inclusion training</i>
	Expand Upskilling and Apprenticeship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate apprenticeship into broadband training programs to increase retention • Continued support for residents after release to provide up-skilling opportunities through community college workforce programs • Create new registered apprenticeship program at MaineDOT for employees 	<i>300+ women connected to jobs or apprenticeships in trades</i>
	Workforce Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring how to collect additional information from contractors and subcontractors including total number of workers, percent of women workers, median wages, and availability of benefits such as training and childcare 	