



## Women in Construction Executive Order

*Progress Report: January 2026*

**Background:** 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 Maine Department of Energy Resources (DOER) – 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.

**Progress to Date:** Agency and education partners established shared metrics to track progress toward the overarching goal of connecting 1,000 additional women to construction careers between 2025 and 2027. A summary of agency actions and 2025 target metrics is included in the appendix. While complete data for December is still being finalized, partners have met the majority of initial internal targets set for 2025, including placing 300+ women into trades jobs and providing new training opportunities to approximately 400 women.

The interagency work groups will reconvene in early 2026 to update key actions, goals and target metrics for the coming years. In 2026, continued focus will be placed on strengthening job placement and training pipelines, expanding public outreach efforts, increasing youth engagement in career exploration, and promoting retention through embedding a gender-based violence and prevention lens in all work as well as expanded employer workplace safety training efforts.

The following provides a recap of key actions taken between September - December 2025 to advance the Women in Construction executive order:

**Raise career aspirations:** To encourage women to pursue opportunities in the trades and ensure they can see themselves in these careers, state agency partners advanced the following:

- The Maine Apprenticeship team is developing a **public outreach campaign** featuring videos of Maine women apprentices in construction careers to launch in early 2026. The campaign will drive Mainers to connect with upcoming trades training and career opportunities on a new Women in Trades webpage. One [video featuring Maine Passive House apprentices](#) is complete, and the second will feature a woman apprentice employed by Maine Laborers Union.
- This quarter, CareerCenter and workforce system partners participated in multiple hiring and outreach events with schools and community-based organizations, reaching more than 400 women with information about training and employment opportunities in the trades. Notably, MDOL partnered with Tradeswomen of Maine to host three Women in Trades workshops at the **Common Ground Fair**. Through joint workshops and tabling, the partners provided information on high-wage, in-demand trades careers and related training opportunities to more than 150 Mainers.
- Partners engaged young women statewide in exploring careers in the trades through coordinated outreach efforts this fall. Sponsored by the National Association of Women in Construction Maine (NAWIC) and the Associated General Contractors (AGC), the annual **Maine Career Construction Day** attracted more than 1,000 young adults—setting a new attendance record—and connected

participants with over 50 employers. New Ventures' Trades For ME event in Farmington engaged more than 100 students from five area schools in hands-on construction demonstrations and career exploration activities, including opportunities to connect with training providers and employers in the field. In addition, more than 15 young women facing barriers to employment participated in targeted trades exposure activities, including Long Creek Youth Development Day in partnership with the Maine Community College System and multiple employers, as well as job site tours and outreach events led by MDOL's Vocational Rehabilitation program in collaboration with community partners such as Village Clubhouse.

*Upcoming events include:*

- The Augusta CareerCenter conducted a three week **Fix it, Build it, Be it Workshops** workshop series highlighting career opportunities in construction, transportation and clean energy to 20+ participants, providing connections to employers and training in the trades. The workshop series will be scaled and offered in various CareerCenter locations across Maine in 2026.

**Develop industry-aligned skills:** To create more accessible on-ramps for women and build their technical skillsets to prepare for construction careers, state agency partners advanced the following this quarter:

- MaineDOT partnered with MDOL to conditionally award \$300,000 to Maranacook Adult Education and the Maine Community College System to provide **CDL training** for more than 40 women in Penobscot, Washington, and Hancock counties in 2026. These training partners will use the funds to scale proven strategies, including women-focused training cohorts, recruitment of women CDL instructors, partnerships with local childcare providers to reduce participation barriers, and strengthened employer connections with MaineDOT and other employers to support rapid job placement after training.
- The Maine Apprenticeship Program supported several **women pre-apprentices** in non-traditional occupations this quarter driven in part by the creation of three **new women's focused pre-apprenticeship programs**, inspired by the Governor's Executive Order including ReVision Energy's "Women in Solar" pre-apprenticeship. With funding support from MDOL and DOER, ReVision Energy launched a female-identifying pre-apprentice cohort where participants were enrolled in Photovoltaic (PV) Associate, OSHA-10, and Introduction to Sales Ethics courses and engaged in several hands-on learning days. They partnered with Waldo Community Action Partners who provided transportation resources, case managers, wrap around services, and recruitment assistance for the cohort.
- Additionally, a new MDOL-funded pre-apprenticeship launched this fall in partnership with the **Maine AFL-CIO and People's Inclusive Welding**. The program was specifically designed to engage women and gender-expansive individuals in careers in the trades and included two women with disabilities who were referred through the vocational rehabilitation program.
- Since the signing of the executive order, women's participation in **Maine Community College System** construction and trades programs has increased. Women now represent 9 percent of graduates across construction-related programs, up from 5 percent in 2022–2023, and 22 percent of Building Construction Technology graduates, up from 10% in prior year. Women also make up 20 percent of fall 2025 students at the SMCC Construction Institute, a no-cost program supported by the Harold Alfond Center. MCCS plans to build on this momentum by expanding the

Maine Construction Academy pre-apprenticeship program statewide in partnership with AGC in 2026.

- In partnership with the Department of Corrections, Maine Connectivity Authority and Central Maine Community College, 9 women from Southern Maine Re-entry Center completed **fiber optic technicians** training in October.
- Ongoing training programs funded by MDOL, Vocational Rehabilitation, WIOA, and the DOER's Clean Energy Partnership (CEP) saw increased participation of **100+ women** this quarter due to targeted outreach and jobseeker education efforts including:
  - 2 women clients participated in CredQuest pilot program where they completed OSHA-10 training, CPR/First Aid/AED certifications, and a paid work experience with Granite Corp Mechanical Contractors learning and performing plumbing-related tasks.
  - 6 women participants in MaineDOT's On-the-Job Training and Supportive Services program.
  - 15 new women are pursuing trades-focused education and training with Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP) and Coastal Counties Workforce Inc.'s Green Jobs for ME grant support to become welders, architectural and engineering managers, carpenters, electricians, HVAC installers, heavy truck drivers, and welders.
  - 96 women received clean energy/ energy efficiency training last quarter through the 2024 Clean Energy Partnership-funded training programs. These include passivhausMAINE's Meeting Maine's Energy Code training and Portland Adult Education's Bridge to Clean Energy, EPA 608, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training programs. It also includes women that MDOL's Clean Energy Career Navigator connected to additional clean energy-related workforce training programs and employer partners.

*Upcoming work includes:*

- Young women will be further engaged in trades-career exploration activities through DOER-funded **Maine Math & Science Alliance's** new out-of-school time leadership program launching in 2026. The program is designed to engage high school women in various activities with the goal of reducing barriers to participation and ensuring that young women and non-binary youth learn about accessing clean energy and energy efficiency careers.
- The Maine Apprenticeship Program (MAP) will work to embed **sector-specific workplace safety training** into pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship contract requirements with new grantees to promote retention in safe, inclusive workplace.

**Connect to jobs and wraparound supports:** State agency and workforce partners provided career counseling, case management and supportive services to connect women to careers in trades including:

- Maine CareerCenters and the Maine Apprenticeship Program supported **85 women** in trades-focused career planning and individualized support, leading to 30 job placements in apprenticeships and jobs such as applications engineer, automotive technician, CDL driver and manufacturer.
- The Division of Vocational Rehab provided career counseling, relevant job and training opportunities to **25 women with disabilities** interested in trades occupations, with six women with disabilities starting full-time apprenticeships or pre-apprenticeship with the Laborer's Union, ReVision Energy, Maine AFL-CIO and People's Inclusive Welding. DVR also supported two women

with disabilities in attaining their OSHA-10 and CPR certifications as part of a new CredQuest program that provides training that leads to a credential and work experience.

- MAP registered **13 new women apprentices** in non-traditional occupations this quarter including new occupations such as manufacturing production technician and new employers such as Sargent.

### *Upcoming*

- The Maine Apprenticeship Program (MAP) was awarded **nearly \$6 million** in federal grant funding to be spent over a 3-year period. The grants will support **nearly 2,500 apprentices and pre-apprentices** throughout Maine, with a focus on expanded apprenticeships for trades as well as education and healthcare occupations, with an emphasis on rural counties. A portion of this funding will be made available to interested employers, training providers, and education partners in early 2026 through a competitive application process to create new and expand existing pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship opportunities in construction.
- Women returning from incarceration will be one priority population for connection to employment in construction trades. In 2026, welding and construction pre-apprenticeship cohorts will launch in partnership with MaineWorks, AGC Maine, and Central Maine Community College. In addition, a **recently awarded Jobs for the Future grant** to the Maine Department of Corrections will strengthen this effort by creating more coordinated pathways from re-entry to employment in partnership with MDOL, MCCS, and WIOA partners, with a focus on women in trades.
- MDOL and workforce partners will explore opportunities to strengthen career navigation to include **post-placement check-ins** focused on retention, including equipping career advisors with clear resources on workers' rights and harassment reporting options

**Retain in respectful, safe, inclusive workplaces:** To address workplace culture barriers that prevent women's retention in construction with a focus on preventing and addressing gender-based violence and harassment as a safety concern, state agency partners advanced the following efforts:

- MDOL and The Maine Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (MePCSW) continue to work with partners such as Maine Human Rights Commission and Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault to review current harassment complaint reporting processes, existing sexual harassment and safety training, and related efforts to inform **recommendations on sexual harassment training and prevention efforts**, to be submitted to the Labor Committee in January pursuant to Resolve, 2025 Ch. 90 (LD 1554 in the first regular and special sessions of the 132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature).
- MDOL's Bureau of Labor Standards is **reviewing and updating its workplace SafetyWorks training** and examining peer state OSHA training offerings to identify opportunities to bolster sections on workplace violence and prevention.
- The Maine Apprenticeship Program and MePCSW partnered with the Maine Community College System (MCCS) to develop an **online training module on creating safe and inclusive workplaces**. The course establishes a baseline understanding of workplace violence prevention and sexual harassment awareness for construction employers and supervisors. The module is currently being piloted with employer and worker partners, including members of the Construction Safety Alliance, NAWIC, and Tradeswomen of Maine, with plans for broader roll-out in 2026.

- MDOL supported the Tradeswomen of Maine to apply for the **Maine Community Foundation Women's Fund**. Though the Tradeswomen were not awarded the full grant, they were granted \$5,000 to strengthen their capacity. The organization is currently determining how to best invest the funding in supporting existing tradeswomen through mentorship and encouraging more women to join the trades through outreach.
- MaineDOT reported awarding one **new MaineDOT contract to a women-owned business** through its disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) program this quarter. As of June 2025, 140 women-owned businesses were participating the DBE program. The MaineDOT team is reviewing new federal guidance that substantially changes and limits this program and determining a path forward for continued support of women-owned enterprises in the future.

*Upcoming work includes:*

- MDOL will expand **employer participation in SafetyWorks! and related construction safety trainings** that integrate gender-based violence prevention, informed by industry feedback from the Construction Safety Alliance and AGC HR groups.
- The interagency group will explore opportunities to **strengthen mentorship networks for women apprentices** and as well as **improve future data collection** efforts to better understand tradeswomen retention and workplace challenges.

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

Strategy	Key Activities	2025 Targets (by Dec 2025)	Progress to Date (as of Dec 2025)
Raise career aspirations	<b>Public outreach campaign:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create workforce storytelling videos featuring women, highlighting infrastructure careers</li> <li>Revamp and promote dedicated women in trades webpage to share stories &amp; connect to jobs (building on current <a href="#">MDOL Women in Construction</a> landing page for this work)</li> </ul>	5,000+ unique visitors to campaign website	<b>1,500+ visits to <a href="#">MDOL Women in Construction</a> landing page</b>
	<b>CTE and K-12 outreach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach out to young girls in CTEs to raise awareness about broadband careers</li> <li>Expand MaineDOT outreach in high schools</li> <li>Prepare and support young women (grades 9-12) to address challenges they may face upon entering STEM fields such as CE&amp;EE through an out-of-school leadership program supported by local mentors (MMSA)</li> <li>Partner with schools to bring VR clients to trades career fairs</li> </ul>	500+ young women reached in outreach events & programs	<b>360+ youth engaged</b>
	<b>CBO partnership and outreach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct broadband career info sessions for women's groups and community partners</li> <li>Expand engagement with Women in Transportation (WTS) and partnership opportunities to highlight opportunities</li> <li>Offer "Why The Trades?" Workshop at both women's facilities</li> <li>Host employer panels at Southern Maine Re-entry Center</li> </ul>	1,000+ adult women engaged in outreach events and programs	<b>1,200+ adult women engaged</b>
Develop industry aligned skills	<b>Expanded training &amp; pre-apprenticeships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the fiber optic training course to more community college campuses</li> <li>Launch training cohorts with Adult Ed to train women to obtain CDL</li> <li>Deliver short-term trainings for builders and carpenters on Maine's Uniform Building Energy Code and High-Performance Building, and other education and outreach</li> <li>Continue MCCS and DOC partnership to train 100+ women in re-entry in infrastructure careers</li> <li>Develop and support cohorts of women to gain industry recognized credentials and enter infrastructure jobs</li> <li>Dedicate funding for women and other populations pre-apprenticeship cohorts in trades</li> </ul>	350+ women trainees in trades courses & NTO pre-apprenticeship	<b>~400 women trainees in trades &amp; NTO pre-apprenticeships</b>

<b>Connect to jobs &amp; wraparound supports</b>	<b><i>Childcare supports</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide employer education through webinars and focus groups on existing childcare subsidies &amp; explore opportunities for further child care investment</li> </ul>	<i>20+ employers provided childcare resource info</i>	<i>8 employers engaged on childcare resources</i>
	<b><i>Job matching and navigation services</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train career advisors to promote construction careers with women participants in vocational rehabilitation, adult education, and other workforce programming</li> <li>Offer 1:1 career counseling to all fiber optic technician training graduates to connect to broadband careers</li> <li>Partner with construction employers to interview and place trained women in jobs after release</li> <li>Organize and promote regional women-focused construction job fairs featuring hands-on trade exhibitions, in coordination with seasonal training and employment opportunities</li> <li>Create new registered apprenticeship program at MaineDOT for employees</li> </ul>	<i>750+ adult women engaged in career advising or job fairs</i>  <i>300+ women connected to NTO jobs or apprenticeships</i>	<i>690+ adult women engaged in career advising or job fairs</i>  <i>310+ women connected to NTO jobs or apprenticeships</i>
<b>Retain in high-quality, safe &amp; respectful jobs</b>	<b><i>Employer Education on Worker Safety &amp; Inclusion</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design, create, and launch online training badge for construction employers that supports culturally responsive, safe, and inclusive workplaces</li> <li>Incorporate safety training into all MCA-affiliated programs to increase retention</li> <li>Develop a code of conduct for inclusion in contractor awards</li> <li>Provide Windmills training on disability inclusion to top construction employers &amp; train apprenticeship mentors at top construction apprenticeship sponsors as job coaches to support individuals with disabilities</li> <li>Coach employers in using gender-neutral language for construction job postings</li> </ul>	<i>50+ employers / contractors participate in inclusion training</i>	<i>10 employers</i>
	<b><i>Workforce Data Collection</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>	<i>In progress</i>	