

FEATURED SPEAKERS

OPENING PLENARY:

Heidi Hart, former Parents as Scholars participant and recent law school graduate, and Sheila Frazier, Family Support Advocate with Caring Unlimited will share their personal journeys to advocacy.

AFTER LUNCH:

Ben Dudley, former state legislator from Portland and current executive director of the Maine Civic Engagement Project will talk about the importance of citizen involvement in the legislative process.

MORNING WORKSHOPS

Legislative Advocacy/Systems Change: The Mechanics (a.m. only) This session focuses on how public policy is made and how you can be part of that process. You will learn how bills are introduced in the State legislature and how to find out about legislation that is important to you. We'll give some pointers as to how to voice your opinion about legislation, and how to work with clients, advocates, and the media to achieve systems change.

TANF, ASPIRE, PaS (a.m. and p.m.) This session will provide an overview of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), ASPIRE and Parents as Scholars programs. We'll highlight any recent or upcoming changes, and give you some tools that will help you advocate for clients who may encounter problems with these programs.

Employment: Issues for Maine Workers (a.m. only) This session will explain the various financial and training resources available for laid-off workers or out-of-work individuals. We'll review who's eligible for unemployment benefits, whether you can be fired from a job without cause, and what constitutes illegal discrimination.

Family Law (a.m. and p.m.) This session will help you understand the maze of family law, including custody rules, parental rights, and court orders. We'll learn how a child support order is established and how it is enforced. We'll talk about what families need to know in dealing with Child Protective Services and the legal and advocacy resources that are available to them.

Housing: the Rights of Tenants in Maine (a.m. only) This session will provide an overview of tenants' rights and responsibilities in Maine and an explanation of the eviction process. We will review the different rental assistance programs and provide information on how to access them. We will also discuss resources available to help prevent or alleviate homelessness, including General Assistance, Emergency Assistance, and Alternative Aid.

Health Care - MaineCare and Prescription Drugs (a.m. only) This session will cover the different eligibility groups for MaineCare and how people can get or maintain coverage. We'll explain how to help your clients meet the new citizenship verification requirements for MaineCare. We'll take a look at the important role MaineCare plays in Maine's health care system, why it's always under attack, and how people can make a difference.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

Legislative Advocacy: Rules of the Game (p.m. only) In order for legislators to understand the issues affecting individuals and families living in poverty, it is vital that they hear directly from you and the clients you serve. This session will explain the roles that you, your organization, and/or your clients can take in impacting public policy. We'll review the federal laws and regulations governing advocacy – what is restricted and what is allowable.

TANF, ASPIRE, Parents as Scholars (See a.m. description)

Family Law (See a.m. description)

Asset Development and Protection (p.m. only) This session will provide tools to help people make decisions about their personal finances. We'll explain first-time home owner programs, Family Development Accounts, and the dangers of predatory lending. We'll also talk about free tax preparation services and the tax credit programs that are available.

Health Care - Services Available to Vulnerable Populations (p.m. only) This session will focus on the services available for Maine's more vulnerable populations, including children with mental retardation, autism, or other physical or mental impairments. We'll look at Child Development Services, in-home mental health services for children; and in-home and community-based services for adults with disabilities. We'll also talk about the role of Adult Protective Services in meeting adult clients' needs, and the role you can take in advocating for your clients.

"Immigration 101" for Service Providers (p.m. only) This session will provide an orientation to immigration and the issues for noncitizens living in Maine. We'll explain how immigrants can qualify for state and federal public benefits and we'll discuss some strategies for advocating effectively for Maine's noncitizens.

Workshops will be limited to about 25 participants in each. We will try to put you in your choice of workshop. If it is already full, we will contact you by phone or email and let you know what is available. Please send your registration in early and be sure to give us your full contact information.

Registrations should be received no later than October 31st.

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME

ORANIZATION (IF ANY)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

TELEPHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Please choose two workshops. Select one each from the morning and afternoon offerings.

My two workshop choices are:

MORNING WORKSHOP

AFTERNOON WORKSHOP

There is a \$30.00* registration fee for each participant. Please make checks payable to Maine Equal Justice. We are unable to accept credit or debit cards.

Please mail your registration form and check to:

MAINE EQUAL JUSTICE
126 SEWALL STREET
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330

* This fee can be waived if necessary.

Are you interested in learning more about Maine's services and supports for families and individuals with low income?

Would you like to be a more effective advocate for your clients?

Do you want to help your clients advocate for themselves?

Are you interested in networking with other social service providers in the Southern Maine area to share ideas and information about resources?

If yes, then please join us for a day of learning and networking at the Southern Maine Advocacy Conference !

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS
WILL BE AWARDED FOR
CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE.

Limited Slots

Training slots are limited. Agencies are encouraged to send employees, as well as one or two members of your client population who have been particularly active with your organization.

AGENDA

- 8:00--8:45 Registration, Breakfast, Networking**
- 8:45--10:00 Welcome and Plenary Speakers**
- 10:15--11:45 Morning Workshops**
- 11:45--12:45 Lunch (Provided) & Networking**
- 12:45--1:15 Afternoon Speaker**
- 1:30--3:00 Afternoon Workshops**
- 3:15--3:30 Wrap Up**

Why Just Southern Maine?

The conference this year is limited to staff and advocates from York, Cumberland, and Sagadahoc counties. The input we have received tells us that you want conferences with small, interactive workshops and the opportunity to network with members of your community. Last year we held the Central Maine Advocacy Conference. This year it's Southern Maine. Next year we hope to find partners to present a Northern Maine Advocacy Conference.

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Maine Equal Justice
and
NASW-Maine Chapter

WORKING TOGETHER WITH:

People's Regional Opportunity Program
Preble Street
York County Community Action Program
Caring Unlimited
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Child Care Services of York County

If you have questions or special needs, please contact
Crystal Bond at
1-866-626-7059 x205
or by email:
cbond@mejp.org

MAINE EQUAL JUSTICE
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SOUTHERN MAINE ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

INSPIRING EFFECTIVE
ADVOCACY

NOVEMBER 8, 2007

8:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.

SHERATON HOTEL
SO. PORTLAND



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MAINE EQUAL JUSTICE
AND
NASW-MAINE CHAPTER