



MAIN Update

In Solidarity for Peace, Bread & Justice!



A Joint Project of Maine Equal Justice & the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods.

This edition of the *MAIN Update* is quite a bit shorter than usual because we're still busy at the State House. But we have some important information that we wanted to share right now. In September, we will send out a complete report on what happened during the legislative session. Also check our website for updates: www.mejp.org

drugs. Their only cost will be a \$1.55 copay for brand name drugs!

Call the DHHS Pharmacy Help Desk at
1-866-796-2463 (TTY 1-800-423-4331)
with questions or to enroll.

You can also get more information from your local Area Agency on Aging (1-877-353-3771), or call us at Maine Equal Justice Partners (1-866-626-7059).

Save money on Medicare costs!

Do you have Medicare?

Is your monthly income \$1,649 or less (if single)
or \$2,211 or less (if married)? *

* (If you're working, your income can be higher.)

There is a program called the **Medicare Savings Program (MSP)** that helps with Medicare costs. Some call this the Medicare Buy-In Program. Eligibility for the MSP has greatly expanded. You may now be eligible!

Save money with the Medicare Savings Program!

- **No** Medicare Part D drug costs other than a maximum \$2.68 copay for brand name drugs—generics have no copay!
- MSP pays for your Part B premium—a savings of \$93.50 per month!
- Many people will also be eligible to save on nearly **all** of their Medicare costs, whether it is for doctors' visits, hospital stays, or prescription

Important information about Medicare Advantage plans.

Medicare Advantage plans are an option for people with Medicare. These plans used to be called Medicare+Choice plans. They offer Medicare benefits but are administered by a private company instead of by the federal government.

Insurance agents or people who work for the health insurance companies sell these private plans. They may go to great lengths to make their plan look like a great deal for you – even though it may not be!

You need to carefully study the plan and your own health care needs. Counselors at your local Area Agency on Aging can help you decide what really is best for you.

Call your local Area Agency on Aging before making any changes to your Medicare benefits. The statewide toll-free number is **1-877-353-3771**.

Want to be on our mailing list or e-mail network? Call or e-mail us!

Maine Equal Justice Partners
126 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 626-7058 1-866-626-7059
www.mejp.org info@mejp.org

Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods
P.O. Box 69
Hallowell, ME 04347

(MAIN leadership team contact info on insert.)

Please feel free to copy and share this newsletter. Also on www.mejp.org

Important New MaineCare Law!

Do you have MaineCare? Are you planning to apply for MaineCare?

**To get or keep MaineCare,
you may have to prove your citizenship and your identity.**

There is an important new federal law that starts this July. It says that many people who already have MaineCare, and many people who apply for MaineCare, must show the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) documents that prove *both* their U.S. citizenship and their identity. This law is for both adults and children.

People who are exempt from this new law.

The following people are exempt from this new law. They do not have to show documents to prove their citizenship and their identity:

- People with:
 - Medicare
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- Legal immigrants, such as people with “green cards” and refugees
- Foster children

The new law does not apply to these groups because they already provided documents to government officials to prove their citizenship or immigration status and identity. They do not have to do anything different to get or keep MaineCare.

* If you were ever in one of these groups in the past, you also do not have to give proof of your citizenship or identity. But you will need to tell your MaineCare Eligibility Specialist that you used to be in one of these groups.

Special rules for infants and pregnant women.

Infants have until age 1 to show documents to prove citizenship and identity.

Pregnant women applying for MaineCare will get extra time to provide the required documents.

What do I need to do if this new law applies to me?

Step 1:

DHHS will first try to look at other records that the state has to see if they can prove your citizenship or identity, without having to bother you. DHHS will check for Maine birth records, Maine licenses and other sources of information. DHHS may need some help from you. For example, if you no longer go by your name at birth, DHHS will need to know this.

Step 2:

If DHHS cannot prove your citizenship or identity, then it will be up to you to do this. You will have to prove both your citizenship and your identity. To do this, you will need to show DHHS original documents (or certified copies from the issuing agency—for example, a certified copy of a birth certificate from the city/town or state where you were born).

Once you have shown DHHS the documents that prove your citizenship and identity, you will not have to do it ever again in Maine. This means that if you stop getting MaineCare, but some time later you get MaineCare again, you will not have to show these documents to DHHS again.

What documents do I need to have?

Any one of these three documents can be used to prove both citizenship **and** identity:

- U.S. Passport (even if it is expired),
- Certificate of Naturalization, or
- Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (this is not the same as a birth certificate).

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DHHS Citizenship and Identity Hotline 1-800-701-1887

Continued from page 2

Most people won't have one of these documents. This means they will have to show *one document that proves citizenship, and another document that proves identity*. Some documents you can use are:

Citizenship

- U.S. birth certificate
- Official Military Record of Service that shows U.S. place of birth

Identity

- Driver's license or State ID
- Native American Tribal Document
- School ID card with photo
- U.S. Military Card or Draft Record
- School records (if age 15 and younger)
- Day care records (if age 15 and younger)
- Affidavit (if age 15 and younger)*

* Children age 15 and younger who do not have a document to prove identity can have a parent fill out a form called an affidavit. This affidavit will prove identity for that child (or children).

This is not a full list of documents that will prove citizenship and identity. You may have another document that you can use. Call the Citizenship and Identity Hotline (1-800-701-1887) to learn what other documents can be used.

Help paying for documents. One of the things that makes this new law so difficult is that it will cost money to get a birth certificate or a driver's license or state ID if you do not already have one. The cost of a birth certificate depends on where you were born.

If you were born in Maine, you will not have to get a copy of your birth certificate. DHHS will check state records for your birth certificate. Most birth certificates from other states cost between \$10 and \$32. You may be able to get help with this cost, or with the cost of renewing or replacing your driver's license or getting a state ID! Call the Citizenship and Identity Hotline (1-800-701-1887) for help with paying for the documents you need.

I already have MaineCare. What do I need to do?

1. You will need to give the documents at your next annual MaineCare review.

2. Three months before your annual review, you will get a letter from DHHS that tells you that your review is coming up. The letter will tell you if you have to prove either citizenship or identity.

* Please note that you will not get a letter if you and others in your household on MaineCare are exempt from this new law. (See who is exempt on page 2.)

3. If you were born in Maine, or if you have a Maine driver's license or state ID, your letter should tell you that you don't have to show either a birth certificate or your driver's license or state ID.
4. You will be given a "reasonable amount of time" to show DHHS the documents that they need to see. You should not lose your MaineCare because you are having a hard time getting these documents—but if you are having a hard time, be sure to call the Citizenship and Identity Hotline or your DHHS Eligibility Specialist. The Hotline staff (1-800-701-1887) can help you get the documents—and they may even help you pay for them!

I plan on applying for MaineCare. What do I need to do?

It's important for you to know that if you are applying for MaineCare, *you will not be able to get it until you show documents* to prove your citizenship and your identity. Don't wait until you have your documents to apply for MaineCare. When applying, tell DHHS that you are working on getting your documents. The staff from the Citizenship and Identity Hotline (1-800-701-1887) can help you—and may be able to help you pay for them.

Outstations: Some local agencies will be acting as "Outstations" for DHHS. This means that staff at these agencies will be able to look at your original documents (or certified copies) instead of you having to show them to DHHS. Call the Citizenship and Identity Hotline (1-800-701-1887) to find an Outstation agency near you.

Please call us at Maine Equal Justice (toll-free) 1-866-626-7059, if you have any questions, or if you are having a hard time with this new law. Your stories will help us to continue to work to change this law for the better.

M.A.I.N.

Annual Picnic

Wednesday, July 25, 2007



11:00 am—2:00 pm

If the weather's really bad, we'll picnic on Thursday, July 26th.)



Maine Equal Justice
126 Sewall St., Augusta
(Outdoors in the side yard)

RSVP by July 20
but please come even if you don't.

Call 1-866-626-7059 ext 204 &
leave a message, or
email crusnov@mejp.org

Check the message at this number,
if you think we might postpone
because of the weather.

Bring family & friends!

Come visit old friends, make new ones and
celebrate all of our work over this past year.

MAIN provides: Hamburgers, hot dogs &
drinks. *Bring something to share*
(salad, dessert, chips, fruit), if you can.

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If you need a ride or have room in your car to give
someone a ride, let us know as soon as possible.
We will do what we can to connect people.

Save this date! Mark your calendars!

MAIN Annual Conference—Friday, November 2, 2007

Learn how we can use our voices more effectively in the Maine Legislature.
Tour the State House. Learn how laws are made. Take part in a "mock" public hearing.
Meet some legislators. Discuss how we can work together!

Together, we have the power to make a difference!



MAIN
P.O. Box 69
Hallowell, Maine 04347

Help MAIN Lead the Way... to make life better for all Maine people!

MAIN is an all-volunteer organization that depends on contributions and a few small grants. Most of our money is used to keep our 2200 members and friends informed, and to help people with low incomes participate in MAIN activities by providing travel and childcare reimbursement.

Your contributions, financial or otherwise, can help MAIN do what needs to be done to support our beliefs and keep MAIN strong!

Financial Contribution: \$_____ Suggested donation: Individuals—\$1.00. Organizations—\$50.
Send us the most generous contribution that you can -- every dollar counts!

Help with fundraising or grant writing_____

Attend monthly MAIN meetings (or as many as possible)._____

Please send me the monthly meeting notices for Statewide_____ Northern Regional MAIN _____

Statewide Meetings are held the second Thursday of every month from 9:30 to 12:30, usually in Augusta. In the fall, we travel to other parts of the state. **Northern Regional MAIN meetings** are held on the third Saturday of every month from 12:00 noon – 2:00 pm in Orono, and include a potluck lunch. Call Laura Moore 827-2176 or e-mail her at TeddsRed@aol.com to confirm day and time.

Share information from the *MAIN Update*, legislative alerts, and MAIN surveys._____

Pass on e-mail alerts and information to friends._____ If you belong to any groups that you can share information with, write the group's name(s) here._____

Help call MAIN members in my area_____

Attend legislative public hearings_____

Testify or help find others to testify._____

Contact my state legislators_____

Talk with the press_____ **Other ways I can help**_____

These are the issues I'm most interested in working on:

TANF & ASPIRE _____ Health Care _____ Dental Care _____ Wages _____ Higher education _____

Earned Income Tax Credit _____ General Assistance _____ Unemployment Insurance benefits _____

Transportation _____ Housing _____ Child Protective Services _____ Family Leave _____ Child Care _____

Name (*Please PRINT*) _____

Address _____

Town/city _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (if any) _____ E-mail (if any) _____

Best way you can be reached: (circle) phone email regular mail

Organization's name (if org. member) _____

Contact person (if org. member) _____

Comments/suggestions:

RETURN TO: MAIN, P.O. Box 69, Hallowell, ME 04347



Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods

P.O. Box 69
Hallowell, ME 04347



Annual Fundraising Appeal—June 2007

Dear MAIN members and friends,

MAIN is off to a fresh and exciting new start, and we need your help!

We, MAIN's new leadership team, are determined to see MAIN grow and thrive. Building on 26 years of dedication and hard work of past leaders and members, the new team is stepping up to organize and grow the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods!

Over the past year, MAIN leaders and members have written letters to the editor, spoken with the press, participated in rallies and testified at the Legislature on bills to improve the lives of Maine people with low incomes. We've spoken out to:

- ✓ Protect MaineCare for individuals and families;
- ✓ Protect the HOME Fund that provides funding for affordable housing, accessible housing, homeless shelters, and first-time homeowners;
- ✓ Support the same access to abortion services for poor women currently provided to others with health care coverage;
- ✓ Support paid family medical leave; and
- ✓ Support DirigoChoice, a health insurance program that working low-income families and their employers can afford.

MAIN's statewide group as well as Northern Regional MAIN in Orono meet monthly to keep members informed and to plan our next moves. We are very excited that some members in Belfast and Lewiston are interested in starting new regional groups. This coming November 2nd, MAIN will hold the annual conference to help members learn how we can use our voices more effectively in the Maine Legislature on the issues that we care about.

Now, more than ever, we need your help to continue to build an organization led by people with low incomes who are speaking out on behalf of all people in Maine with low incomes!

Please fill out and return the form on the back.

Send us the most generous contribution that you can -- every dollar counts! Join us at meetings, at our picnic on July 25th, and at our November 2nd Conference. Get involved in helping us do what needs to be done to support our beliefs and keep MAIN strong!

In Solidarity for Peace, Bread & Justice,
MAIN Leadership Team

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www.peacebreadjustice.org