

Transition Planning with Youth

A Checklist for Community Reintegration

This checklist details components of a comprehensive plan for youth transitioning out of systems (juvenile justice, child welfare, children’s behavioral health, etc.) and into adulthood. It aims to provide a starting point for stakeholders to assess a youth’s needs in planning for community reintegration. Youth leaving a correctional institution, congregate care, foster home setting, or other system-involvement, just like other youth, will need: a place to live, access to health care, educational opportunity, and employment assistance—but these youth may be particularly vulnerable and require specific, individualized attention which this checklist will help identify.

Every youth represents a unique roadmap of their various experiences and intersecting identities: race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, etc. Effectively matching individual needs with supports and services requires asking targeted questions to assess each young person’s current situation and future goals. Once there is a clear understanding of the young person’s needs and intersecting identities, community partners can work with the state, the young person, and their family to provide resources and support in the community. ***This planning process should start the moment the child under state custody enters institutional or residential care and continue to be reassessed and revised up until the young person transitions back into the community.***

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic unexpectedly altered our lives and the lives of system-involved youth who need support and advocacy. Young people involved in state systems have higher rates of physical health conditions such as asthma and hypertension than the general youth population, as well as higher rates of past trauma and behavioral health challenges.¹ This means that they are at a greater risk of serious health issues if they contract COVID-19, and they are also at a greater risk of psychological harm from the stress of possible exposure and the separation from support networks during this time. For these reasons, several organizations and associations are recommending expedited release of as many youth as can be quickly and safely released into the community.²

State agencies are working to meet their supervision and case planning duties, while also complying with the local and state restrictions on movement and contact. This tool is designed to be used by any system stakeholder working to ensure youth in transition are safe, stable, and cared for.

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¹ Wadiya A. Udell & Selina A. Mohammed, *The Prevalence of Physical Health Problems among Youth in the Juvenile Justice System: A Systematic Review*, JOURNAL OF HEALTH DISPARITIES RESEARCH AND PRACTICE (2019). Retrieved at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1890&context=jhdrp>

² See COVID statements from National Partnership for Juvenile Services, National Governors Association, Youth Correctional Leaders for Justice.

Table of Contents

Stable Housing	3
Food & Other Basic Needs	5
Health	6
Staying Connected	9
Legal Issues	10
Education & Training	12
Identification & Financial Literacy	14
Parenting	15
Technology & Utilities	16
Emergency Contact List	17
Appendix: Resource List	18

Stable Housing

Youth involved with the child welfare and justice systems are at a higher risk of housing instability and homelessness.³ It is critical that youth re-entering the community have a designated home in which to transition and stable housing going forward.

Does the youth have access to stable housing and is able to continue to meet expenses related to that housing arrangement?

- Ensure that the youth understands where essential resources are located in proximity to their residence.
 - Where is the closest grocery store? Closest bank? Closest medical facility?
- Ensure youth are aware of local civil legal aid resources that may be able to help with housing resources, housing law, and other benefits.
 - Pine Tree Legal resource on renters' rights: <https://ptla.org/rights-maine-renters-unsafe-or-unfit-housing>
- If formerly incarcerated, ensure that youth is aware of what comes back on a background check. Long Creek has a program which specifically offers this service where they develop a strategy for how youth will address any hits returned with their prospective landlord.
- Are there any funds to help pay for a safety deposit for the apartment?
- Does the youth have a steady source of income enabling them to pay rent every month?
 - Has the youth been able to have a face to face or facetime conversation with their landlord to cure some of the unknowns in the landlord/tenant relationship?
- Is the youth in a conditional program that is zero tolerance for substance use? Make sure that they know what they need to do to stay in the placement.
- Is the youth living with a partner/parental unit/guardian who has showed signs of inconsistency and instability in the past? Make sure that there is a plan and a point person to contact if things get out of control.
- Additional Housing Resources:
 - Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP): <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/mentalhealth/housing/brap/>
 - Stability Through Engagement Program (STEP): <https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/rental/rentaldetail/stability-through-engagement-program>
 - Housing Authorities in Maine: <https://www.mainehousing.org/charts/local-housing-authority-contacts>
 - General Assistance: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofc/programs-services/general-assistance>

Has a Section 8, or alternative housing, application been started with the youth?

- Section 8 applications should be started a few months ahead of a youth's planned transition date. <https://mainesection8centralwaitlist.org/dup/>

³ Les Whitback et al, Administration for Children and Families Family and Youth Services Bureau Street Outreach Program, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN, April 2016. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fysb/data_collection_study_final_report_street_outreach_program.pdf

- For more information on Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8):
 - <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/mentalhealth/housing/section-8/eligibility.html>
 - <https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/rental/rentaldetail/housing-choice-vouchers>
 - Foster to Youth Independence (FYI):
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/fyi

Does the youth have a backup housing plan in case of an emergency?

- Come up with a backup housing plan to ensure that there is a plan should anything occur which may force the youth out of their home. Some resources include:
 - Preble Street Housing (Portland): <https://www.preblestreet.org/what-we-do/housing-services/>
 - New Beginnings (Lewiston): <https://newbeginmaine.org/>
 - Shaw House (Bangor): <https://www.theshawhouse.org/>
- Identify risk factors which may lead to homelessness and do your best to mitigate these risks. For more information: http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_888.html
- Work with youth to identify family members or other safe adults who could be housing options in case of an emergency.
 - Talk through the backup plan with each potential housing placement.
 - Help the youth reach out to those adults and be able to answer any questions that they may have.

Does the youth have a plan if they encounter a conflict with their parent/guardian/foster parent?

- Discuss with the youth who they can reach out to if a conflict arises. Consider adding the identified supports to the youth’s contact list at the end of this document.

Does the youth have a steady and set visitation schedule with their social worker or community supervision officer?

- Make sure the youth knows how and when their social worker/juvenile community corrections officer (JCCO) can come to their home and what areas they can search if they are living in a shared home.
- If the youth is justice involved:
 - Make sure the youth talks to their JCCO about other individuals, like police officers, that the JCCO may instruct to enter their home in case the JCCO is unavailable.
 - If the youth has an advocate through the Youth Advocate Program (YAP), ensure they are connected and can help support the youth with this visitation schedule.

COVID Considerations

- If the youth currently rents an apartment and cannot pay rent due to effects from the crisis, seek assistance from the provider agency, other sources like the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or the Department of Corrections (DOC) to prevent homelessness.
 - For example, the Friends of Long Creek may have discretionary funds to help with rent.

- Maine Housing COVID-19 Rental Relief Program:
<https://mainehousing.org/programs-services/rental/rentaldetail/covid-19-rental-relief-program>
- If the youth is also involved with DHHS, Youth Transition Services can potentially assist with housing and living costs through the V9 program:
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/cw/chafee.htm>

Food & Other Basic Needs

Ensuring access to food and basic needs is a critical component of a successful transition back into the community.

Does the youth have enough food (or money for food) to get through the next few weeks/months?

- Help youth apply for Food Supplement Program (Food Stamps/SNAP) if they are eligible, but know that that will not meet immediate needs.
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/services/snap/index.html>
- Seek funding resources to support weekly grocery trips. Identify the youth's preferences and help them schedule a time in their week to go to the store.
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP):
<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/tefap/countysearch.html>
- School districts are providing free breakfasts and lunches to youth under the age of 18. For more information: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition>
- Many restaurants are also providing free food for youth under the age of 18. Look in your local area for places doing it.

Make sure the youth knows how to get access to food

- Explain all the protocols of the local grocer they will be visiting, especially protocols set up for Covid-19, so that the youth, and whomever may be going with them, is prepared to navigate it.
- Send the youth information about food delivery and food bank, and brainstorm strategies for the youth to get to their nearest food bank or food distribution site. Here is a list of places to get food across Maine: <https://www.gsfb.org/get-help/food-map/>

Other Necessities

- Does the youth have enough money to meet his or her basic and daily needs related to clothing, hygiene items, and incidentals? Help the youth access emergency assistance from the provider agency, DHHS or DOC.

Health

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system experience health issues at a higher rate compared to the general young adult population.⁴ In light of the on-going COVID pandemic, it is even more critical to review health-related risk factors with youth and ensure that they have adequate access to both health care and insurance.

Does the youth have any current or ongoing medical issues (including mental health) that will require attention during the crisis?

- Make sure the youth knows where to go for treatment during the next month. Many regular medical services are being postponed or handled differently, and youth will need a plan to access necessary treatment.
- Make sure the youth has access to a smart phone and/or a computer/laptop that will allow telemedicine health access.
- Talk with youth about plans for transportation in case of shelter in place orders and/or reductions in public transportation options.
- Ensure that the youth has access to at least one reliable mode of transportation either via a family member or another available support system.
- Maine allows people to designate a surrogate for health care information and decisions if more assistance is necessary.
 - Health Care Proxy: <https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/choosing-a-healthcare-agent/>
 - Decisions by Surrogate: [18-C M.R.S.A. § 5-806](#)

Is the youth currently taking any prescription medication?

- Make sure the youth has enough prescription medication and refills to last at least the next month, coordinating with the youth's medical provider and social worker and obtaining court orders as needed.

Does the youth have a primary care physician?

- Helping a youth to identify a primary care physician is critical for easing medical barriers once they are back in the community.
- Primary care physicians can be identified through a youth's insurance carrier.

Does the youth have active health insurance and know how to use it?

- Remind them that the COVID-19 test is free regardless of type of (or lack of) insurance.
- Youth can enroll in Medicaid: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms>
- If youth have Medicaid, they can also access Logisticare for transportation support to and from appointments: <https://facilityinfo.logisticare.com/mefacility/>

⁴ Paula K. Braverman & Pamela J. Murray, *Policy Statement: Health Care for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System*, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS (December 2011). Retrieved at: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/128/6/1219.full.pdf>.

What is the youth's plan if they or a loved one gets sick?

- Advise youth to call their healthcare provider before going to the emergency room and help them locate the best number to call.
- If a hospital/ER visit is required, ensure they have someone who can go with them, if allowed by the hospital, that can help them navigate the healthcare system. Even though the test is free, subsequent treatments and ER visits are not.
- Maine Hospital Association: <http://www.themha.org/Our-Members/Member-Hospitals>

Is the youth feeling isolated, depressed, and/or anxious, and expressing or demonstrating a need for mental health services?

- If the youth is experiencing a mental health crisis:
 - The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) also operates a mental health hotline at (800) 950-6264 (or text 741741).
 - Other crisis hotlines can be found here: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/hotlines.shtml>
- Brainstorm ideas for social contacts, coping mechanisms, and develop a stress management plan with clear actions and important contacts for every youth. Example here: <https://parentandteen.com/teen-stress-management-plan/>

Does the youth have access to identity affirming sexual and reproductive healthcare?

- For a guide on Minors' Rights around Confidential Health Care in Maine: https://mainefamilyplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/MFP_MinorsRights_Brochure_web-1.pdf
- Planned Parenthood Locations in Maine: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/me>

COVID Considerations

- NAMI has a resource guide related to COVID-19 issues: <https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/NAMI-HelpLine/COVID-19-Information-and-Resources/COVID-19-Resource-and-Information-Guide>

Is the youth aware of and have an adequate understanding of Covid-19?

- Review the main points of the current emergency and basic guidance on protecting oneself and preventing the spread of the virus.
- Recommendations and information about Maine are available and being updated here: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml>
- Make sure that the youth is aware of the specific precautions and orders in place for their community.
- Ensure that youth understand which health conditions place them at higher risk for severe illness and have a plan to stay healthy. Guidance available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>
- Ensure the youth understands the potential consequences of non-compliance with Maine CDC guidelines while in the community. Make sure they have access to masks upon release.

How is the young person feeling physically related to Covid-19?

- Review the COVID-19 symptoms (cough, fever, respiratory distress) that youth need to be aware of for self-assessment. More information can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- Make sure they have a current number for their health provider and/or the county health line in case they develop symptoms or have health-related questions.
- Getting Tested for COVID-19 (Swab + Send – free of charge): <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/keepmainehealthy/testing>
- Rapid Test Search (Costs vary): <https://get-tested-covid19.org/>

Is the young person interested in getting the COVID-19 Vaccine?

- Information regarding the different COVID-19 vaccination options: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html>
- Finding vaccination sites: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines/vaccination-sites> (or call 1-888-445-4111)
- Free Transportation to a vaccine appointment: Call 1-855-608-5172 at least 48 hours in advance of a scheduled vaccination appointment.

Staying Connected

Staying connected with community, family, and other natural supports is pivotal for continued success after release.⁵

Is the young person staying in contact with important people?

- Assist youth in compiling a list of important contacts to keep with them during the crisis (see template emergency contact list below). You can even fill out the form with them and then email it to them so that they have the list on their phones.
- Make sure that they know how to reach you specifically (i.e., is your office open? Are you checking voicemails? Email?).

What are they planning to do to stay busy?

- Discuss the importance of maintaining a good routine to combat the negative effects of social isolation. Consider topics such as waking up at the same time as usual, an exercise routine, light exposure, work or hobbies to fill the day.
- Help the youth find peer support through Youth Peer Support Statewide Network (YPSSN): https://mainehealth2.formstack.com/forms/ypssn_referral_form

COVID Considerations

- The importance of connection for youth is only heightened during this time of social distancing.
- Do they have the ability and/or a plan for staying in touch with friends, family and social supports during the isolation period? Do they have someone to talk with regularly?
 - Have they considered how to visit with friends by video or joining group chats or video calls to catch up? Social isolation and loneliness are not trivial. Youth should make concerted efforts to stay in touch with their social networks. Video chats and phone calls can help fill some of the gap, and they are better at providing interactive opportunities than email or text.
 - Understand that despite protocols, the youth may seek to visit with friends. Encourage the youth to be safe when doing so and brainstorm creative ways for them to ensure social distancing protocols are followed if they do meet up with other youth.
- Are they missing therapy appointments that can transition to virtual?
 - If the youth is engaged in any mental health services that have shifted to remote delivery, make sure they have the access to the technology required as well as a basic understanding of how to access their appointments.
 - See Education & Training and Technology & Utilities sections for additional WiFi access information.

⁵ Shaena M. Fazal, Safely Home, YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAMS POLICY & ADVOCACY CENTER (June 2014). Retrieved at: <http://www.safelyhomecampaign.org/Portals/1/Docs/safelyhome.pdf>

Legal Issues

It is critical that youth that re-enter their communities maintain an open line of communication with their attorney and/or have access to legal representation. This is necessary so that the youth can stay engaged with their cases, avoid any infractions, and be successful once released.

Does the youth feel in control of their legal matters?

- Does the youth have legal representation?
 - If the youth is currently represented, make sure they know how to contact their attorney and make sure the attorney knows how to contact them.
- Does the youth know how to get legal representation if needed?
 - If the youth is not currently represented but feels like they need to, have them contact the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic at (207) 780-4370.
 - Volunteer Legal Project runs a website that lets people ask legal questions online and then get a response: <https://maine.freelegalanswers.org/>
 - Disability Rights Maine provides advocacy and legal representation around a large spectrum of issues to those with disabilities: <https://drme.org/>
 - Intake form: <https://drme.org/online-intake-form>
- Make sure you review all outstanding worries and create an action plan on how to solve them now or in the future.
 - For example, if the youth has a record make sure they know what they need to disclose and make sure they know when/how they can get the record sealed. Make sure they get a copy of this pamphlet: <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/academics/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/mcjpai-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
 - For example, if the youth has outstanding restitution payments make sure that they know that it can potentially get modified if the juvenile is able to prove that they are unable to pay restitution in the time and manner ordered. Please reach out to the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic at (207) 780-4370 for assistance.

Does the youth understand their conditions of release or community reintegration plan, if applicable?

- Do they have a copy of their conditions either on their phone or printed out?
- Do they know how to contact their JCCO or identified caseworker?
- Does the youth understand their rights if they are arrested? For reference: <https://www.aclumaine.org/en/know-your-rights/know-your-rights-police-encounters>

Does the youth understand how to seal their records and when they are eligible to do so?

- Do they have a copy of the *Know the Facts: What does it mean to have a juvenile record in Maine?* brochure? <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/academics/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/mcjpai-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
- Do they have information on who to contact to have their record sealed?

For child welfare involved youth: is the youth aware of services available after the age of 18?

- Youth Transition Services at DHHS: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/cw/chafee.htm>

COVID Considerations

- Does the youth know how court closures will impact pending cases?
 - Make sure the youth knows about the current court closures and how that may affect any ongoing case. Check here for updated information:
<https://www.courts.maine.gov/covid19/index.html>
 - Make sure they understand what sort of legal matters are still being heard in court, being heard over video conference, and are being postponed.

Education & Training

Access to education and/or job training are necessary for a successful transition back into the community and to avoid further contact with the system in the future.⁶ Creating a plan with youth to engage with education and/or job training before they return to their communities is critical for long term success.

High School/ General Education Development (GED)

- Has the youth completed high school/received their GED?
- Are they receiving the information about finishing high school and/or continuing their education and is it in the correct language?
- Do they know what their school's plan is for returning in the Fall? Does the school have their updated contact information to keep them informed about the changing systems?
- Do they have the technology/equipment/access to the internet they need to succeed in a remote setting? See the next section for more information.
- Many school districts that have moved to distance learning are offering Chromebooks to youth so that they can continue learning. If a student does not have a computer, advise them to first to call their school and ask if one can be provided. Also ask about a wireless hotspot if the student is still waiting for internet to be installed.
- If the youth was receiving supplemental tutoring or support, assist the youth in contacting the tutor or service to arrange for online/virtual one on one tutoring sessions.
- Does the youth have an IEP or Section 504 plan?⁷
 - Ensure the school department that the youth will be transitioning to is contacted to coordinate the transition of special education and related services.
- If the youth does not have an IEP or Section 504 plan, does or could the youth have a disability that would entitle them to one? (Autism Spectrum Disorder, emotional trauma, learning disorders, speech or language disorders, intellectual impairment, mental health disorders, health impairments, etc.)
 - Coordinate with the youth's guardian(s) and school to begin the evaluation process

Post-secondary Education

- Does the young person want to sign up for college, either a two-year or four-year program? Do they know who to contact to help start this process?
- Does the young person need assistance applying for financial aid?
 - Students who are independent and living off campus may be eligible for more aid, depending on how the college calculates off-campus cost of attendance. Colleges are often able to adjust cost of attendance to take into account students' specific circumstances. Youth should also communicate with financial aid about money for internet access if they find that the free internet speeds offered by providers are insufficient to allow them to use video calling or other digital resources.

⁶ Snapshot: Improving Educational Opportunities for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System, NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE NETWORK, 2016, <http://www.njjn.org/our-work/improving-education-for-youth-in-juvenile-justice-snapshot#hub-ed3>.

⁷ "Youth with mental health disorders may qualify as students with disabilities under federal antidiscrimination laws prohibiting disability discrimination, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990." p. 7, <https://www2.ed.gov/students/prep/juvenile-justice-transition/transition-toolkit-3.pdf>

- If the youth is in college and does not have a laptop, one potential resource if the youth is in college is - One Simple Wish. You can email them with a laptop request here: info@onesimplewish.org

Employment

- Did the youth have a job before they entered the system? Do they want to and are they able to return there?
- Make sure that the youth has an updated resume and help them identify potential references.
- Does the youth know about what they need to disclose on a job application or background check? Make sure they have a copy of this brochure.
<https://mainelaw.maine.edu/academics/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/mcjpai-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
- Some youth focused employment resources in the state include:
 - Youth Services via Goodwill: <https://goodwillnne.org/jobs/youth-job-services/>
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) via Goodwill: <https://goodwillnne.org/about/goodwill-nnes-programs-and-services-2019/>
 - Vocational Rehabilitation: https://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth_transition.shtml

COVID Considerations

- How is youth employment being affected during this crisis? Does youth need employment assistance or information on applying for unemployment benefits
- Advise youth that they may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they meet certain criteria in Maine. Check out the Department of Labor's website for more information: <https://www.maine.gov/labor/covid19/>
- Advise youth that they may be able to get internet access and devices through the Maine Department of Education: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/ltt/ConnectKidsNow>

Identification & Financial Literacy

Having the knowledge and skills to manage financial resources is important for young people to be able to successfully transition out of state supervision and care. It provides the foundation that youth need to become self-sufficient adults. It is also critical that they have the appropriate identification in order to be able to open bank accounts.

Identification

- Does the youth have any of the following forms of identification?
 - Birth Certificate: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/data-research/vital-records/order/index.shtml>
 - Social Security Card: <https://www.ssa.gov/boston/ME.htm>
 - Photo identification (Maine State ID / Permit / Driver's License): <https://www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/licenses/id.html>

Financial Literacy

- Work with the youth to help them come up with a financial plan going forward. Encourage the youth to be as transparent as they can be with you while making this plan.
 - Educate about credit rating and history, and how defaulting on payments may cause them long-term harm.
 - Educate about applying for credit cards and other types of credit, and the risks they need to be aware of.
 - Educate about sensitive personal data (SSN, etc.) and how to protect against identity theft.
- Financial factors to consider when developing a financial plan:
 - Does the youth have money saved from their time incarcerated? If so, be sure to help them have any money in their canteen fund released to them.
 - Does the youth have a bank account? If not, do they know how to open one?
 - Does the youth owe any court ordered restitution to any party for which they could be found in violation of their conditions of release? (see Legal Issues section)
 - Does the youth have a car payment?
 - Does the youth have a cell phone bill?
 - Does the youth pay rent?
 - If the youth has these expenses identify opportunities to defer payments for whatever number of months is being offered.
- Is there anyone in their immediate support network who can aid them financially if needed?
- If the youth has an income, is it direct deposit or do they receive a check?
 - If they receive a check, do they have a method of depositing it?
- Ensure that the youth has someone in their support network that they trust to ask for financial advice.

Parenting

During this time of uncertainty, it is important that the young person has their basic needs met and access to a support system so that they, in turn, can provide the necessary care to their children and prevent further system involvement.

Is the youth parenting and in need of immediate funds meet basic needs?

- Help the youth identify the unmet needs and make requests for emergency funds.
- Most District Offices are now open to assist with eligibility of benefits in person. Check here to determine which office to direct the young person to, and what walk-in services they offer: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/about/contact/offices>
 - Online benefit management: <https://www1.maine.gov/benefits/account/login.html>
- Questions about eligibility for benefits can be directed to the DHHS Office of Family Independence at (855) 797-4357.

Is the youth parenting and in immediate need of food or formula?

- Help youth apply for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program if they are not already receiving WIC. Advise youth there may be flexibility in eligibility determinations, such as remote certification and issuing benefits up to three months in advance. Start the application here: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/wic/applicants/where-do-i-apply.shtml>

Does the youth have other immediate needs for themselves and their children?

- Ensure that youth are able to access resources that are difficult to find, such as diapers, wipes, or formula. Assist youth with locating a nearby store with the necessary supplies and make a plan for the youth to get to a store. If funds to purchase these items are an issue, assist youth in identifying a local charitable group who can provide basic supplies.

Does the youth have a child in foster care and need help getting information about or visiting their child?

- Does the youth know how their rights around parenting and how to get in touch with their lawyer around advocating for those rights?
- Determine whether the visits are supervised or unsupervised.
 - If they are unsupervised help the youth determine a safe location for visiting or whether it is possible to visit with the child at the foster home.
 - If they are supervised visits help the young person determine whether the foster parent or a family member can supervise the visits in a safe location or in the foster home. If they have a child in care with a relative this should be something that the agency is able to determine quickly to resume or continue regular visitation.
- Even if in-person visitation is not an option during this time, ensure a plan is in place for virtual visitation and ongoing contact.
- If the youth has a child/children in an ongoing DHHS case, make sure the youth knows how to contact important people for that case, like their attorney and the guardian ad litem (GAL). Make sure these people have the youth's updated contact information.

Technology & Utilities

Technology is a required tool for youth to remain connected with their teams and support systems once they are released, especially if their service providers are in different organizations and physical locations.

Does the youth have sufficient access to a phone to meet their needs?

- If the youth does not have a phone and does not have the ability to get on a cell phone plan immediately following release, develop a plan to purchase a phone and a pay as you go card in the interim.
- Once the phone is purchased, it can be added to a plan at any time, or the youth can continue with the pay as you go model.
- If funding for a phone is needed, work with provider organization and DOC to identify funding.

Does the youth have access to the internet?

- Ensure that the youth has necessary supplies to connect to WiFi service. They need, at the most basic level, a router and a modem. If the youth cannot afford one, identify funding sources which can potentially help them purchase these items.
 - If the youth lives in a rural area, investigate whether the youth needs special equipment (satellite dish or other) to access WiFi.
 - If a visit from the WiFi company is needed to establish service, help the youth and/or the youth's family navigate the situation.

COVID Considerations

- Is the youth concerned about loss of their utilities (gas, water, electric)?
 - Advise the youth that Maine regulators issued an order directing all electric transmission and distribution utilities, natural gas utilities, water utilities and telephone Providers of Last Resort to not engage in any disconnection activity until further notice. Help them to check the policy of their utilities services.
- Certain internet providers (Spectrum, etc.) are offering free internet for a limited time to K-12 and college students. If any of these providers are in the youth's service area, help the youth call, identify as a student, and request any free service the internet provider is offering (getting the terms and conditions in writing so that they know when the free term ends). <https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/InternetConnectivity>
- Advise youth that they may be able to get internet access and devices through the Maine Department of Education: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/ltt/ConnectKidsNow>

Special thanks to the Youth Law Center and Juvenile Law Center for developing and sharing the original tool for use with transitioning foster care youth in California and Pennsylvania.

The Maine Center for Juvenile Policy & Law and Juvenile Justice Clinic students adapted to provide stakeholder guidance for working with youth transitioning out of systems in Maine.

Emergency Contact List

Important Contact	Phone and Email	Notes
Young Person (especially, if it is a new number)		
Juvenile Community Correction Officer (JCCO)		
Case worker		
Case worker's supervisor		
YAP Advocate		
Attorney		
GAL (if applicable)		
Doctor's office		
Therapist/Clinician		
Physician		
School contacts		
Child Care Provider (if applicable)		
Local food bank		
Local pharmacy		

Appendix: Resource List

General Transition Resources

- Youth Transition Services via DHHS:
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/maine.gov.dhhs/files/documents/ocfs/policy-documents/V.%20T.%20%20Youth%20Transition%20Policy.doc>
- Navigating the juvenile justice system:
<https://www.maine.gov/corrections/ijag/PDF/Youth-and-Family-Handbook-Final.pdf>
- Resources for transitioning youth with disabilities:
<https://www2.ed.gov/students/prep/juvenile-justice-transition/pathways-transitioning-justice-facilities.pdf>
- Guide to Transition Services:
<http://apps.web.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/maine.gov.dhhs/files/documents/ocfs/cbhs/documents/Youth%20Transition%20Booklet%202019.pdf>
- Maine Prisoner Re-entry Network Guide: <http://re-entrymaine.org/summer-2021-resource-guide-pdf/>
- HRC Survival Guide for Independent LGBTQ Youth:
<https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/HRC-OnOurOwn-LGBTQYouth.pdf>

Stable Housing

- Maine Housing: <https://www.mainehousing.org/>
- List of local Housing Authorities: <https://www.mainehousing.org/charts/local-housing-authority-contacts>
- Maine Housing Search: <https://www.mainehousingsearch.org/index.html>
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance (Rental Housing): <https://ptla.org/self-help/2652>
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance (Homeownership & Foreclosure): <https://www.ptla.org/self-help/2658>
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): <https://www.hud.gov>
- National Center for Children in Poverty (Report on homeless Children and Youth): http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_888.html

Food and Other Basic Needs

- Food Supplement Program (Food Stamps/SNAP):
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/services/snap/index.html>
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP):
<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/tefap/countysearch.html>
- Food Help across Maine: <https://www.gsfb.org/get-help/food-map/>
- Summer meal pick-up sites: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids>

Health

- Maine CDC COVID guidelines: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml>
- CDC risk guide: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>
- CDC COVID Symptoms guide: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness COVID guide: <https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/NAMI-HelpLine/COVID-19-Information-and-Resources/COVID-19-Resource-and-Information-Guide>
- Maine Health Care Decisions by Surrogate: <https://rb.gy/lll5s9> (18-C M.R.S.A. § 5-804)
- MaineCare Application: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms>
- Logisticare (Transportation): <https://facilityinfo.logisticare.com/mefacility/>
- Maine Hospitals: <http://www.themha.org/Our-Members/Member-Hospitals>
- Maine Crisis Hotlines: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/hotlines.shtml>
- Minors' Rights around Confidential Health Care in Maine: https://mainefamilyplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/MFP_MinorsRights_Brochure_web-1.pdf
- Planned Parenthood Maine: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/me>
- Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence: <https://www.mcedv.org/get-help/>
- CDC COVID-19 Vaccine information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html>
- Maine COVID vaccination site search: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines/vaccination-sites> (or call 1-888-445-4111)
- Transportation to COVID Vaccine: 1-855-608-5172 at least 48 hours in advance
- Maine COVID-19 testing: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/keepmainehealthy/testing>
- COVID Rapid Test Search: <https://get-tested-covid19.org/>
- Mental health counselor search tool: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/maine>
- Support programs for youth 14-26 with mental health or substance use challenges: <https://www.mainehealth.org/Maine-Behavioral-Healthcare/Services/Counseling-Therapy-Services-Adult-Child/Peer-Support/Youth-Peer-Support-Statewide-Network>

Staying Connected

- Maine Inside Out: <https://www.maineinsideout.org/>
- Portland Outright: <https://portlandoutright.org/>
- Preble Street Teen Center: <https://www.preblestreet.org/what-we-do/teen-services/preble-street-teen-center/>
- Boys and Girls Club Aroostook County: <http://bgcbordertowns.org/>
- Apex Youth Connections (Biddeford): <https://www.apexyouthconnection.org/>
- My Place Teen Center (Westbrook): <https://myplaceteencenter.org/>
- Bangor YMCA Teen Center: <https://www.bangory.org/teencenter/>

- Brunswick Area Teen Center: <https://peopleplusmaine.org/brunswick-area-teen-center>
- Tree Street Youth: <https://treestreetyouth.org/>
- Youth Peer Support Statewide Network social groups calendar (open and free to all youth): <https://www.mainehealth.org/Maine-Behavioral-Healthcare/Services/Counseling-Therapy-Services-Adult-Child/Peer-Support/Youth-Peer-Support-Statewide-Network/Groups-and-Events>
- YPSSN Advisory Board (a compensated position (age 14-26): email YPSSN@mainehealth.org

Legal Issues

- Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic: <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/public-service/clac/>
- Volunteer Legal Project: <https://maine.freelegalanswers.org/>
- Disability Rights Maine: <https://drme.org/>
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance: <https://ptla.org/>
- Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project: <https://www.vlp.org/>
- Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project: <https://ilapmaine.org/>
- Maine Equal Justice: <https://maineequaljustice.org/>
- Sealing youth records in Maine: <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/academics/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/mcjp-al-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
- ACLU Know Your Rights: <https://www.aclumaine.org/en/know-your-rights/know-your-rights-police-encounters>
- Maine Courts & COVID: <https://www.courts.maine.gov/covid19/index.html>
- Maine Youth Court: <http://www.mainejuvencourt.org/what-is-maine-youth-court.html>
- Restorative Justice Institute of Maine: <https://www.rjimaine.org/>

Education and Training

- Maine DOE: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/home>
- Maine Adult Education: <https://maineadulted.org/>
- Maine Educational Opportunity Center (MEOC): <https://meoc.maine.edu/about-meoc/>
- Maine Career Centers: <http://www.mainecareercenter.gov/>
- New England Job Corps: <https://www.jobcorps.gov/>
- Goodwill Youth Services: <https://goodwillnne.org/jobs/youth-job-services/>
- Vocational Rehabilitation: https://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth_transition.shtml
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) via Goodwill: <https://goodwillnne.org/about/goodwill-nnes-programs-and-services-2019/>
- Maine Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship Program: https://www.maine.gov/labor/jobs_training/apprenticeship/

Identification & Financial Literacy

- Birth Certificates: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/data-research/vital-records/order/index.shtml>
- Social Security Cards: <https://www.ssa.gov/boston/ME.htm>

- Photo identification (Maine State ID / Permit / Driver's License): <https://www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/licenses/id.html>
- Financial Literacy Rocks: <https://financialliteracy.rocks/financial-literacy-for-young-adults/>

Parenting

- TANF office list: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/about/contact/offices>
- TANF online management: <https://www1.maine.gov/benefits/account/login.html>
- WIC: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/wic/applicants/where-do-i-apply.shtml>
- Maine Families: <http://mainefamilies.org/>
- Maine's Child Care Subsidy Program: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/step.htm>
- Jewish Community Alliance Diaper Bank: <https://www.mainejewish.org/michaelklahrjewishfamilyservices/diaperbank/>

Technology & Utilities

- COVID Internet Resources for students: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/InternetConnectivity>
- Safelink: <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment/Safelink/en/Web/www/default/index.html#/aboutUs>
- Emergency Broadband Benefits (COVID): <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>