

# Transition Planning with Youth in the Youth Justice and Child Welfare Systems

## A Checklist for Community Reintegration

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This checklist details components of a thoughtful plan for youth transitioning out of the youth justice and child welfare systems. 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, or foster home setting, 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.***

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. If you have any updates, additions, or corrections, please contact Jill Ward, Director at the Center for Youth Policy & Law, at [jill.ward@maine.edu](mailto:jill.ward@maine.edu).

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## Stable Housing

Youth involved with the child welfare and justice systems are at a higher risk of housing instability and homelessness.<sup>1</sup> 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 are they able to continue to meet expenses related to that housing arrangement?**

- Ensure that the youth knows where to find essential resources close to their residence.
  - Where is the closest grocery store? Closest bank? Closest medical facility?
- Ensure that the youth is aware of local civil legal aid resources that may be able to help with housing resources, housing law, and other benefits.
  - Pine Tree Legal resources on renters' rights and housing:
    - <https://www.ptla.org/rights-maine-renters-unsafe-or-unfit-housing>
    - <https://www.ptla.org/sites/default/files/tenants.pdf>
    - Rental Housing: <https://ptla.org/self-help/2652>
    - Homeownership & Foreclosure: <https://www.ptla.org/self help/2658>
- If formerly incarcerated, ensure that the youth is aware of what appears on a background check.
  - Some information on juvenile records and background checks:  
<https://mainecourtrecords.us/family-court-records/find/juvenile/>
- 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:
  - Maine Department of Health and Human Services - Housing Services: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/obh/support-services/housing-services>
  - 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/ofi/programs-services/general-assistance>
  - Preble Street - Transitional Living, Housing and Rapid Re-housing:

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<sup>1</sup> 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](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fysb/data_collection_study_final_report_street_outreach_program.pdf)

<https://www.preblestreet.org/what-we-do/housing-services/teen/>

- The Northern Light House - Transitional Living Program: [https://tnlh.org/?page\\_id=1659](https://tnlh.org/?page_id=1659)
- The Landing Place - Transitional Living Program: <https://www.homehelphope.org/the-landing-place>
- New Beginnings - Transitional Living Program: <https://newbeginmaine.org/programs/transitional-living-program/>
- Project HOME: <https://www.qualityhousingcoalition.org/project-home>

### **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/>
- For more information on Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8):
  - <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](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?**

- 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](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_888.html)
- Develop a backup plan to ensure that there is an alternative housing option should anything occur which may force the youth out of their home. Youth emergency shelters:
  - Preble Street (Portland): [https://www.preblestreet.org/what-we-do/teen\\_services/joe-kreisler-teen-shelter/](https://www.preblestreet.org/what-we-do/teen_services/joe-kreisler-teen-shelter/)
  - New Beginnings (Lewiston): <https://newbeginmaine.org/>
  - Shaw House (Bangor): <https://comcareme.org/shawhouse/>
  - Safe Harbor Shelter (Aroostook County): [https://tnlh.org/?page\\_id=1469](https://tnlh.org/?page_id=1469)
- 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 answer any questions either party has.

### **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 involved in the justice system:
  - 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.

## 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 or months?**

- Help the youth apply for Food Supplement Program (Food Stamps/SNAP) if they are eligible, but explain that the program 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.
- Help youth identify possible food supports through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/food-assistance/tefap/index.shtml>
- 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>
- Some restaurants provide free food for youth under the age of 18. Look in the youth's community for places that may be providing this service:  
<https://impact.nokidhungry.org/free-meal-finder> (free meal finder)
  - Free summer meals for kids under 18: <https://mainefarmersmarkets.org/summer-meals-for-kids-under-18/>
- Summer meal pick-up sites: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids>

### **Make sure the youth knows how to get access to food**

- Explain all the protocols of the local grocer they will be visiting, 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 banks, 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 their 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 & Wellness

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system experience health issues at a higher rate compared to the general young adult population.<sup>2</sup>

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

- The youth will need a plan to access necessary treatment. Make sure the youth knows where to go for treatment during the next month.
- Make sure the youth has access to a smart phone and/or a computer/laptop that will allow telemedicine health access.
- Talk with the 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.
  - Friends of Long Creek may provide bikes.<sup>3</sup>
- 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 the 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 the youth's insurance carrier.

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

- Youth can enroll in Medicaid: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms>
- If the youth has Medicaid, they can also access Logisticare for transportation support to and from appointments: <https://www.logisticare.com/booknow>

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

- Advise the youth to call their healthcare provider before going to the emergency room and

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<sup>2</sup> 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>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://friendsoflongcreek.org/projects>.

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, to help them navigate the healthcare system.
  - Maine Hospital Association: <https://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) 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/>

### **Make sure the youth knows about behavioral health and coordinated care strategies available to help with family and mental health issues and to keep the youth in their community and strengthen peer support**

- Aftercare services are available and provided to a youth and their parents and/or caregivers by a Family Transition Specialist for 6 months after a youth is discharged from a Children’s Residential Care Facility.<sup>4</sup>
- Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT): <https://www.mainehealth.org/maine-behavioral-healthcare/care-and-services/counseling-and-therapy-services/trauma-counseling-and-treatment>
- Functional Family Therapy providers:
  - Region 1: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/childrens-behavioral-health/services/find-a-provider/provider-region1-fft>
  - Region 2: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/childrens-behavioral-health/services/find-a-provider/provider-region2-fft>
- Multisystemic Therapy: <https://www.mainehealth.org/maine-behavioral-healthcare/care-and-services/counseling-and-therapy-services/multisystemic-therapy-juvenile-and-young-adult-offenders>
- Youth Peer Support Statewide Network: <https://www.mainehealth.org/maine-behavioral-healthcare/care-and-services/counseling-and-therapy-services/peer-support/youth-peer-support-statewide-network>
- Providers are being trained in Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA). See: [https://www.maineaap.org/assets/docs/Adolescent-Substance-Use-Disorder-Treatment\\_-An-Update-on-Evidence-Based-Strategies.pdf](https://www.maineaap.org/assets/docs/Adolescent-Substance-Use-Disorder-Treatment_-An-Update-on-Evidence-Based-Strategies.pdf) and <https://www.jjagmaine.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CC-Presentation-to-the-JJAG-1.19.24.pdf>
- Multi-dimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) and High-Fidelity Wraparound services have

<sup>4</sup>Code Me. R. 10-144 Ch. 101, Ch. II, § 97.01-1, ME ADC 10-144 Ch. 101, Ch. II, § 97.01-1, <https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getTestimonyDoc.asp?id=10014689>.

recently received increased funding for development in the state of Maine. You can read more about these programs here: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/blog/boosting-implementation-maines-childrens-behavioral-health-plan-2023-05-16>

- Youth-guided behavioral health services are receiving grants. See: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/childrens-behavioral-health/services/system-of-care> and <https://www.jjagmaine.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CC-Presentation-to-the-JJAG-1.19.24.pdf>
- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) programming is being developed in a pilot capacity in schools: <https://knowledgeconnection.mainehealth.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=cpi>
- Expansion of school-based health centers: [https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/3k26tx39d8bhy3hggd8jt/Maine-SBHC\\_Overview.pdf?rlkey=ricianw16gxojjekph542tczv&e=1&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/3k26tx39d8bhy3hggd8jt/Maine-SBHC_Overview.pdf?rlkey=ricianw16gxojjekph542tczv&e=1&dl=0)
- Tele-behavioral health pilots have started in seven schools. Find out more here: <https://www.mechw.org/docs/CHW-toolkit/Caitlyn-Allen-PFH-Maines-Youth-Tele-Behavioral-Health-Program.pdf>
- Expand Access in School Environments (EASE) Maine: <https://mainedoenews.net/2024/02/07/scholarship-opportunities-available-for-maine-school-counselors-and-school-social-workers/#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20Maine%20DOE%20received,and%20services%20in%20Maine%20schools;>
- Stronger Connections Grants. Read more here: <https://mainedoenews.net/2023/05/18/stronger-connections-grant-program-request-for-applications-rfa-202304093/>

### **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/MFP\\_MinorsRights\\_Brochure\\_web-1.pdf](https://mainefamilyplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/MFP_MinorsRights_Brochure_web-1.pdf)
- Planned Parenthood Locations in Maine: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center?location=Maine&service=&channel=any>



## 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.<sup>5</sup> 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 have a plan to return to school? Does the school have their updated contact information to keep them informed?
- Do they have the technology/equipment/access to the internet they need to succeed in a remote setting?
- Many school districts that more regularly utilize distance learning are offering necessary technology 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 has internet access issues where they live.
- If the youth was receiving supplemental tutoring or support, assist the youth in contacting the tutor or service to arrange tutoring sessions.
- Does the youth have an IEP or Section 504 plan?<sup>6</sup>
  - 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 go to 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

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<sup>5</sup> 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>.

<sup>6</sup> "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://www.academia.edu/109341129/Transition\\_Toolkit\\_3\\_0\\_Meeting\\_the\\_Educational\\_Needs\\_of\\_Youth\\_Exposed\\_to\\_the\\_Juvenile\\_Justice\\_System\\_Third\\_Edition](https://www.academia.edu/109341129/Transition_Toolkit_3_0_Meeting_the_Educational_Needs_of_Youth_Exposed_to_the_Juvenile_Justice_System_Third_Edition).

often able to adjust cost of attendance to account for students' specific circumstances.

- If the youth is in college and does not have a laptop, one potential resource is One Simple Wish. You can email them with a laptop request here: [info@onesimplewish.org](mailto:info@onesimplewish.org)
  - The youth should ask about assistance with 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.

## Employment

- Did the youth have a job before they entered the system? Do they want to and are they able to return to it?
- 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/mcipal-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
  - Make sure the youth knows that employers may look into their social media presence.
- Some youth focused employment resources in the state include:
  - Maine Department of Labor - Workforce Resources for Schools and Students:  
<https://www.maine.gov/labor/schoolresources/> - Department of Labor Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship programs:  
[https://www.maine.gov/labor/jobs\\_training/apprenticeship](https://www.maine.gov/labor/jobs_training/apprenticeship)
  - Vocational Rehabilitation: [https://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth\\_transition.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth_transition.shtml)
  - Eastern Maine Development Corporation- Youth Workforce Services:  
<https://www.emdc.org/youth-workforce-services/>
  - Workforce Solutions- Youth Employment Services:  
<https://workforcesolutionsme.org/youth-employment-services>
  - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):  
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/adulted/wioa>
  - Maine Career Exploration Program: <https://linktr.ee/mainecareerexploration>
  - DOE Extended Learning Opportunity Programming:  
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/elo>
  - Opportunity Passport Program by JMG: <https://jmg.org/opportunity-passport>
  - SNAP E&T for 16-to-18-year-olds: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement/fset>
  - Youth Services via Goodwill: <https://goodwillnne.org/programs/workforce-services/>
  - New Beginnings Education and Employment Program:  
<https://newbeginmaine.org/programs/education-employment-support-program/>

## 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 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/forms/ss-5.pdf>
  - 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 them about credit rating and history, and how defaulting on payments may cause them long-term harm.
  - Educate them about applying for credit cards and other types of credit, and the risks they need to be aware of.
  - Educate them 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.
- 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://www.mymaineconnection.gov/benefits/s/?language=en\\_US](https://www.mymaineconnection.gov/benefits/s/?language=en_US)
- 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 the youth that 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/>

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

- Ensure that the youth is able to access resources that are difficult to find, such as diapers, wipes, or formula. Assist the youth with locating a nearby store with the necessary supplies and 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 may be able to 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 or children in an ongoing DHHS case, make sure the youth and important adults, like their attorney and guardian ad litem, know how to contact each other.

## 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 a 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.
  - The Affordable Connectivity Program (<https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/>) is a useful tool but is currently not accepting applications → instead, you can apply for other programs, such as LIFELINE, available here: <https://www.fcc.gov/general/universal-service>
  - Safelink (Phone service): <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/en/#!/aboutUs>

### **Is the youth concerned about loss of their utilities (gas, water, electric)?**

- Advise the youth that Maine has a disconnection law that prohibits utility companies from turning off power to customers in the winter between November 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>. <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/35-A/title35-Asec718.html>. Help them to check the policy of their utilities services.
- Home Energy Assistance Program: [https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/energy/energydetails/liheap?gad\\_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwsaqzBhDdARIsAK2gqncxwZNmYDUW-kj-JAOJWM3Dmfis8itKZpWa1tEh\\_CszxLwX9Mn\\_9UaArPIELw\\_wcB](https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/energy/energydetails/liheap?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwsaqzBhDdARIsAK2gqncxwZNmYDUW-kj-JAOJWM3Dmfis8itKZpWa1tEh_CszxLwX9Mn_9UaArPIELw_wcB)

## 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 be, have them contact the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic (Maine Law Clinical Programs) at (207) 780-4370.
  - Volunteer Legal Project runs a website that lets people asks legal questions online and then get a response: <https://maine.freelegalanswers.org/>
  - Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project: <https://www.vlp.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 the get a copy of this pamphlet: [https://mainelaw.maine.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1/MCJPAL\\_Brochure\\_2021\\_WEB-1.pdf](https://mainelaw.maine.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1/MCJPAL_Brochure_2021_WEB-1.pdf)
  - For example, if the youth has outstanding restitution payments make sure they know it may be able to be modified if the youth 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?**

- Do they have a copy of their conditions either on their phone or printed out?
- Do they know how to contact their JCCO?
- 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/mcjpjpal-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
- Do they have information on who to contact to have their record sealed?
  - <https://www.courts.maine.gov/courts/juvenile/records.html>

## 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/support-for-families/child-welfare/youth-transitions/youth-transition-services>
  - <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/child-welfare/youth-transitions>

## Staying Connected

Staying connected with community, family, and other natural supports is pivotal for continued success after release.<sup>7</sup>

### Is the young person staying in contact with important people?

- Assist the youth in compiling a list of important contacts to keep with them during a 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., when 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 stay busy and on track. Consider topics such as waking up at the same time each day, 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](https://mainehealth2.formstack.com/forms/ypssn_referral_form)

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*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 Center for Youth Policy & Law and Youth Justice Clinic students adapted to provide stakeholder guidance for working with youth transitioning out of the juvenile justice and child welfare systems in Maine.*

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<sup>7</sup> Shaena M. Fazal, Safely Home, YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAMS POLICY & ADVOCACY CENTER (June 2014). Retrieved at: <http://www.safelyhomecampaign.org/Portals/1/Docs/safelyhome.pdf>

## 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		
Guardian ad Litem (GAL) (if applicable)		
Doctor's Office		
Therapist/Clinician		
Physician		
School contacts		
Child Care Provider (if applicable)		
Local Food Bank		
Local Pharmacy		
Other important adult(s)		



# Appendix: General Resource List

## Additional Transition Resources

- Youth Transition Services via DHHS: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/support-for-families/child-welfare/youth-transitions/youth-transition-services>
- Navigating the juvenile justice system: <https://www.maine.gov/corrections/ijag/PDF/Youth-and-Family-Handbook-Final.pdf>
- Resources for transitioning youth with disabilities: <http://apps.web.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/main.gov.dhhs/files/documents/ocfs/cbhs/documents/Youth%20Transition%20Booklet%202019.pdf>
- Maine Prisoner Re-entry Network Guide: <https://re-entrymaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Summer-2021-Resource-Guide-PDF.pdf>
- HRC Survival Guide for Independent LGBTQ Youth: <https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/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>
- 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](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_888.html)
- Preble Street- Transitional Living, Housing and Rapid Re-housing: <https://www.preblestreet.org/what-we-do/housing-services/teen/>
- The Northern Light House - Transitional Living Program: [https://tnlh.org/?page\\_id=1659](https://tnlh.org/?page_id=1659)
- The Landing Place - Transitional Living Program: <https://www.homehelphope.org/the-landing-place>
- New Beginnings - Transitional Living Program: <https://newbeginmaine.org/programs/transitional-living-program/>
- Project HOME: <https://www.qualityhousingcoalition.org/project-home>

## Food and Other Basic Needs

- Food Supplement Program (Food Stamps/SNAP): <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofc/services/snap/index.html>
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/food-assistance/tefap/index.shtml>
- Food Help across Maine: <https://www.gsfb.org/get-help/food-map/>

## Health & Wellness

- Maine Health Care Decisions by Surrogate: <https://rb.gy/lll5s9>
- MaineCare Application: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms>
- Logisticare (Transportation): <https://www.logisticare.com/booknow>
- Maine Hospitals: <http://www.themha.org/Our-Members/Member-Hopsitals>
- Maine Crisis Hotlines: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/hotlines.shtml>
- Minors' Rights around Confidential Health Care in Maine: [https://mainefamilyplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/MFP\\_MinorsRights\\_Brochure\\_web-1.pdf](https://mainefamilyplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/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/>
- 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/care-and-services/counseling-and-therapy-services/peer-support/youth-peer-support-statewide-network#:~:text=Who%20is%20eligible%20for%20the,call%20207%2D396%2D7052.>

## 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 Work Services: <https://goodwillne.org/programs/workforce-services/>
- Vocational Rehabilitation: [https://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth\\_transition.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth_transition.shtml)
- Maine Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship Program: [https://www.maine.gov/labor/jobs\\_training/apprenticeship/](https://www.maine.gov/labor/jobs_training/apprenticeship/)
- Maine Department of Labor - Workforce Resources for Schools and Students: <https://www.maine.gov/labor/schoolresources/>
- Eastern Maine Development Corporation - Youth Workforce Services: <https://www.emdc.org/youth-workforce-services/>
- Workforce Solutions - Youth Employment Services: <https://workforcesolutionsme.org/youth-employment-services>
- New Beginnings- Education and Employment Program: <https://newbeginmaine.org/programs/education-employment-support-program/>

## 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/forms/ss-5.pdf>
- 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/index.shtml>
- Maine Families: <http://mainefamilies.org/>
- Maine's Child Care Subsidy Program: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Child%20Care%20Subsidy%20Application.pdf>
- Jewish Community Alliance Diaper Bank: <https://www.findhelp.org/jewish-community-alliance-of-southern-maine--portland-me--diaper-bank-program/5448886678716416?postal=04032>

## Technology & Utilities

- Lifeline (WiFi and connectivity): <https://www.fcc.gov/general/universal-service>
- Home Energy Assistance Program: [https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/energy/energydetails/liheap?gad\\_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwyo60BhBiEiwAHmVLJcEfBoHLc8gV8Poe3mmjOypzRDh8axQK2Tf-SCb1tNjLGbl\\_dOlz8BoC\\_IQA vD\\_BwE](https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/energy/energydetails/liheap?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwyo60BhBiEiwAHmVLJcEfBoHLc8gV8Poe3mmjOypzRDh8axQK2Tf-SCb1tNjLGbl_dOlz8BoC_IQA vD_BwE)
- Safelink (Phone): <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/en/#!/aboutUs>

## 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/mcjpai-juvenile-record-maine.pdf>
- ACLU Know Your Rights: <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights>
- Youth-LED Justice: <https://www.youthledjustice.org/>
- Restorative Justice Institute of Maine: <https://www.rjimaine.org/>
- Restorative Justice Project: <https://www.rjpmidcoast.org/>

## 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/>
- Midcoast Youth Center (Bath): <https://www.midcoastyouth.org/>
- Brunswick Area Teen Center: <https://peopleplasmaine.org/brunswick-area-teen-center>
- The Landing Place (Rockland): <https://www.homehelphope.org/the-landing-place>
- 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/care-and-services/counseling-and-therapy-services/peer-support/youth-peer-support-statewide-network/ypssn-groups-and-events>
- YPSSN Advisory Board (a compensated position (age 14-26): email [YPSSN@mainehealth.org](mailto:YPSSN@mainehealth.org)