

Resource Round-Up January 2025

A quarterly e-newsletter of news, training, and resources in support of anti-trafficking efforts in Maine and the United States.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month

January is designated as Human Trafficking Prevention Month, a presidential observance aimed at educating the public about human trafficking and the important role they can play in prevention and response.



URGENT SUPPORT NEEDED for Maine Human Trafficking Survivor Fund

MECASA manages the Maine Human Trafficking Survivor Fund, which is a flexible, accessible, and timely source of funds to support the immediate needs of survivors of trafficking and exploitation as they seek to increase their safety.

The Survivor Fund has seen major cuts, starting with just \$25,000 at the beginning of the fiscal year on October 1. That is only half the amount we had the year before, and have already used \$10,000. **Now, our ability to help survivors is in jeopardy.** To keep this important program going, MECASA has put in an extra \$7,000 from its unrestricted funds, but we really need your help.

We are asking for your support to find more resources.

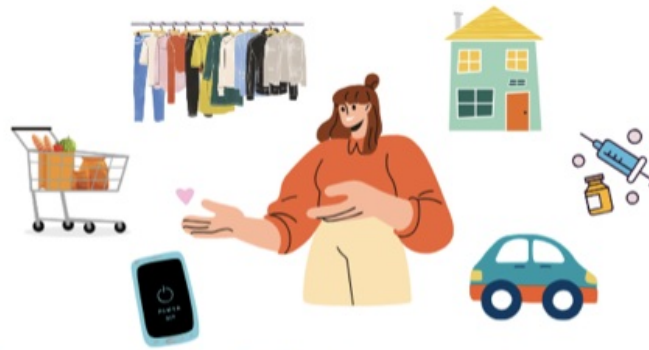
Your donation can make a big difference for those trying to find safety and healing during or after human trafficking experiences. No donation is too small—every dollar helps ensure that survivors get the immediate support they need.

Plus, a very generous survivor has offered to DOUBLE every donation made, so your contribution counts now more than ever.

Please donate to the Maine Human Trafficking Survivor Fund today. You can do so by [clicking here](#) and selecting "Maine Human Trafficking Survivor Fund" in the dropdown menu.

Together, we can offer hope and safety to those who need it most.

Help Trafficking Survivors Meet Their Basic Needs



Support Maine's Human Trafficking Survivor Fund



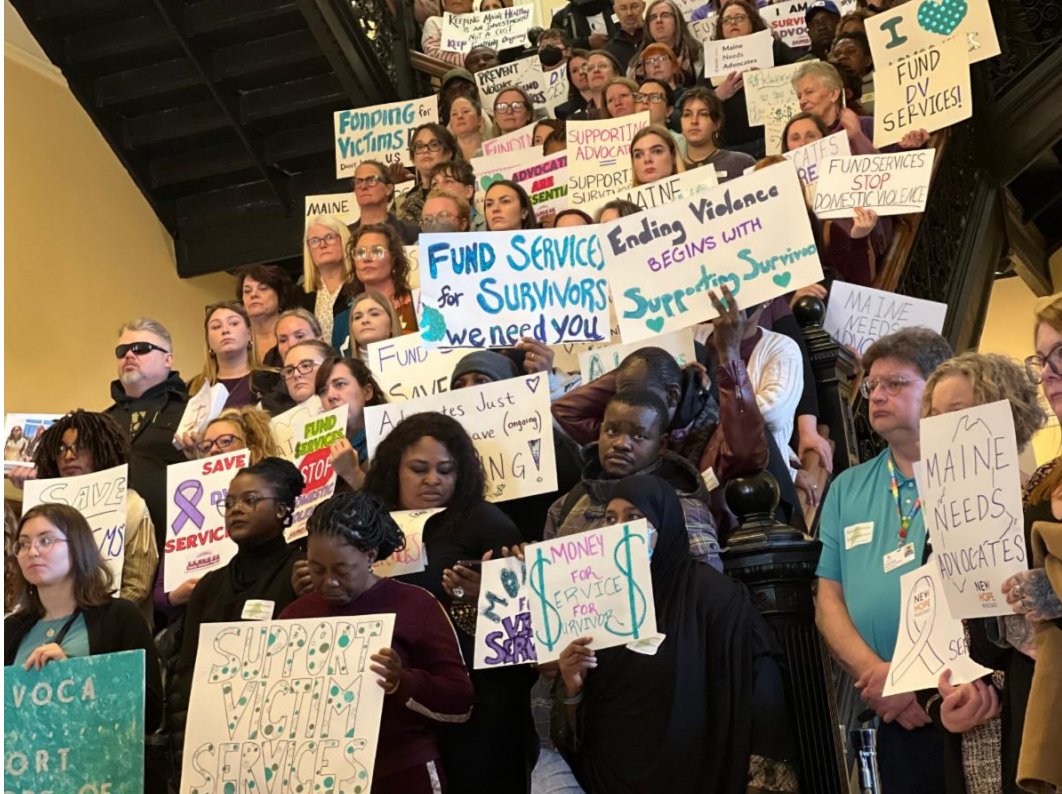
Your Donation Matched
at mecasa.kindful.com

NEWS

[Victims Rights Advocates Still Fighting to Fill Federal Funding Gap](#)

Maine Morning Star - January 16, 2025

Maine's victim services, essential for trafficking survivors, face funding challenges due to decreased federal support from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Advocates are calling for increased state funding to meet the growing demand for these services, which rose by 9% last year.



Maine Man Sentenced to 50 Years for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Child *Department of Homeland Security - November 6, 2024*

A man from West Gardiner was sentenced in November in U.S. District Court in Bangor following an investigation by Homeland Security and the Maine State Police. He faced charges for transporting, receiving, distributing, and possessing child sexual abuse material, and failing to register as a sex offender. He has also been ordered to pay \$8,000 in restitution.

EVENTS

Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Services: An Introduction (virtual)

Hailey Virusso, the Director of Anti-Trafficking Services at Preble Street, is inviting educators and community organizations to learn about human trafficking in Maine and the services available for survivors, with a special emphasis on youth. The session will take place on Tuesday, **January 21**, 2025, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.

From Awareness to Action: Recognizing and Reporting Human Trafficking

Join in on the effort to address human trafficking. On **January 21**, 2025, representatives from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign will share tips on recognizing and reporting potential cases, as well as how you can help raise awareness in your communities.

Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Services HT Awareness Month Event

Preble Street will host an event for Human Trafficking Prevention Month on Wednesday, **January 22nd**, from 3 to 5 PM at their Healing Center located at 55 Portland Street in Portland.

Freedom Network USA Human Trafficking Virtual Conference

Freedom Network USA will host its 2025 virtual anti-human trafficking conference, titled "Sharing Power: Building Inclusive Communities," on **March 26 and 27**, 2025. This online event aims to showcase specialized, evidence-based strategies designed to meet the unique needs of survivors with various identities, experiences, and challenges.

RESOURCES

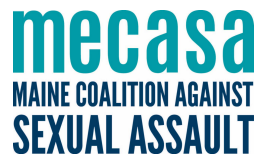
[The National HT Hotline Cannot Act as a Law Enforcement Tipline and Help Survivors](#)

Freedom Network USA opposes the federal National Human Trafficking Hotline Enhancement Act, which would mandate the hotline to report trafficking tips to law enforcement. They believe this would jeopardize the hotline's primary role in connecting survivors to essential services, undermine trust among survivors and providers, and compromise their safety.

[Criminal Record Relief for Trafficking Survivors](#)

This Polaris report explores the challenges human trafficking survivors face because of their criminal records, which are often directly linked to experiences of exploitation. Criminal records make it difficult for survivors to find housing, jobs, and education. The report emphasizes the need for a federal way to help clear these records, as there are active efforts in Congress to tackle these important issues for survivors trying to rebuild their lives.

**For referrals to Maine services or to report a tip:
The National Human Trafficking Hotline
Call: 1-888-373-7888
Text: 233733**



The Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network provides training, technical assistance, and resources to direct service providers engaged in anti-trafficking efforts in Maine, as well as, community awareness and public policy support.

[Maine STEN](#) is a program of the [Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault](#).

Want to stay updated on our work? Follow MECASA on social media!



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