

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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AARON M. FREY
ATTORNEY GENERAL



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
6 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0006

TEL: (207) 626-8800
TTY USERS CALL MAINE RELAY 711

REGIONAL OFFICES
84 HARLOW ST. 2ND FLOOR
BANGOR, MAINE 04401
TEL: (207) 941-3070
FAX: (207) 941-3075

125 PRESUMPCOT ST., SUITE 26
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103
TEL: (207) 822-0260
FAX: (207) 822-0259

14 ACCESS HIGHWAY, STE. 1
CARIBOU, MAINE 04736
TEL: (207) 496-3792
FAX: (207) 496-3291

December 12, 2024

Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
c/o Office of Fiscal and Program Review
5 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Committee on Health and Human Services
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Opioid Litigation Settlements and the Maine Recovery Fund

Dear Committee Members,

This letter is to report to you about the status of the settlement funds in the Maine Recovery Fund to address statewide needs for abating the opioid crisis in Maine.

As you know, in 2022 I signed a Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") with certain counties, cities, and towns which had filed lawsuits against manufacturers and distributors of opioid pain medications. The MOU allocates within Maine settlement funds from various opioids-related investigations and litigation, with 50% of settlement funds going to the Maine Recovery Fund, 20% to the Attorney General, and 30% to 39 counties, cities, and towns, all for spending to abate the opioid crisis in Maine. The MOU, along with legislation passed by the 130th Legislature (L.D. 1722), created the Maine Recovery Fund and established the Maine Recovery Council "to direct the disbursement of recovery funds for recovery purposes on a statewide basis" for certain opioid abatement uses. The Senate President and the House Speaker each have the authority to appoint three members of the Council, resulting in six of the fifteen members having been appointed by the Legislature.

Section IV(E) of the MOU provides that that "[t]he Attorney General shall report at least annually on or before the 2nd Friday in December" to your committees and the report "must summarize the activity in any funds or accounts directly related to this section".¹

¹ Prior reports, videos of the Council's meetings, and substantial information about its work may be found on the Council's website, hosted by the Attorney General's Office at: <https://www.maine.gov/ag/recovery-council/>.

Regarding the Recovery Fund, as of October 31, 2024, it has a balance of \$ 36,289,632.82. An overview of the settlement funds allocated in Maine, including to the Recovery Fund, may be found on my office's website, <https://www.maine.gov/ag/opioids/settlement-payments.html>.

The Council has made significant progress towards distributing funds. Shortly following my report of December 8, 2023, the Council allocated over \$9 million to organizations working in four areas of opioid abatement: harm reduction, treatment, prevention, and recovery support.² Those funds have begun to flow out to communities in Maine as my staff develop and improve the Council's processes for contracting with providers. In addition, a few weeks ago, the Council completed its grant application process which it began in June 2024. The Council decided to award grants for 43 projects totaling nearly \$14 million.³ The Council reviewed 220 letters of interest requesting a total of \$87.5 million and 127 applications.

The next report to the Legislature on the Recovery Council is due on February 1st, as required by 5 M.R.S. § 203-C (5). The statute requires me to report to the Committee on Health and Human Services "describing the activities of the Council and the status of the Maine Recovery Fund and listing information on disbursements from the fund and information related to the outcomes of funded activities." Between now and then, I will be coordinating with the Council as it works to take over its grants contracting work with the shared goal of speeding up its contracting process while ensuring these limited, critical funds are protected from misappropriation and waste.

Sincerely,


Aaron M. Frey
Attorney General

² See Attachment A for more detail.

³ See Attachment B.

Maine Recovery Council Approved Funding & Activities – December 14, 2023 – updated October 2024					
Pillar	Total Funding	Year 1 Funding	Year 2 Funding	Activity	Funding
Harm Reduction	\$2,850,000	\$1,425,000	\$1,425,000	Provide unrestricted funding to support 19 Syringe Service Providers	\$75k/year per site (2 years)
Treatment	\$3,000,000	\$400,000		Provide startup funding for (1) new detox facility with at least 10 beds in Androscoggin County (one-time)	\$400,000 (Year 1, one-time)
		\$1,100,000		Provide funding for Tessa's House to open a new detox facility with at least 8 beds in Knox County	\$1.1M (Year 1, one-time)
		\$400,000		Provide \$400,000 over two years to Franklin County to support regional planning process.	\$400,000 (one-time)
		\$1,100,000		Provide \$1.1 million to support Milestone Recovery to continue availability of detox beds	\$1.1M (one-time)
Prevention	\$1,500,000	\$575,000	\$575,000	Provide funding to support youth serving prevention programs through the Peter Alfond Foundation	\$1,150,000 (2 years)
		\$175,000	\$175,000	Provide funding to support youth serving prevention programs through the Maine Youth Action Network	\$350,000 (2 years)
	\$1,400,000	\$700,000	\$700,000	Provide direct flexible funding to "Whole Family Services" programs (ex: CAP agencies)	\$700k/year (2 years)
Recovery Support	\$501,088	\$250,544	\$250,544	Provide funding for development and operation of "Recovery Wellness Initiative" recovery center in Piscataquis County	\$501,088 (eight quarterly installments over two years)
Total	\$9,251,088	\$6,125,544	\$3,125,544		

MRC Approved Grant Funding Package (Finalized on November 19, 2024)				
Organization Name	Project Name	Approved Funding Amount	Pillar	Service Area
MaineHealth Maine Medical Center	Enhancing Project DHARMA; implementing and evaluating a community-based drug checking	\$973,801	Harm Reduction	Statewide
Kennebec Behavioral Health	Somerset County Risk Reduction & Syringe Service	\$422,340	Harm Reduction	Somerset County
Aroostook County Action Program	Strengthening Harm Reduction Strategies in Aroostook County	\$80,000	Harm Reduction	Aroostook County
Maine Recovery Access Project (ME-RAP)	The Access Center & Project Doorstep	\$499,536	Harm Reduction	Kennebec County
Commonspace	Reentry Navigator Pilot Project	\$300,000	Harm Reduction	Cumberland County
Portland Fire Department	Project Lifeline: A community-based partnership caring for	\$80,000	Harm Reduction	Cumberland County
Maine Transgender Network Inc	Expanding Access to Harm Reduction, Community Supports, and Culturally-	\$300,000	Harm Reduction	Statewide
SafeSpot Overdose Hotline at Boston Medical Center	SafeSpot Overdose Hotline	\$400,000	Harm Reduction	Statewide
Maine Works LLC	MaineWorks Northern Expansion	\$349,384	Recovery Support	Hancock, Kennebec, Lincoln, Penobscot, Somerset, Waldo Counties
Maine Association of Recovery Residences	Rural Recovery Residence Expansion Program (RRREP)	\$542,000	Recovery Support	Statewide
Portland Recovery Community Center	Recovery Rides	\$165,033	Recovery Support	Cumberland County
MCD Global Health	Recovery Jobs for Beginners	\$165,073	Recovery Support	Androscoggin, Cumberland, Franklin, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo, York Counties
Strengthen LA/Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce	Strengthen LA	\$50,000	Recovery Support	Androscoggin County
Mercy Hospital d.b.a. Northern Light Mercy Hospital	McAuley Residence Winter Street	\$500,000	Recovery Support	Cumberland County
Milestone Recovery	Low-Barrier Shelter-Based OUD Recovery Support	\$307,692	Recovery Support	Cumberland County
Healthy Acadia	INSPIRE Community Recovery Center	\$358,050	Recovery Support	Hancock County
Kennebec Behavioral Health	Somerset County Recovery Support Center	\$500,000	Recovery Support	Somerset County
United Recovery Fund	Client Employment Supports	\$200,000	Recovery Support	Cumberland, Kennebec, York Counties
Larry Labonte Recovery Center	Recovery Support Operating Expenses and Programs	\$318,588	Recovery Support	Oxford County
Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter & Services	Low-Barrier Shelter-Based OUD Recovery Support	\$529,914	Recovery Support	Kennebec County
MaineHealth d/b/a Healthy Community Coalition	Franklin County Recovery Center	\$200,000	Recovery Support	Franklin County
Healthy Acadia	Safe Harbor Recovery Residence for Women and Children	\$403,498	Recovery Support	Washington County
Lifeline for ME Recovery	Summit House House Manager	\$20,800	Recovery Support	Franklin County
Opiate-Free Island Partnership	Harm Reduction for the Deer Isle-Stonington Community	\$150,000	Recovery Support	Hancock County
Needlepoint Sanctuary of Maine	Low Threshold Employment Program for People Who Use Drugs and People in Recovery	\$20,000	Recovery Support	Statewide, Kennebec County, Penobscot County, Piscataquis County
Lakes Region Recovery Center	Outreach recovery coach and recovery coaches in schools	\$75,000	Recovery Support	Cumberland County, Oxford County
VOA Northern New England	Twilight House Recovery Coaching	\$181,989	Recovery Support	Cumberland County
Bangor Area Recovery Network	BARN Recovery Justice Program	\$282,408	Recovery Support	Statewide, Penobscot County
St. Andre Home	CourageLIVES Peer Support Specialist	\$60,000	Recovery Support	Statewide
Michael's Active Recovery	1Mar Recovery Residence	\$225,000	Recovery Support	Aroostook County
Gateway Community Services Maine	Immigrant and Bpoc Opioid Recovery and Support	\$400,000	Recovery Support	Androscoggin County, Cumberland County, York County
Maine Pretrial Services, Inc.	Barrier Removal Funding for Ancillary Services for Treatment Court Participants	\$50,000	Treatment	Statewide
Greater Portland Health	Increasing OUD Treatment Access	\$600,000	Treatment	Cumberland County
Maine Pretrial Services, Inc.	Program Incentives for Adult Treatment Recovery Courts	\$15,000	Treatment	Statewide
Day One	Treat ME Now	\$293,425	Treatment	Washington County
Maine Family Planning	Mobile Integrated SUD Treatment and Harm Reduction Services for the Lewiston/Auburn area	\$700,000	Treatment	Androscoggin County
Somerset County Jail	Bridge to Reentry	\$350,000	Treatment	Oxford County, Penobscot County, Somerset County
MD3	MD3	\$236,914	Treatment	Kennebec County
Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness	Wabanaki Healing and Recovery	\$1,000,000	Treatment	Penobscot County
Central Maine Medical Center Family Medicine Residency	Building a Foundation of Treatment in Residency Primary Care	\$296,434	Treatment	Androscoggin County
York County Government	York County Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Center	\$300,000	Treatment	York County
AccessDirect Recovery Network	Growth Helps Healing	\$500,000	Treatment	Statewide
Lifeline, Addiction and Recovery Services, LLC	Northern Maine Wellness Clinic	\$500,000	Treatment	Aroostook County
Total Projects: 43		\$13,901,879		