

Housing Connections -

SMAA & Legal Services for Maine Elders' Eviction Prevention Program

Building cross-sector partnerships to keep older adults housed

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Ashley Perrone, Community Impact Director

Southern Maine Agency on Aging

Southern Maine Agency on Aging

Mission

Southern Maine Agency on Aging is the focal point in Cumberland and York counties for resources, services, and information to empower older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers to live to their fullest potential.



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AGENCY
On **AGING**
EMPOWERING OLDER ADULTS
AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Southern Maine Agency on Aging



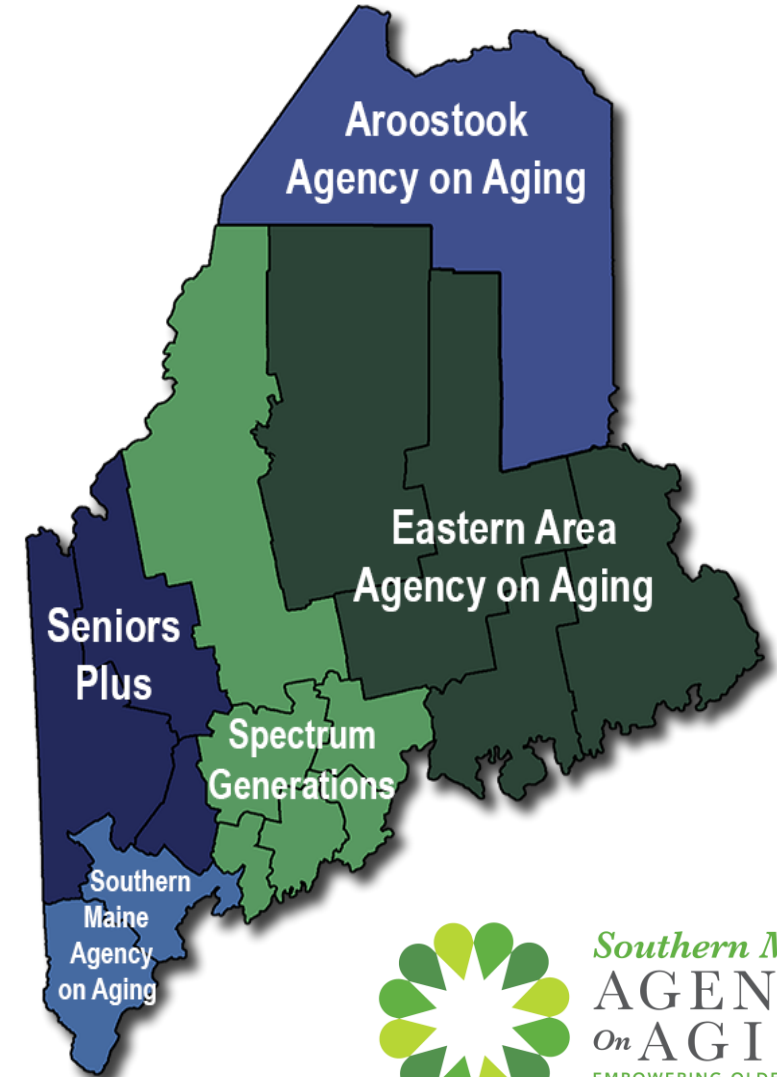
1 of 5 AAA's in the state



70+ Staff & 500 Volunteers



18,329 Individuals served in 2024



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Why Housing Matters to SMAA & AAAs



50%+ Older renters are housing cost burdened



50%+ Care Coordination caseload includes housing concerns



1,700+ Housing-related navigation contacts since late 2023

MAINE
CENTRALIZED SECTION 8/HCV WAITING LIST
PRELIMINARY APPLICATION

APPLICATION ID #: -----

The Maine Centralized Section 8/HCV Waiting List is a partnership between 20 public housing authorities (PHAs) within the State of Maine which have streamlined their application process for a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher. Applicants submit one preliminary (pre) application to the Centralized Waiting List system and their application is automatically added to the waiting list for all 20 participating PHAs. Each participating PHA selects participants to their Section 8 Voucher program from the Centralized Waiting List in accordance with their local policy.

How to Submit an Application:
To submit an application by mail or in person please fill out the entire enclosed pre-application, sign it and return it to ONE of the participating PHAs nearest you. Each participating PHA accepts applications via mail or in person during normal business hours. Only ONE application per family will be accepted. Income and other eligibility requirements may be found on our website.

What to Expect After Submitting Your Application:
After you submit your application you will receive a receipt containing your application number and date submitted to the waiting list. Please keep your application receipt for your records. If you were determined to be ineligible to apply to this waiting list, you will receive a letter explaining why. While on the waiting list, you must submit changes in contact information (address, email, and phone number) household composition, household income, household composition and any other information that may affect your ranking and priority on the waiting list.

How to Check Your Application Status and Update Your Application:
Participating PHAs cannot give an estimate waiting time or your number on the waiting list. The most important thing that you can do, while you wait is to keep your information updated. If you are unable to access your application online, you can submit a change in your application in person at a participating PHA or by mailing a written change to a participating PHA. You will receive an update request by mail if you have not updated your application for over two years. If you do not respond to any correspondence mailed to you, your application will be removed from the waiting list.

Submit and Manage Your Application Online:
For a list of participating housing authorities and their contact information, to apply online or edit your application and for more information on the Maine Section 8 Centralized Waiting List please visit:
www.MaineSection8CentralWaitlist.org or www.affordablehousing.com/MaineCWL

Pre-Application v1.0



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Common Housing Concerns



Loss of home or apartment after a major life event, like hospitalization, change in mobility, death of a spouse

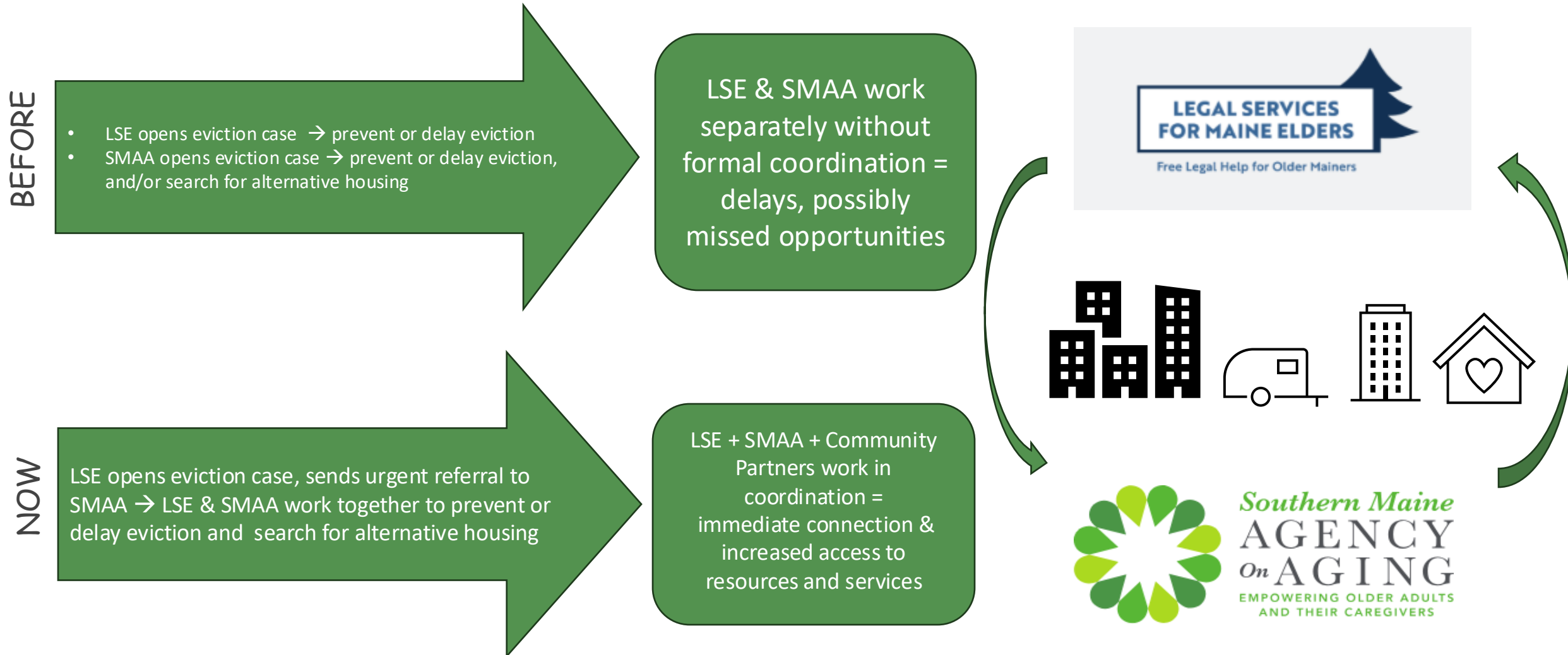
Cannot afford to stay in home due to increase in costs, like property taxes or mobile home park fees

Nowhere to go, but do not meet definition of "literal homelessness"

Eviction for many reasons like home is sold, change in landlords, past due rent, lease violations



Eviction Prevention Pilot Program





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SOUTHERN MAINE AGENCY ON AGING + LEGAL SERVICES FOR MAINE ELDERS EVICTION PREVENTION IN ACTION

A proven partnership keeping older adults safely housed in Southern Maine.

THE CHALLENGE

Older adults face housing crises that can quickly lead to homelessness.



Eviction notices and court filings



Rising rents, property taxes, and utility costs



Housing loss after hospitalization or life changes



Don't meet homelessness eligibility—nowhere else to turn

These crises are rarely just about housing.

THE INNOVATION: A FAST-TRACK PARTNERSHIP

Legal expertise + housing navigation = better outcomes



LEGAL SERVICES FOR MAINE ELDERS

Identifies urgent eviction threats in older adults and makes immediate referral to SMAA.



SMAA HOUSING CONNECTIONS

Referral bypasses waitlists and is prioritized for immediate attention.



RESOURCE SPECIALIST ASSIGNED

Dedicated Housing Specialist connects with the older adult right away.



COORDINATED RESPONSE

Legal + Housing + Benefits + Community Partners work together to stabilize housing and plan for long-term stability.



One team. One plan. Better outcomes for older adults.

OUTCOMES THAT MATTER

Helping older adults remain safely housed and connected to their community.



HOUSING RETAINED



AFFORDABLE HOUSING LOCATED



FAMILY SUPPORTS ACTIVATED



BENEFITS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SECURED



LONG-TERM HOUSING PLAN DEVELOPED

From crisis to stability—with dignity and support.



66

URGENT REFERRALS
SINCE LAUNCH

March 2023 – March 2026



1,757+

HOUSING-RELATED
CONTACTS

Since November 2023



MORE THAN 1/2

OF SMAA CARE COORDINATION
CASELOADS INVOLVE
HOUSING CONCERNS

*Working together today
to prevent homelessness
tomorrow.*



STRONG PARTNERSHIPS. TARGETED INTERVENTIONS. STABLE HOMES. BETTER LIVES.

SMAA and Legal Services for Maine Elders—innovating together for older adults in Cumberland and York Counties.

Discussion



Where are
eviction referrals
sent in your
community?

What barriers would prevent a
partnership like this in your area?

Who isn't at the table today that should be?



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Outcomes & Lessons Learned



Outcomes/Status of LSE SMAA Eviction Prevention Pilot Program Urgent Referrals	#
Living with family or seeking housing with family assistance	14
Found affordable housing	11
Working with other organization	11
Long Term Care Facility	7
Unknown	7
Seeking housing with SMAA outreach worker assistance	6
Retained current housing	5
Retained current housing/on affordable housing waitlists	3
Moved out of area	2
Total	66

Lessons Learned

- Warm hand-offs matter
- Earlier interventions changes outcomes
- Housing takes a team
- Legal + aging services are stronger together
- Start small!

Your 90-Day Challenge



What could you start in 90 days?

- Meet with Legal Aid?
- Build one referral pathway?
- Track three outcomes?
- Start with one pilot?
- _____
- _____

Questions & Contact Information

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We would love to connect with you!



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Thank you!

