

# **mecasa**

## **MAINE COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT**

May 12, 2023

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

My name is Melissa Martin and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA), the organization which represents and serves Maine's sexual violence prevention and response programs as well as Maine's Children's Advocacy Centers. MECASA initiates and advocates for victim-centered public policy, provides expert training, technical assistance, and resources for providers and partners, and funds the service providers in your communities.

MECASA is here today in support of LD.535, An Act to Increase Access to Necessary Medical Care for Certain Minors. Thank you to Representative Sheehan, Senator Tipping, and Representatives Malon, Moonen, Osher, and Rana.

At least 70% of Trans Mainers experience sexual violence at some point in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> 83% experience this before transitioning.<sup>2</sup> These experiences often begin in childhood.<sup>3</sup> 41% of Trans youth in Maine experience forced sexual contact (versus 11% of cis youth).<sup>4</sup>

When Trans Mainers are able to access gender affirming care and transition, this reduces vulnerability to sexual violence.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Maine Transgender Community Survey Results, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iea9ykjXtRc>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, <https://www.maine.gov/miyhs/>

<sup>5</sup> Maine Transgender Community Survey Results, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iea9ykjXtRc>

In addition, the most recent Needs Assessment conducted by the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault found that the largest need of sexual violence survivors across the state in general is basic needs, such as housing, food, and healthcare

Because of the high rates of sexual violence in the Trans community, you have the opportunity to meet the basic, essential healthcare needs of a group of survivors by supporting this bill

Thank you for your consideration. We hope you will support LD 535 and would be pleased to answer any questions you might have

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### **About Maine's Sexual Assault Service Providers**

One in five Mainers will experience sexual assault at some point in their lifetime<sup>6</sup> Each year, 14,000 Mainers will experience sexual violence<sup>7</sup>

Maine's sexual violence service providers provide free and confidential services across the state to victims/survivors of sexual harassment and sexual assault and those close to them, as well as to individuals who wish to increase their understanding of the issues. Just some of the services include a 24-hour statewide sexual assault helpline, crisis intervention and information, support groups, in-person accompaniment and advocacy through the medical and legal systems, and school- and community-based prevention education. Services are provided for a victim/survivor regardless of when they experienced sexual violence, and regardless of what type of sexual violence they experienced. Types of sexual violence include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment and gender-based bullying, child sexual abuse, elder sexual abuse, stalking, sex trafficking, and sexual violence within an intimate partner relationship.

*24/7 Confidential  
Maine Sexual Assault Helpline 1-800-871-7741*

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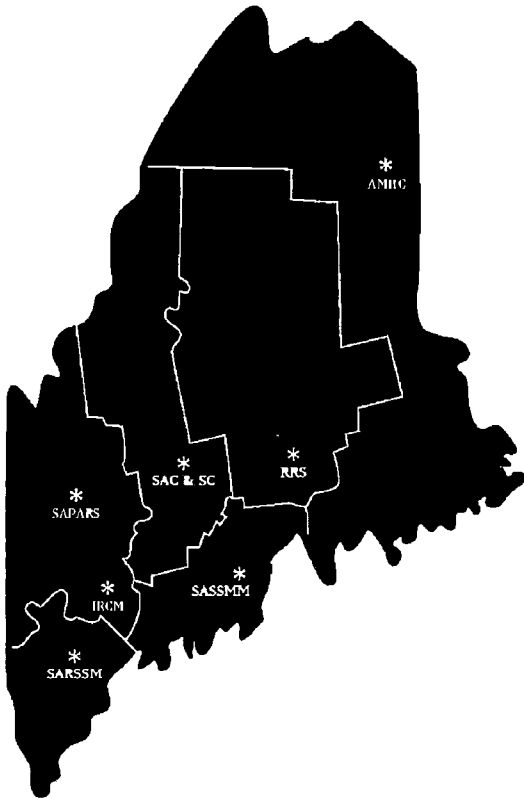
<sup>6</sup> Dumont, R. & Shaler, G. (2015) *Maine Crime Victimization Report: Informing public policy for safer communities*. Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*

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**MAINE COALITION AGAINST  
SEXUAL ASSAULT**

info@mecasa.org | mecasa.org  
207-626-0034



**STATEWIDE  
SEXUAL ASSAULT HELPLINE  
1-800-871-7741**

**Free. Private. 24/7.**

## **MAINE'S SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTERS**

### **AMHC Sexual Assault Services (AMHC)**

Serving Aroostook, Hancock, & Washington Counties •  
amhcsexualassaultservices.org

### **Immigrant Resource Center of Maine**

Serving Androscoggin & Cumberland Counties • ircofmaine.org

### **Rape Response Services (RRS)**

Serving Penobscot & Piscataquis Counties • rrsonline.org

### **Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Services (SAPARS)**

Serving Androscoggin, Oxford & Franklin Counties and the towns of  
Bridgton & Harrison • sapars.org

### **Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center (SAC & SC)**

Serving Kennebec & Somerset Counties • silentnomore.org

### **Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM)**

Serving Cumberland & York Counties • sarsonline.org

### **Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMM)**

Serving Eastern Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Knox, Waldo & Lincoln  
Counties • sassmm.org

## **MORE SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES**

Maine TransNet • mainetrans.net • info@mainetransnet.org

Wabanaki Women's Coalition • wabanakiwomenscoalition.org  
207 763 3478

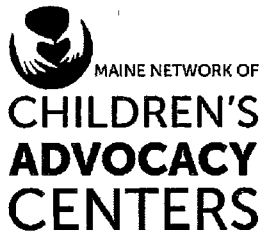
Aroostook Band of Micmacs, Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Advocacy Center • 207 551 3639

Houlton Band of Maliseets, Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Advocacy Center • 207 532 6401

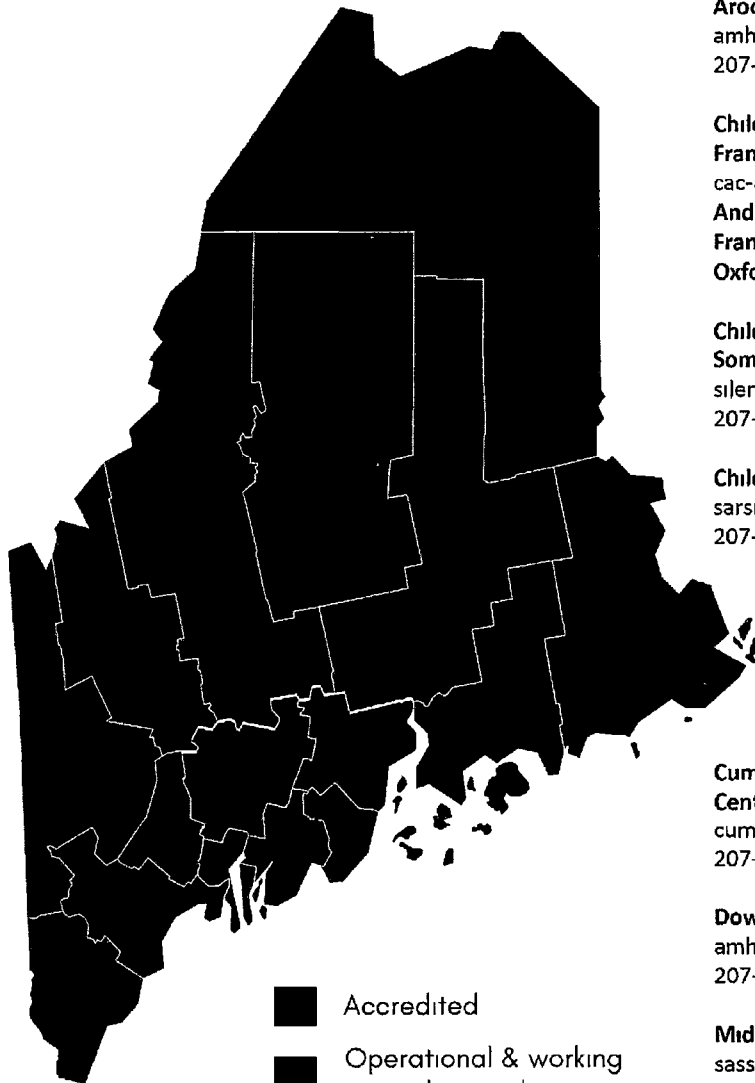
Indian Township Passamaquoddy, Domestic & Sexual  
Violence Advocacy Center • 207-214 1917

Passamaquoddy Peaceful Relations • 1 877 853 2613

Penobscot Indian Nation, Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Advocacy Center • 207 631 4886



# Maine's Children's Advocacy Centers



**Aroostook County Children's Advocacy Center**  
amhcsas.org  
207-472-6134

**Children's Advocacy Center of Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties**  
cac-afco.org  
**Androscoggin** 207-784-0436  
**Franklin** 207-778-9777  
**Oxford** 207-739-1228

**Children's Advocacy Center of Kennebec & Somerset Counties**  
silentnomore.org/about-our-cac  
207-861-4491

**Children's Advocacy Center of York County**  
sarsmm.org  
207-459-2380

**Cumberland County Children's Advocacy Center**  
cumberlandcountycac.org  
207-879-6160

**Downeast Children's Advocacy Center**  
amhcsas.org  
207-255-3687

**Midcoast Children's Advocacy Center**  
sassmm.org  
207-522-7162

**Penquis Children's Advocacy Center**  
penquiscac.org  
207-974-2469