

Campaign for Justice 2023 Co-Chairs

DEFENDERS OF JUSTICE FOR ALL



DAVID ABRAMSON

It is such an honor and privilege for me to serve as Co-Chair of the 2023 Campaign for Justice along with Tim Pease. As we continue to emerge from the impact of COVID-19, the six legal aid providers that serve the most needy individuals around our state continue to stretch their already limited resources in assistance of those who cannot afford their own counsel. We can all be proud of the work that Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Volunteer Lawyers Project, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, Legal Services for the Elderly, University of Maine School of Law's Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic, and Maine Equal Justice accomplish every day by delivering high-quality legal services to a large segment of Mainers. There are still too many that otherwise qualify for services, but cannot be served due to a lack of funding. That's where we come in. Your contribution will help to ensure that more and more of the most needy in our communities have access to justice.

I applaud the incredible dedication and work our legal aid providers bring to the table every day for so many. The Campaign for Justice is the primary source of funding that comes directly from members of the Bar, whether as solo practitioners, in-house counsel, members of a firm, or those in public service. We all see the need exists, regardless of the area of practice, to help those who are not in the financial position to help themselves when faced with daunting legal challenges in their lives. Please join Tim and me in contributing to this year's Campaign in a meaningful way. We hope you can help support the Campaign financially, and we also need more dedicated individuals to help us further our cause. In the upcoming months, we look forward to sharing wonderful stories from our dedicated providers with you. I hope to talk with you soon.

In gratitude,



TIM PEASE

"You can do well, and you can do good," said Jim Bond. "Let me state that again – you can do well, AND you can do good." Those were the first words my law school dean said on orientation day nearly 30 years ago outside of Seattle. He knew most of his eager-eyed students were focused more on doing well financially than doing good communally. Sure, some students planned to go directly to the front lines and do public service work, but most of us, myself included, were not. Looking back, Dean Bond was urging us that regardless of our eventual career choice, lawyers have unique skills and training (and in many cases, the financial flexibility) to stand up for people and help them with their most basic needs – in other words, do good.

This is where the Campaign for Justice comes in. The Campaign is your—our—opportunity to do good. Let's face it: few of us are ever going to court to represent a tenant facing eviction, advise a frightened immigrant facing deportation, or counsel an indigent grandmother who has been denied basic benefits. But what we can do is donate. And when we do, our dollars go directly to six organizations whose mission it is to be on the front lines providing civil legal aid. As lawyers, we know how important this work is, and we know the need is there, always. We also know there are a great many deserving organizations vying for our donations.

So here's our ask, lawyer to lawyer: as you think about your giving budget for 2023, please carve out as much as you can for the Campaign. At current funding levels, the six providers we help support can only assist about one in four individuals who seek their services. So, we ask:

- If you've given in the past, please consider bumping up the gift by 10%, or more.
- If you give to a number of organizations, please make the Campaign one of your top three.
- If you haven't given before, please consider making this the year you start.

Let's do good together.

All my best,

2022 proved to be another challenging year for Mainers. Skyrocketing inflation, an uncertain economic future, an ongoing housing crisis and more factors continue to push more at-risk individuals into a tight spot. Maine's civil legal aid providers help as many as they can, but resources don't allow them to help everybody.

Due to the tireless efforts of our 2022 Campaign Co-Chairs, Ben Marcus and Gigi Sanchez, fewer Mainers struggled last year. Under their leadership, the team of dedicated volunteers they chaired devoted invaluable time, expertise and funds to advance legal aid causes across our state.

The Campaign for Justice, the annual fundraising campaign to the Maine bar, raised \$633,000 for needy Mainers last year. Nearly 1,400 members contributed a gift to the Campaign. In addition, 54 volunteers turned out to lend a hand in fundraising efforts, donating 740 hours of their time at an estimated value of almost \$148,000.

"We never cease to be amazed by the incredible generosity of the Maine bar who collectively commit so much time and money toward helping Mainers in need. We are grateful to Maine lawyers and judges for their selflessness and leadership in ensuring access to justice via the Campaign for Justice," says Michelle Draeger, Executive Director of the Maine Justice Foundation.

Since 2004, the Campaign for Justice has worked collaboratively with Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, Legal Services for the Elderly, Maine Equal Justice, Pine Tree Legal Assistance, and Volunteer Lawyers Project to raise money from the Maine bar in support of civil legal aid. The 2022 Campaign for Justice result is the third highest in its history.

These legal aid providers serve over 20,000 people every year—Mainers who need, but are not able to afford, help for life-changing issues like protection from abuse and harassment, divorce, eviction, health care, immigration, or loss of government benefits.

The amazing work you will read about in the following pages, and the donors who support it, have our enduring gratitude. Maine's legal community turns out time and time again to support its most vulnerable people, and that is proven by the words on these pages. To them, and you, we say thank you again.

Angela Doyle
Director, Campaign for Justice

Volunteers are the Catalyst of our Success

Many factors contribute to the Campaign for Justice, but the countless hours, endless dedication and overwhelming positivity of our volunteers are by far the biggest keys to our success. To them, we extend our deepest thanks.

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“As a lawyer, I know how important our justice system is to every individual. Equal access to that system should be a right, not a privilege. The Campaign for Justice provides critical support in assuring that is a reality for tens of thousands of individuals and families each year. I’m proud to support the Campaign’s work in broadening access to the justice system for Mainers.”—Stacey Neumann, Partner, Murray Plumb & Murray

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On its tenth anniversary, the Campaign for Justice created the Founders Circle to recognize those supporters who had donated to the Campaign every year. We continue to acknowledge those who have donated for ten or more consecutive years. Thank you to all Founders Circle members for your steadfast support.

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Volunteer Lawyers Project: A Broad Spectrum of Legal Aid Assistance

The Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) recruits and supports Maine attorneys who are willing to provide pro bono legal assistance to low-income Maine people who need help with civil legal problems. The VLP helps people in all sixteen counties of Maine get help when there is often no other resource available.

For example, Rachel, an older woman in Somerset County, was living in a small house on property owned by her late husband, who died of cancer after suffering with Alzheimer's for years. Due to his illnesses, he did not have a will or make other provisions for his wife after his passing. VLP was able to connect her with a volunteer attorney to assist her with the probate process to get the property into her name and to secure her circumstances so that she could remain living independently.

In another case, Carlos started a small non-profit to provide health care support services to low-income people in Lewiston, and had questions about appropriate forms to use with clients. VLP accepted Carlos into its Small Business and Non-profit Clinic and matched him with an experienced health care attorney for advice. His clinic was able to get off the ground and provides services to clients in Androscoggin County today.

Another example is Carrie, a single mom of a five-year-old in Franklin County who obtained a protection from abuse order after she was assaulted by her child's father in February of 2022. When the defendant assaulted her again in July, she needed help modifying the custody order to limit his contact with the child. A VLP pro bono attorney accepted the case, represented the client in the hearing, and successfully obtained an order protecting the child, also.

These are just a few examples of the work that pro bono attorneys are doing for clients in need of civil legal aid across the state, facilitated and supported by VLP.

VLP continues to develop new ways to enable pro bono legal help by creating legal clinics where attorneys can provide limited representation in areas of high need, like family law, and by presenting continuing legal education opportunities for its volunteers. VLP partners with the American Bar Association to administer the Free Legal Answers Maine website, where qualified Mainers can ask legal questions online and VLP recruits attorneys to provide answers. Together with other legal aid providers, the Justice Action Group, the Maine State Bar Association, the University of Maine School of Law, and other partners, VLP is engaged in projects to improve access to justice across the state.

The financial support that the Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project receives from the Campaign for Justice is used to multiply value: VLP recruits from members of the Maine bar who are willing to donate their time, and from students and other community volunteers who help with administrative processes. With a staff of only seven, VLP then serves thousands of Mainers each year with legal advice and representation by coordinating this invaluable volunteer service.

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IMMIGRANT LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project: Efforts Leading to Real Change

In March 2022, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP) joined with the Refugee and Human Rights Clinic at the University of Maine School of Law, ACLU of Maine, and Dr. Basileus Zeno to publish the report *Lives in Limbo: How the Boston Asylum Office Fails Asylum Seekers*. The findings were clear and disturbing: the Boston Asylum Office's asylum grant rate is half the national average due to racial and language bias, burnout, and other due process-eroding pressures. ILAP and its partner organizations are hopeful that the resulting national media attention and ongoing advocacy efforts will lead to real change in how asylum cases are adjudicated.

ILAP staff and *pro bono* attorneys first started noticing serious problems and high denial rates at the Boston Asylum Office in 2019 and, with its partners, filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request and analyzed the extensive documents produced. This type of in-depth analysis is what is needed to hold the immigration system accountable and protect the rights of asylum seekers in Maine, but it also requires significant staff time over an extended period. The support of donors and funders across the state allowed ILAP to dedicate the necessary staff time to this project and build capacity for future impact litigation.

In addition to the important work uncovering injustices at the Boston Asylum Office, ILAP proudly led Maine with effective, timely representation in a variety of areas:

Direct legal services

- In 2022, ILAP provided direct legal services to 1,613 people and benefitted 1,131 of their household family members.
- ILAP had a greater than 98% approval rate for full representation cases that received a final decision, which often can take several years.
- More than 200 *pro bono* attorneys donated 5,177 hours of their time at a value of \$1,016,797 providing representation in cases for asylum seekers, vulnerable immigrant youth, and Afghan evacuees.

Community legal education

- In 2022, 1,975 immigrant community members and service providers across the state attended 71 in-person and virtual outreach events.
- ILAP's website (ilapmaine.org) had 130,000 unique visitors (a 365% increase year over year) and 159,000 visits (a 326% increase year over year).
- ILAP's Facebook page reached 14,226 people with timely updates on Temporary Protected Status (TPS), advice on protecting yourself from immigration fraud, and more.
- ILAP was a regular contributor to Amjambo Africa (and its podcast Amjambo Time) and Maine Public News Connect on topics relevant to Maine's immigrant communities.

Systemic advocacy

- ILAP was featured in the media on 50 occasions, including Amjambo Africa, CentralMaine.com, Maine Public, Penobscot Bay Pilot, Press Herald, Spectrum News, WBUR, WGBH, WMPG, and WMTW.
- ILAP endorsed 38 policy recommendation letters or joint public comments on a range of local, state, and federal issues related to immigration law and policy.



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Pine Tree Legal Assistance: Sharing Sheryl's Story

One day, in early January, Sheryl walked into Pine Tree Legal Assistance's office in Presque Isle looking for assistance with an issue with her landlord. While in the office that day, she mentioned that she was scared of her husband and wanted to know what she could do to protect herself.

Pine Tree staff found out that last July, Sheryl was in a serious car accident and suffered a traumatic brain injury. After the accident, her husband prevented her from going anywhere or talking to anyone. He told her not to talk to anyone because her condition embarrassed him. Then, the

day after Christmas, Sheryl ended up in the hospital. Her husband told her she fell and hit her head on the edge of the tub, although he did not call an ambulance or take her to the hospital. She took herself to the hospital the next day. She had a brain bleed and the doctors diagnosed her with Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic jolt concussion. They questioned whether something other than a fall may have happened, but Sheryl had no memory of the incident.

One week after that, on Sheryl's birthday, her husband started a fight with her. When she reached for his phone to call for help, he grabbed her wrist and forced her down on the bed with his arm across her chest near her neck, causing her to feel suffocated and scared. When he let her up, he pushed her and caused her to fall against the wall, hitting her head once again. She called the police, but he threatened to have her committed. She believed him and did not follow through with the police report.

It was clear that Sheryl needed much more help than simply a housing case entailed. In addition to assisting Sheryl with her landlord, a Pine Tree attorney helped her file a Protection from Abuse case and connected her with Hope and Justice Project, a local domestic violence agency. Pine Tree Legal also negotiated a two-year PFA Order by agreement. The PFA terms included a firearms prohibition, allowed her to stay in her home and keep the car, provided for the protection of her pet, and awarded spousal support. After the PFA Order was in place, Sheryl changed the locks to be safe, and reported that she felt very empowered by standing up for herself.

By stepping foot in a Pine Tree Legal Assistance office seeking help in her housing matter, Sheryl ultimately set in a motion a series of events that changed the course of her life immeasurably for the better.

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Legal Services for the Elderly: Spotlight on Elder Abuse

In the past year, Legal Services for the Elderly (LSE) assisted over three hundred older people who faced elder abuse. Because of Maine's aging population, elder abuse is a devastating and pervasive issue our state faces. Elder abuse often occurs right in the home, and involves a family member or someone who had previously been trusted. Elder abuse often deprives an older person of what had been a stable living situation, placing at-risk individuals in even more dire circumstances due to Maine's existing housing crisis.

The most common financial exploitation scenarios involve theft of the home, diversion of fixed, essential income streams like Social Security, theft of cash savings, theft of personal property such as automobiles, and theft via credit cards obtained in the older person's name. These predatory acts leave an older person stripped of all income and assets and without safe housing.

A recent case reveals the significant impact of abuse and the difference having an attorney can make. Sally was forced to leave her home that she co-owns with her son due to abuse and safety concerns. She moved in with her daughter in her apartment, bringing along her pet. The daughter received an eviction notice soon after because this was a lease violation. Sally then attempted to move back into the home she co-owns but again faced abuse and hostility from her son. With no other options, she boarded her pet and moved back in with her daughter, who was given an extension before being evicted.

Sally sought legal help. Soon after, an LSE attorney got involved and Sally's son brought a Protection from Harassment proceeding against her. He was granted a temporary order which stated that Sally could not return to her own home. Throughout this time, Sally was continuing to make payments on the house with no contributions to the costs from her son. The LSE attorney brought a motion to dissolve the temporary order and after a hearing, the motion was granted, allowing Sally to return to her home. However, another problem remained: Sally was too frightened to do so with her son still present. The LSE attorney then filed for a Protection from Abuse order against Sally's son and was able to negotiate a two year order after a hearing. Sally returned to her home, where she could once again feel safe and enjoy the company of her beloved dog.

Without LSE, Sally's outcome would likely have been very different. Because of Legal Services for the Elderly, hundreds of aging Mainers just like her did not have to face their abusers alone.

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Maine Equal Justice: Economic Building Blocks for Thousands of Mainers

In 2022, Maine Equal Justice (MEJ) sought to build upon previous successes to grow new systems and programs. Realizing that improving the economic circumstances for disadvantaged Mainers sets people on the road to long term success for the future, MEJ leveraged opportunities to create stability for Maine families.

Maine Equal Justice designed and advanced the Higher Opportunity for Pathways to Employment (HOPE) program that was established by the Legislature in 2018. The HOPE program makes higher education and training possible for low-income parents with children. HOPE provides critical financial support and navigation services that can enable low-income parents to go back to school and succeed.

Unfortunately, many students in the HOPE program report they still struggle to meet their needs over the course of their program, especially in the face of unexpected emergencies. In 2022, MEJ launched the Build HOPE project to fill in gaps in the HOPE program by providing additional income support for childcare, books, high electricity costs, transportation, internet service or other necessities students might need to stay in school. MEJ has been able to address unexpected needs that would have derailed students' success so they can stay on track in reaching their goals. In fourteen months, MEJ distributed \$750,000 to over 300 families. The project also includes research that will result in a report and recommendations for policymakers to inform policy changes needed to support parents in reaching their employment goals and sustaining economic security.

Maine "Credit to Kids" Collaborative:

Child poverty was temporarily cut almost in half in Maine due to the expanded federal Child Tax Credit (CTC). MEJ was able to help hundreds of Maine families apply for the Child Tax Credit and other payments that provide critical funds to families with low income. MEJ convened a network of organizations called the Credit to Kids Collaborative that reached out to Mainers about the federal Child Tax Credit and helped them access it. MEJ also worked with state agencies to help connect people to the CTC. The coalition helped families with low income enroll in and access the CTC if they were not receiving it automatically because their incomes were below the tax filing threshold.

MEJ trained thirty low-income parents as "Child Tax Credit Helpers" who each helped at least twenty other families in their communities access the CTC. Many of them were also trained as Certified IRS Intake Specialists. MEJ held eight training sessions for CTC Helpers and advocates, reaching over 200 people. With in-person events and office hours, Maine Equal Justice served hundreds of people with tax questions or direct tax assistance, and MEJ reached thousands more through coalition partners, training, and outreach efforts. The collective efforts helped 1,200 tax filers receive \$2.67 million in CTC payments and assisted 6,881 tax filers with receiving the State of Maine's \$850 pandemic relief payment, totaling \$5.85 million.

Research demonstrated that the improved CTC greatly reduced child poverty, shrunk racial disparities in income security, improved the health and wellbeing of children, and supported parents' ability to work. MEJ is now leading an effort to improve Maine's child tax credit and make it fully refundable so that families with children who need the additional income most can access the credit.

Peer Workforce Navigators:

Together with the Department of Labor and four other community-based organizations, MEJ launched the Peer Workforce Navigator (PWN) Project. Community-based Peer Navigators connect people who are under- or unemployed with education and training, apprenticeships, unemployment insurance, healthcare, and other supports people need to get and keep gainful employment. Six navigators are now trained and in place, including one at MEJ. The Navigators have directly reached 3,600 people and connected nearly 800 of them with public benefits. Through this work, MEJ is also identifying and addressing systemic barriers that are standing in peoples' way of employment and working to eliminate those barriers with MDOL. Together, Maine Equal Justice and partners are making improvements to the unemployment insurance system, access to education, training, and apprenticeship programs, and other supports for unemployed workers.



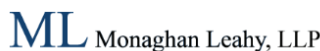
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Cumberland
Legal Aid Clinic

Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic: Training the Next Generation of Lawyers to Improve Access to Justice

Established in 1970 as a program of the University of Maine School of Law, the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic is committed to training the next generation of lawyers, promoting access to justice, and meeting the acute needs of vulnerable communities. The Clinic is home to the General Practice Clinic, Prisoner Assistance Clinic, Protection from Abuse Program, Refugee and Human Rights Clinic, Rural Practice Clinic, Youth Justice Clinic, and the Center for Youth Policy & Law.

The Prisoner Assistance Clinic, which was launched in 2003 and is now run by Associate Professor Courtney Beer, is unique both in Maine and nationally. Without legal assistance, residents of correctional facilities often struggle to navigate civil legal matters they are faced with. In an effort to reduce recidivism and build more stability in their clients' lives after prison, student attorneys work with residents to resolve their civil legal matters. While many other legal aid organizations in the state are restricted from assisting residents of Maine's correctional facilities with civil legal matters, the Prisoner Assistance Clinic, funded in part by the Campaign for Justice, represents one way to close this gap in justice for those in Maine's prisons.

In the summer of 2022, for the first time since the pandemic started, correctional facilities in Maine reopened for in-person visits, allowing student attorneys to resume making weekly visits to clients residing at Maine Correctional Center and the Southern Maine Women's Reentry Center in Windham. In 2022, the Prisoner Assistance Clinic provided over 75 people who are incarcerated with legal information, advice, counsel, and, in some cases, full representation.

Additionally, the Refugee and Human Rights Clinic, under the leadership of Managing Co-Director Anna Welch, received the Award for Excellence in a Public Interest Case or Project from the national Clinical Legal Education Association. This honor was conferred in recognition of the Refugee and Human Rights Clinic's multi-year investigation into concerning practices at the Boston Asylum Office. The report, "Lives in Limbo: How the Asylum Office Fails Asylum Seekers," was published in partnership with the ACLU of Maine, the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, and Dr. Basileus Zeno. The award was presented in a virtual ceremony at the Association of American Law School's Conference on Clinical Legal Education.

Along with working on the Boston Asylum Office investigation this year, student attorneys in Refugee and Human Rights Clinic continued assisting low-income immigrants on a broad range of cases and projects, with matters involving defensive asylum, work permits, Freedom of Information Act requests, asylum derivative/family reunification, lawful permanent residence, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, and naturalization. Students also filed an amicus brief to the First Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of U.S. immigration law professors and scholars on issues related to asylum and relief under the Convention Against Torture.

The faculty and staff at the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic laid the groundwork in 2022 to open up a new clinical program in Aroostook County. In April 2022, after months of hard work from stakeholders, Governor Janet Mills signed LD 1924 into law, providing funding to open the Rural Practice Clinic in Fort Kent, Maine. Aimed at providing Maine Law students the opportunity to practice rural law and improve access to justice in Aroostook County, the Rural Practice Clinic opened its doors to clients in January 2023.

Within all the programs that operate within the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic, student attorneys, faculty, and staff worked hard in 2022 to expand access to justice in Maine. Throughout the year, forty-six students at Maine Law enrolled in Clinic courses, seven students worked as full-time interns, one worked as a public policy Cushman Anthony fellow, and two worked as part-time fellows focusing on policy work. Representing close to 400 clients overall in 2022, the students who participated in the Clinic gained valuable skills while helping meet the needs of vulnerable communities in Maine.



Special Recognitions

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We thank the following ten groups for their outstanding participation rates achieved through individual participation by their attorneys.

Roach Ruprecht Sanchez & Bischoff, PC	100%
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Thompson, Bowie & Hatch	94%
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Pierce Atwood LLP	76%
Maine Superior Court	76%
Bernstein Shur	75%
Verrill	71%
U.S. District Court of Maine	71%

Recognizing the importance of legal aid in our communities, the following firms gave a generous gift to the Campaign for Justice on behalf of all firm attorneys.

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PretiFlaherty	\$23,346
Unum	\$19,945
Norman, Hanson & DeTroy	\$15,375
Brann & Isaacson	\$12,450

AVERAGE GIFT AMOUNT

TOP TEN

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Law Offices of Joe Bornstein	\$1,667
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Eaton Peabody	\$1,389
Berman & Simmons, PA	\$1,321
Norman, Hanson & DeTroy	\$1,281
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Unum	\$950
PretiFlaherty	\$934
Kelly, Rimmel & Zimmerman	\$700

Mainers Served in 2022 by Six Core Legal Aid Providers



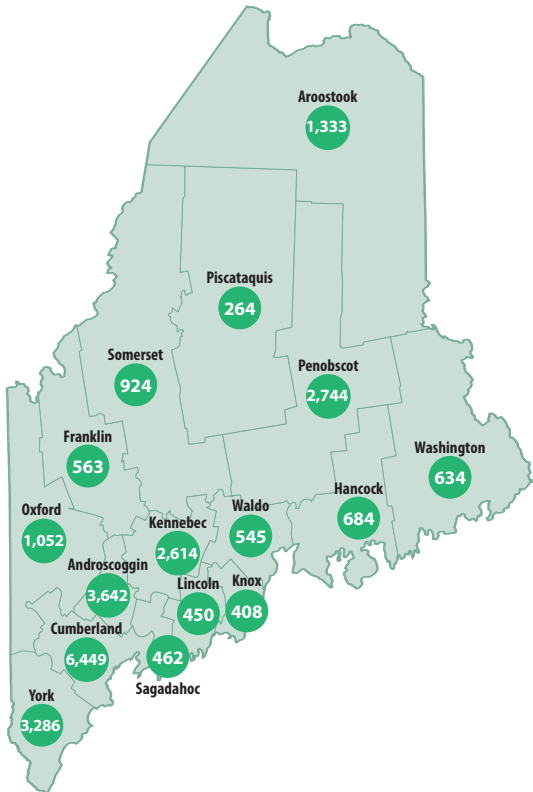
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County	Cases
Androscoggin	3,642
Aroostook	1,333
Cumberland	6,449
Franklin	563
Hancock	684
Kennebec	2,614
Knox	408
Lincoln	450
Oxford	1,052
Penobscot	2,744
Piscataquis	264
Sagadahoc	462
Somerset	924
Waldo	545
Washington	634
York	3,286
Total	26,054

This is the number of CASES reported to the Maine Justice Foundation for 2022, by county. The number of PEOPLE impacted is much larger—over 300,000.

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