



the Spotlight

Ideas Wanted!

We are looking to make the 2024 issues of the Spotlight more engaging and fun to read. What would you like to see? Please send your ideas, or constructive feedback, to our email, Spotlight.DHHS@maine.gov.

~ The Spotlight Committee

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Holiday Season Stress!

Last December the American Psychiatric Association wrote an article titled “Seven Ways to Cope with Holiday Stress.” While their survey results are not current for this year, the tips are still very applicable for this upcoming holiday season. You can find that article [here](#).

State of Maine employees have access to a wonderful program known as Living Resources. (This benefit replaces what we used to call our Employee Assistant Program, or EAP.) Living Resources offers assistance in several areas like short term counseling; legal and financial; back to school resources and much more. Accessing support in any or all of these areas may help the holiday stress, [click here](#) to see all the Living Resources has to offer!

MOVEit Data Related Incident

The State was informed of a software vulnerability in MOVEit, a third-party file transfer tool that is owned by Progress Software and used by thousands of entities worldwide to send and receive data. As it pertains to the State, this vulnerability was exploited by a group of cybercriminals and allowed them to access and download files belonging to the State between May 28 and May 29, 2023.

As soon as the State became aware of the incident, the State took steps to secure its information, including by blocking internet access to and from the MOVEit server. The State also implemented security measures recommended by Progress Software to patch the vulnerability, engaged the services of

outside legal counsel, engaged external cybersecurity experts to investigate the nature and scope of the incident, and conducted an extensive investigation to determine what information was involved. This investigation was recently completed and revealed that certain information pertaining to State residents, employees, and other individuals that the State has served may have been affected by the incident.

The specific information involved in this incident varies based on the individual and their association with the State. However, the following types of information may have been involved: name, Social Security number (SSN), date of birth, driver's license/state identification number, and taxpayer identification number. In addition, for some individuals, certain types of medical information and health insurance information may be involved.

Now, since the onset of the incident, the cybercriminals involved claimed their

primary targets were businesses, with a promise to erase data from certain entities, including governments. Despite their assertions that any data obtained from governments has been erased, the State is urging individuals to take steps to protect their personal information.

Individuals are encouraged to contact Maine's dedicated call center to find out if their data was involved or if they have questions about this incident. The phone number is (877) 618-3659, with representatives available from Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 9 PM ET. If it is determined that an individual's Social Security number or taxpayer identification number is involved, the call center will provide the individual with info for complimentary credit monitoring.

You can also visit a [dedicated website](#) to see the latest information on this incident.



Acknowledge Hard Work!

DHHS has so many amazing employees that we want to recognize people quarterly rather than just annually. If you have an employee or manager you'd like to recognize, please submit up to a 250-word paragraph on the nominee, including in your description how the nominee embodies the goals of DHHS: Health, Safety, Resilience, and/or Opportunity. Send your nominations to Spotlight.DHHS@maine.gov



2022 Employee and Manager of the Quarter

The **Employee of the Quarter** at DHHS is **Phil Harriman**, Fraud Investigator. Phil produces top-level investigative reports that never require follow-up or correction. He is also a top-producer of criminal investigations. For this reason alone he should be recognized for his diligence, but where Phil shines is going above and beyond his assigned tasks. Phil regularly mentors new employees and assists with training in proper case preparation. Phil's work product is so highly thought of that the Attorney General's Office asked for his assistance with a large case when they lacked staff to properly prepare it.

James Barton, OFI Unit Supervisor, is our **Manager of the Quarter**. James is described as the most approachable, patient leader an employee could have the opportunity to learn from and be guided by. He is always very helpful when staff need to understand a case more thoroughly. He leads with care in making sure each case is given the best practice in accordance with policy. His nominator is quoted as saying "I feel privileged to be under his direction. If anyone should have recognition in our busy fast paced offices, it should be James Barton!"

Congratulations

DHHS “Coming Together” for MSECCA

September marked the kick-off for the 2023-24 MSECCA Campaign with a repeat statewide goal of \$515,000. To date, \$282,757 has been contributed by state employees toward this goal. DHHS staff have contributed \$23,798 (30%) toward our goal of \$78,500.

Everyone that has made a contribution from the start of the campaign will be entered into drawings for items donated to us by the Maine State Prison Store.

- **Enter by November 27** to be entered to win the Buoy Bird House
- **Enter by December 5** to be entered to win either the lazy susan, mini cutting board, or trinket box

Additionally, random drawings will be held for several Hannaford and Dunkin gift cards along with several other MSECCA related items. If you are the recipient of any of the smaller drawings, your name will go back in for the three larger drawings.

Also, watch for notification of the MSECCA Online Auction that will be held at the end of November. Should you have an item(s) that you would like to donate toward the auction, please contact Kathy Veilleux (Kathy.Veilleux@maine.gov) or Kelly Roman (Kelly.D.Roman@maine.gov).

The link to make your donation online is www.maine.gov/msecca. You can also track the progress of the campaign by visiting the leaderboard at www.maine.gov/msecca/leaderboard.



“You don’t inspire your teammates by showing them how amazing you are. You inspire them by showing them how amazing they are.” ~ Robyn Benincasa, World Champion Adventure Racer

Health Insurance Premium Changes

The Office of Employee Health & Wellness considers multiple factors when calculating individual health insurance premiums. One of these factors is an employee’s level of base annual salary.

Due to recent legislation, **there will be a change in the active State of Maine Health Plan member salary tiering** which impacts a portion of members’ premium rates, **effective November 1st, 2023.**

NEW Tiering Effective November 1, 2023:

- a. Level 1: Base Annual Salary is Equal to or Less Than \$50,000
- b. Level 2: Base Annual Salary is Between \$50,000 – \$100,000
- c. Level 3: Base Annual Salary is Equal to or More Than \$100,000

Previous Tiering Structure *before* November 1, 2023:

- a. Level 1: Base Annual Salary is Equal to or Less Than \$30,000
- b. Level 2: Base Annual Salary is Between \$30,000 - \$80,000
- c. Level 3: Base Annual Salary is Equal to or More Than \$80,000

The Office of Employee Health & Wellness [website](#) will be updated to reflect the new health plan salary tiering structure as of November 1st, 2023. For questions regarding the new health plan salary tiering structure please reach out to our office at info.benefits@maine.gov or 207-624-7380.

Take Charge of Your Health

November is National Diabetes Month, a time when communities across the country seek to bring attention to diabetes.

More than 37 million people in the United States have diabetes, and 1 in 5 of them don’t know they have it.

(Source: www.cdc.gov)

The [State of Maine](#) has partnered with Livongo with the goal of reducing the burden and cost of managing diabetes.

[Livongo](#) is a data-based health coaching program that offers Smart Meters that enables people with diabetes to share blood glucose records with Certified Diabetes Educators. It also offers unlimited test strips & unlimited lancets all at no-cost to plan members.

To see a complete list of all the helpful assistance Livongo offers, [click here](#).

Reminder: Health Plan members can access their individual risk by accessing the Diabetes Risk assessment found within the 2024 Health Premium Credit Program questionnaire.



Notes from the Commissioner's Desk

Commissioner Lambrew does a wonderful job keeping DHHS employees informed of important DHHS news on a weekly basis. Here are some highlights from her recent all-staff emails, in case you missed them.

- “November is Adoption Awareness Month. In 2022, 413 children in Maine were adopted and provided permanency. The theme of National Adoption Month this year is “Empowering Youth: Finding Points of Connection.” It underscores the importance of providing opportunities and services that connect youth to their backgrounds to support meaningful permanent relationships. Thanks to the many of you have expanded your families through adoption.”
- “Open enrollment for [CoverME.gov](#) begins today. [11/01/23] The Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace runs CoverME.gov, where people can compare private plans, apply for financial savings, and enroll in a 2024 health or dental insurance plan. All plans offered on CoverME.gov provide quality, comprehensive insurance that protects consumers if they have an accident or major illness and fully pays for preventive screenings. This year, Maine people can continue to take advantage of additional federal financial assistance that makes insurance more affordable. If you know someone who is uninsured or struggles to pay for health insurance please encourage them visit [CoverME.gov](#) to check out its options.
- “Tomorrow is the last day that flags in Maine will be at half-staff in commemoration of those who lost their lives in the Lewiston mass shooting. We will not forget these individuals, their families, the other people harmed directly and indirectly, and all whose hearts hurt from the terror and loss of this tragedy. We continue to update our [resources](#) for individuals and organizations well as opportunities through [Healing Together](#) for people who wish to help.”

“The future depends on what you do today.” ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Longevity Awards

DHHS has many employees who have served the people of Maine for **25 years or more!** One way we recognize these achievements is by issuing certificates and pins to longtime employees as they reach milestone years.

This year, DHHS thanks the employees listed below for their continued dedication to the people of Maine!

45 Years of Service

Mary Martin

40 Years of Service

Stephanie Emens

Patricia Wall (Retired)



35 Years of Service

Herbert Downs

Denise Bemis

Stacy Boss

Anne Briggs

Robin Gerrard

Bethany Hamm

Althea Harris

Tammy Kincaid

Kelly Kramer

Richard Lawrence

Joelle Milliken

Susan Paradis

Ginger Roberts-Scott

Ava Walker

Jan Wright

30 Years of Service

Deanna Coutts

Melissa Bailey

Dolores Barton

Lee Caron-Tremblay

Joanne Charette

Michelle Depatsy

Holly Fortin

Suzanne Freitas

Donna Grass

Esther Hunt

Kimberly Mayne

Cathy Jo Parlin

Karen Small

Harry Tobey, Jr

Scott Whitney

25 Years of Service

Cathy Adams

Cheryl Allen

Dwayne Bickford

Darlene Boober

David Boucher

Darren Brann

Victoria Brayall

Haig Brochu

Paula Casoria

Janet Cassidy

Becky Clark

Tammy Cooper

Kandi Crawford

Steven Creamer

Penny Dennett

Brian Dufault

Michelle Galego

David Girard II

Staci Gustin

Lisa Hall

Terri hall

Bobbi Jackson

Angel Jamison

Robert Jandreau

Kelley Karkos

Carla Keddy

Kathleen Mattia

Jessica McCluskey

Randi McKechnie

Niesje McKeown

Mary Lee Motuzas

Lisa Munster

Lisa Nadeau

Robert Parent

Patricia Pettegrow

Kristen Piela

Barbara Plummer

Rachel Pomeroy

Jeffrey Randolph

Cynthia Raymond

Kelie Routhier

Tina Stevens

Allison Stratton

Tabitha Tschamler

Healthy Recipe—Cheesy Potato Soup

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Yield: 6 Servings

Serving size: 1 cup

Nutrition (Per Serving): 170 calories, 6g Total Fat, 520mg Sodium, 20g Total Carbohydrates, 9g Protein.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1/4 cup celery, chopped
- 1 teaspoon oil
- 2 cups potatoes, peels and diced bite size
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 1/2 cups nonfat or 1% milk, divided
- 1 cup (4 ounces) reduced-fat cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 tablespoon bacon bits or 1 slice bacon, cooked and crumbled

Directions:

- In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, saute onions and celery in oil until onions are clear
- Add the potatoes, broth, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 to 25 minutes or until the potatoes are tender.
- In a small bowl, stir together cornstarch and 1/4 cup milk until smooth. Add remaining milk. Stir into the potato mixture.
- Cook and stir until thickened and heated through, about 5 minutes. **Do not boil.**
- Remove from heat. Stir in cheese until melted. Top with bacon bits. Serve warm.

Notes:

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

For this recipe and other healthy recipes, see the Office for Family Independence's (OFI), [Snap-Ed Health Recipe webpage](#).



Celebrating the Unifying Power of Sport and Food to Combat Hate

In May, the Biden-Harris Administration released the [U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#). Recognizing that hate and the violence it fuels are on the rise in America, the Strategy calls for everyone—regardless of personal backgrounds and beliefs—to stand united against hate, racism, bigotry, and violence.

The President's Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition is proud to play a role in helping to highlight how social activities such as sports, cooking, and breaking bread together can build community solidarity and counter antisemitism and other forms of hate. This summer, the President's Council hosted a digital campaign and invited others to join them in sharing personal stories that illustrate the power of both sports and food to combat hate.

Playing a sport is a great way to engage in physical activity, and as Council member Dr. J. Nadine Gracia stated, "Participating in sports can not only improve your health, it can also help bring communities together. Whether it's a basketball or soccer league, a softball team, a sports camp, or other sports activity, these are meaningful opportunities to get to know your neighbors and counter stereotypes."

To continue reading, [click here](#)

Our Mission

The Maine State Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is committed to promoting the health, safety, resilience, and opportunity for the people of Maine. We will accomplish this by fostering an environment where employees feel appreciated, achievements are celebrated, and successes are highlighted. DHHS is dedicated to team building, employee recognition and engagement.

The Spotlight Committee Members

The following people are members of the Spotlight Committee. Feel free to share with them your feedback of current issues of the Spotlight and also your ideas for future issues.

Aimee Brown	Amy Desrochers	Desirea Murray
Maranda Bubar	Kelly Flagg	Kelly Roman
Lisa Bullard	Mark Lutte	Jennifer Tankersley
Morgan Connolly	Shannon Martin	Kathy Veilleux

*“You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have.”
- Cayla Mills*

DHHS Scent Policies

This is a reminder to employees that there are policies in place to help ensure a healthy environment for all staff. Even in offices that are not scent- or fragrance-free, we ask that you are mindful when wearing or using scented products.

The [DHHS Office Attire Policy](#) and the [DHHS Environmental Quality Policy](#) both state:

“Chemical compositions in many agents (including fragrances found in personal care items) pose varying health risks to some people. Therefore, products such as perfumes, cologne, and heavily scented products such as air fresheners, scented candles, and potpourri should be used conservatively. In some cases, it may be necessary to prohibit such products altogether when the health of an individual may be compromised.”

Please reach out to [Jodie Craig](#) in the HR Service Center with questions or concerns.

Confidentiality Corner

Here are a few important confidentiality issues to remember:

1. **For those of us seeking to partner with other offices or programs within the Department:** *Before* moving forward with an initiative, please be sure to complete the **Interoffice Collaboration Memorandum** found on [this intranet page](#) to ensure that there is a legal basis for any sharing of consumer information.
2. **For all of us:** Please *slow down* to prevent errors involving consumer information. Check your work and communications to ensure that:
 - a. You are sending the right information to the right person, whether by U.S. Mail or email;
 - b. You are uploading, attaching or vetting the right person’s information to a case file or communication; and/or
 - c. You reach out immediately to your Privacy/Security Liaison in the event of an error or incident involving consumer information.

As always, thank you for helping to keep the Department’s consumer information private and secure.

