



Maine Equal Justice

People Policy Solutions

Stand up for General Assistance and Maine people and local governments in the middle of a housing emergency!

Proposed cuts to GA would weaken our ability to protect Maine people from homelessness and cause a rise in housing instability across the state.

GA is a statewide program of last resort for Mainers who have exhausted all other options to afford food, medicine, rent, heat, electricity, or other basic needs. Rules for receiving GA are strict and there are **maximums on specific assistance** types, which can only be exceeded for emergencies. The program **keeps a roof over many heads, which helps save 35-50%** in other costs related to health care, incarceration, and other services.

The cost of everything keeps going up, but the **baseline budget for GA has not changed for many years**. As we work to build more homes, GA supports people hit hardest by rising rents, from families with young kids to older Mainers. Now, wrongheaded proposals to limit housing assistance under GA would **balance the state budget on the backs of people who have very low incomes** and no other options—all while **maintaining tax breaks for wealthy Mainers**.

Don't pull the rug out from under cities and towns working to keep Maine people housed

"More people than ever are relying on the GA program due to the lack of housing supply, rising costs of homes and rents, and increased prices for food, clothing, energy and other essentials... The recent **sub-zero weather forcefully reminds** us all of the **possibly dire consequences** for vulnerable citizens...Securing housing would be even more difficult, pressures on shelters – already at capacity – would mount, and the State could end up seeing a **spike in its unhoused population**, not just in cities, but in communities across Maine." *Maine Mayors Coalition, representing Auburn, Bangor, Biddeford, Lewiston, Portland, Rockland, Saco, Sanford, South Portland, Waterville and Westbrook*



During a housing emergency, GA is keeping people safe

"My health issues have resulted in me losing my cleaning jobs. I've recently had to go to the town GA for help with rent. I don't know if I'll even be able to afford this and stay here..."

Many of us are not getting by, and if we are, it's by the skin of our teeth. I'm in constant threat of losing everything, causing increased mental health issues."

-Nancy, Brunswick

Produced by Maine Equal Justice
www.maineequaljustice.org