

Immigrant Resource Center of Maine's COVID-19 Response & Updates

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the Immigrant Resource Center of Maine's (IRCM) continues to adjust and shift its services to ensure we are following the state and local municipalities' orders of social distancing for the safety of our staff and the communities we serve.

We have temporarily closed our doors until May 15th. On said date, we will reassess our next steps to ensure the safety of our staff and the communities we serve. Our goal is to make sure we're minimizing the virus's spread by following the social distancing orders. As a result, **ALL** programs at the Immigrant Resource Center have temporarily shifted/adjusted to the following:

Office Hours and Operations: Our office number at 207-753-0061 are rerouted to our cell phones. Our typical workdays and hours, from Monday to Friday between 9 am to 5 pm, still apply during this time. We're experiencing an increasing number of calls at this moment. If you do not get through to one of our staff members, please patiently try again. You may also reach us via our email at info@uswofmaine.org. We will make sure to get back to you as soon as possible.

System Advocacy: IRCM continues to provide system advocacy by partnering with many New Mainer providers. On 3/16, we held our monthly New Mainers Community Collaborative (NMCC). The meeting focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and our response. Our follow-up task was to look at two immediate emerging needs: information sharing & supplies to meet the emergency needs of families. IRCM partnered with several New Mainer providers across the state and since then have been convening weekly meetings that have developed the following: advocacy in education, housing, employment, small business, food, supplies/household needs, and information sharing. All of the work from these meetings, including the varying notes/agendas, folders on the various systems, COVID-19 translated materials/videos/audios, can be found [here](#). We continue to work with the multiple system platforms as we encounter emerging needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic through the direction of these collaborative efforts. IRCM will explore and continue to provide advocacy in other systems as we come across different emerging needs.

ALL Essential Direct Services: While most services have been suspended or adjusted to the best of our abilities, IRCM continues to provide all essential services. Direct services, like victim services, medical/hospital, immigration, and court services, are determined on a case by case basis. We will continue to collaborate with our partner agencies to assess the next steps due to agency closures and delayed services affected by the virus.

Sexual and Domestic Violence Advocacy & Services: IRCM continues to provide system advocacy for domestic and sexual violence victims. We are providing direct services as best we can our victims and survivors. We're doing our best to make sure our services/benefits are not disrupted through the following forms of assistance: material/food support, transportation, emerging and unmet needs, regular check-ins, and any other essential activities.

Transportation: Although IRCM staff are not currently providing direct transportation, we continue to utilize uber and lift services for essential appointments, like medical assistance for a newborn child or critical appointments.

Medical/Hospital Accompaniment: IRCM will not be providing hospital accompaniment for medical appointments until further notice. Survivors and clients will have the opportunity to have medical services, including interpreters. IRCM staff will continue to connect with hospitals/medical providers to cancel or set up medical appointments as needed. For survivors who

have questions around medical accompaniment, please contact our office at 207-753-0061 or email us at info@uswofmaine.org.

Court Advocacy & Accompaniment: IRCM continues to monitor the court cases and reviews the weekly needs based on the information we have. We conduct daily check-ins and follow-ups with our victims and survivors. For further assistance around court advocacy and accompaniment, please contact our office at 207-753-0061 or visit our website at www.ircofmaine.org.

Meeting Circles/ Support Group: IRCM currently has suspended its meeting circles sessions. However, we are reassessing at this time which platforms we can use to engage our clients. We will restart this program soon through other options that meet the VAWA confidentiality standards. For further information or referrals, please call us at 207-753-0061 or email us at info@uswofmaine.org.

Community Education and Prevention: Until further notice, IRCM monthly community education will be conducted via zoom on the last Friday of each month. Additionally, we are posting content and information on the virus and sending regular communication to the public. IRCM has also developed a series of short videos/audios for April Sexual Awareness Month that can be found on our Facebook page at the moment. We are also in the process of developing text messages to disseminate community education through WhatsApp and other social media platforms. For more information and referrals, please call 207-753-0061 or email us at info@uswofmaine.org.

Service Provider Trainings: IRCM will be working on organizing its training tools and materials to offer online Cultural Sensitivity & Humility trainings and technical assistance for the service providers in the various systems. For more information and training requests, please call 207-753-0061 or visit our website at www.ircofmaine.org to complete a training request form.

Donation & Material Assistance: Although we are not physically in the office, we are continuing to drop off supplies such as gift cards. We are in the process of ordering other supplies such as laundry detergent, personal hygiene, school supplies, hand sanitizer, ethnic foods, etc. for families in need. We are also accepting donations at www.ircofmaine.org. For families who are in need, please call 207-753-0061 or email us at info@uswofmaine.org.

ESL Classes & Work Readiness Classes: IRCM is working on providing the ESL and Work Readiness classes virtually. For more information and referrals, please call 207-753-0061 or email us at info@uswofmaine.org.

Referral Resource & Drop-in Services: All office walk-ins, office referrals, and resource sharing are suspended temporarily until further notice.

Thank you all, and stay safe!

Fatuma Hussein

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