



Maine
Community Foundation

THE FACTS:

Maine Community Foundation's Support for Victims, Families & the Lewiston-Auburn Community Following the Oct. 25, 2023, Mass Shooting

BEST PRACTICES TO SUPPORT VICTIMS & FAMILIES GUIDED EFFORTS

1. **Victims & Families Centered Process:** MaineCF developed a clear, transparent and comprehensive process to support victims, families and the Lewiston-Auburn community MaineCF hired Jeff Dion, one of the nation's foremost mass-casualty victims' advocates, who has worked with victims and families after mass shootings in more than 31 communities across the country. Dion called the MaineCF effort "the best that I have seen." ([Sun Journal, Oct. 15, 2024](#))
2. **Creating Two Funds Is a Victims & Family Best Practice & Was Widely, Publicly Reported:** Two funds – the Victims & Families Fund and the Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund – were [publicly announced](#) and [widely reported](#) on the first day the funds were launched. Two funds are a "best practice," according to Dion, to ensure every dollar a donor chooses to give to victims and families is restricted for that purpose. ([Statement from Jeffrey Dion, Feb. 18, 2025](#))

DONOR INTENT WAS AT THE CORE OF THE PROCESS

3. **Donors Directed Their Own Dollars, Not MaineCF:** People who donated decided which of the two funds they would support when they contributed. MaineCF did not "appropriate" or decide where donors' funds went. Through clear and visible procedures, this process honored donor intent.
4. **Donors Got a Receipt to Confirm Their Intent:** Donors received a "thank you" letter or message from MaineCF within days of their donation that expressed appreciation for their support and confirming to which fund or funds their donation went consistent with their intent.
5. **Maine's Attorney General Confirmed MaineCF Followed Donor Intent:** Maine's highest career consumer protection law enforcement officer, the Attorney General's Office (AG), reviewed MaineCF's process related to supporting victims, families and the Lewiston-Auburn community. After "thoroughly reviewing" materials and information "about the fact of and process underlying distributions to community nonprofit organizations," The AG's Office "identified no legal concerns" and thanked MaineCF for its "willingness to step up to manage the fundraising efforts in the wake of last year's tragedy."
6. **Independent Audit Confirmed MaineCF Followed Donor Intent:** An independent audit, recommended by Dion and conducted by Baker Newman & Noyes at the conclusion of the process, confirmed MaineCF managed both funds appropriately. Baker Newman & Noyes "Agreed Upon Procedure" reviewed both funds following Dion's methodology and found "no exceptions."

BROAD RECOVERY FUND PROCESS WAS THOROUGH & TRANSPARENT

7. **AG's Office Reviewed Broad Recovery Fund Steering Committee, Found No Conflict:** The Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund steering committee comprised local community leaders. The committee voted on only two things: 1) the criteria for receiving a grant from the fund (below); and 2) whether grants would be of equal amounts to all qualifying organizations or structured in tiers,

with varying amounts. (Committee members voted for an equal amount to all qualifying organizations. These facts were reviewed by the Maine AG's Office, which agreed with all attorneys who reviewed the process and found there was no "conflict of interest.")

8. **Criteria for Broad Recovery Fund Grants Clear and Public:** The criteria for applying for Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grants was publicly announced by the steering committee at the beginning on Feb. 2, 2024, and has been available on the MaineCF website and included the following requirements:
 - "must be located in the L-A region"
 - "must have provided or are continuing to provide relevant services or support to people who were present at the time of the shootings **and/or support to people in the L-A region who suffered psychological trauma as a result of the shootings...**" [Emphasis added] ([Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund final protocol, Feb. 2, 2024](#))
9. **Helping Victims, Families, and the Community: The Right and Necessary Approach:** Supporting the broader community's recovery, alongside direct assistance to victims and their families, was guided by compassion, best practices, and a commitment to doing what is right. Leading mass shooting victims' advocates recommend this approach, recognizing that healing extends beyond those directly affected to the entire Lewiston-Auburn community. MaineCF's efforts reflect this principle: even after the closure of both funds, the ongoing work of the Maine Resiliency Center—established with support from a Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grant—demonstrates the lasting impact of helping all who were touched by the tragedy. Here is what the Resiliency Center says about those it serves:

"The Maine Resiliency Center is a resource hub for anyone impacted by the October 25th shootings at Just-in-Time Recreation and Schemengees Bar and Grille. This includes:

 - Family, friends, and loved ones of individuals killed on October 25th
 - First responders and medical personnel
 - Anyone present at either of the shootings
 - **Any member of the community who feels impacted by these events**" (Emphasis added)
10. **29 of 30 Eligible Organizations That Chose to Apply Received Broad Recovery Grants:** Nonprofit organizations that met the Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grant criteria were welcome to apply for grants starting Feb. 5, 2024. Twenty-nine organizations received funding, which was distributed evenly among each organization. MaineCF did not select what organizations could or did apply for Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grants. MaineCF did not define the criteria for grant awards. No donation to the Victims & Families Fund was ever moved to the Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund and vice versa. This separation was a core principle of our process.
11. **What Broad Recovery Grantees Did with Funds Has Been Public for Over a Year:** What each Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grantee did with its **one-time** grant has been public on the MaineCF website and linked to several news stories for more than a year. Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grants were "unrestricted general operating grants," and reporting requirements were intentionally minimized to ensure funds reached the community. ([MaineCF Lewiston Response: One Year Later](#))
12. **Community Foundations Play an Essential Role in Helping Victims of Mass Violence:** MaineCF helped ensure "a fair, transparent, and victim-centered donation management program" that was "among the very best responses to mass violence that I have seen in all my years doing this work,"

according to Dion. Dion says the role of community foundations is often critical across the country “to provide the experience communities need” and cover administrative expenses “separate from any of the donations for victims.”

13. **Facts: Gateway Community Services:** While not actually directly related, charitable nonprofit Gateway Community Services Maine did apply for and receive a Broad Recovery & Organizations Fund grant. A separate, for-profit entity – Gateway Community Services LLC – has come under recent scrutiny regarding state and federal funds related to health-related services it provides.