

# MeHAF

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## Maine Health Access Foundation

### *2006C Grants Round*

Request For Proposals (RFP) in support of  
Strengthening Maine's Health Care Safety Net:

### ***Meeting the New Federal Medicaid Citizenship Verification Requirements***

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Maine Health Access Foundation

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**RFP ISSUE DATE – NOVEMBER 8, 2006**

OVERVIEW OF 2006C RFP PROCESS & TIMELINE	
<b>RFP Released</b>	November 8, 2006
<b>Teleconference Discussion</b> <i>(A review of the RFP and MeHAF's expectations with questions and answers)</i>	November 14, 2006: 10:30 am to 11:30 am November 15, 2006: 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm November 17, 2006: 9:00 am to 10:00 am  Dial-in information: 1-866-779-0774 and enter the access code*9742612*
<b>Applications Due at the MeHAF Office</b>	Proposals must be <u>received</u> at the MeHAF office no later than Friday, December 1, 2006
<b>Funding Range and Grant Duration</b>	\$5,000 to \$100,000 over <b>18</b> months. Higher funding levels are reserved for lead organizations that coordinate the activities on multiple collaborators, including those in membership organizations or affiliates. Questions about the budget range should be directed to Dr. Wendy Wolf, MeHAF President & CEO at (207) 620-8266, ext 101.
<b>Funding Decisions Made</b>	On December 21, 2006
<b>Project Period</b>	January 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008
<b>Interim Reports Due</b>	November 16, 2007
<b>Final Narrative &amp; Financial Reports Due</b>	August 15, 2008

### PROJECT FOCUS and FUNDING PRIORITY

The Maine Health Access Foundation (MeHAF) is issuing a new request for proposals (RFP) as part of the Foundation's initiative to strengthen Maine's health care safety net.

This RFP, "*Meeting the New Federal Medicaid Citizenship Verification Requirements*" will support key organizations to work in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Integrated Access and Support. The purpose of this RFP is to educate and assist both the Maine residents who are uninsured or currently enrolled in MaineCare and the providers who serve them in meeting the new citizenship documentation requirements related to Medicaid eligibility and redetermination.

### ORGANIZATIONAL ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants must be 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charities, governmental or other public, non-profit entities. Individuals, fiscal sponsorships, organizations with pending 501(c)(3) status, and private foundations are ineligible.

### QUESTIONS:

- Applicants are strongly recommended to discuss their proposal with Dr. Wendy Wolf, President & CEO, (207) 620-8266, ext. 101, or email: [wwolf@mehaf.org](mailto:wwolf@mehaf.org)
- Technical or logistical questions should be directed to Catherine Luce, Grants Associate, (207) 620-8266, ext. 104, [cluce@mehaf.org](mailto:cluce@mehaf.org)

## **The Maine Health Access Foundation**

***The mission of the Maine Health Access Foundation is to promote affordable and timely access to comprehensive quality health care, and improve the health of every Maine resident.***

MeHAF is a mission-driven and results-oriented organization that uses grants and other program support to advance strategic solutions to Maine's health care needs, *particularly for persons who are uninsured and medically underserved.*

One of the Foundation's strategic priorities is to strengthen and expand the quality, capacity, efficiency, service capabilities and reach of our health care "safety net". Maine's health care "safety net" is comprised of two key components: (a) the individual providers and health care organizations that disproportionately care for people who are uninsured, and (b) the publicly funded health care programs, such as MaineCare, that provide coverage for children and adults with low-incomes, people with disabilities, seniors and others. This new RFP focuses on helping Maine people who are uninsured with low-incomes overcome new barriers to enrolling and re-enrolling in MaineCare.

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### **Meeting the New Federal Medicaid Citizenship Verification Requirements**

**BACKGROUND:** The Federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 enacted in February 2006 created a new subsection of the Social Security Act that requires individuals to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of citizenship or nationality when initially applying or upon the recipient's first redetermination for Medicaid. This new provision, which began July 2006, requires States to implement an effective process for assuring compliance with documentation of citizenship in order to obtain Federal matching funds. The Federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will monitor State compliance.

CMS issued guidance on the new citizenship verification requirements, stating that the primary documentation required for citizenship verification is a U.S. passport or a Certificate of Naturalization or U.S. Citizenship. Acceptable secondary documentation is a U.S. Birth Certificate. Because seniors and people with a disability who receive Medicare or Supplemental Security Income already meet documentation requirements, the new requirements do not apply to these individuals. For information on the new documentary evidence guidelines, please refer to the CMS website: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidEligibility/downloads/Citizenshipfactsheet.pdf>

Maine's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has been working with Federal officials, local advocacy organizations, providers and others to clarify these new requirements and determine how they can be implemented to assure compliance yet preserve coverage for eligible applicants. The DHHS Office of Integrated Access and

Support (OIAS) is committed to collecting documentation from internal searches of other state databases (such as the Bureau of Vital Records to identify birth records); however, a significant number of the 9,000 MaineCare applicants per month will require additional assistance to meet the documentation requirements.

No new Federal funds are provided to help States and program beneficiaries meet these requirements, yet securing documentation will be logistically and fiscally challenging for MaineCare recipients and applicants. To assist OIAS in implementing this requirement and minimizing the effect on applicants and beneficiaries, the MeHAF Board of Trustees recently approved a one year grant to the DHHS-OIAS to:

- Add new centralized staff specialists who will provide one-on-one phone counseling to clients and families who are seeking assistance with the citizenship verification requirements.
- Train Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients participating in the ASPIRE program to serve as on-site citizenship assistants at DHHS regional offices.
- Provide limited support for a documentation procurement fund that will draw down Federal match funding. The purpose of this fund is to pay for procuring the necessary documentation for highly vulnerable MaineCare applicants (those who are homeless, mentally impaired, or physically incapacitated).

FUNDING OBJECTIVE: OIAS has been working with consumer advocacy groups and health care providers to develop collaborative strategies for the smooth implementation of these new eligibility requirements. The Department is committed to ensuring people have a reasonable opportunity to collect the appropriate citizenship documentation, yet many recipients and applicants will require help beyond the capacity of the current OIAS eligibility specialists.

People applying and those re-applying for MaineCare must understand both the documentation requirements and the steps they must take to collect the documents required by the Federal government. By expanding their staff capacity as outlined above, OIAS is committed to assisting applicants. However, many people will turn to their health care provider, consumer advocates, or local community organizations to receive guidance on how to comply. To meet this need, consumer advocates, provider organizations, and other key community groups must work collaboratively with OIAS to develop easily understood informational materials, train community groups on the new requirements, frame appropriate outreach strategies, and in some instances, provide direct hands-on technical assistance to MaineCare applicants.

OIAS will help educate consumer advocacy groups and providers about the new requirements, and work collaboratively with them to frame strategies so MaineCare applicants and recipients receive the help they need to collect the required documentation.

*A copy of the DHHS-OIAS grant is attached to this RFP. With this new funding solicitation, MeHAF will provide **18** months of support to key consumer advocacy groups, provider organizations, and other community-based groups to (1) work collaboratively with DHHS-OIAS to provide education and training to organizations that serve MaineCare patients, and (2) assist OIAS in promoting education, outreach, and direct technical assistance to individuals and families who are applying for MaineCare so they can meet the new citizenship verification requirements.*

*Applicants to this RFP solicitation must review the OIAS work plan and describe how their proposed activities will complement and assist OIAS' work.*

**ASSISTING OIAS THROUGH STRATEGIC COLLABORATION:** Over the last 6 months, OIAS has been working with the following organizations to address how Maine will comply in a way that minimizes barriers to MaineCare eligible residents:

- Maine Equal Justice
- Consumers for Affordable Health Care
- Disability Rights Center
- Southern Kennebec Child Development Center
- Representatives from homeless shelters: Preble Street Resource Center, Bread of Life Ministries
- Representatives from Maine's Native American Tribes
- Alzheimer's Association
- AARP Maine
- Legal Services for the Elderly
- Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Maine Health Care Association
- Maine Primary Care Association
- Maine Association of Mental Health Services
- Maine Medical Association

Given their current engagement on this issue, MeHAF anticipates that some of these organizations will develop collaborative proposals in response to this RFP. However, other organizations and groups can contribute to this important work. ***Any eligible organization that can credibly address the funding objective for this solicitation is invited to apply.***

**Funding Preference:** MeHAF will give strong preference to proposals that include collaborators from membership/affiliate organizations to implement state-wide, cross-disciplinary projects. In the proposal review process, preference will be given to highly collaborative proposals that bring organizations together to build on and enhance the expertise and experience of the groups that have been working with OIAS. The most competitive proposals will frame cross-disciplinary and creative collaborations in an attempt to educate and provide outreach to MaineCare applicants in a variety of settings.

Collaborative proposals may present work plans and project budgets in which:

- The participants propose the division of the total requested funds; or

- Present independent but collaborative proposals and budget requests for each organization within the collaborative; or
- List participating organizations as subcontractors or consultants.

PROJECT WORK PLAN: Applicant organization should describe in detail how their work plans compliment and build on the work outlined by OIAS (see Attachment A). OIAS will coordinate the Department's outreach and assistance efforts with consumer and provider groups to help promote and appropriately utilize the resources that are available to educate recipients and applicants about the new requirement. In some instances, MaineCare applicants will require direct assistance in collecting the necessary documents.

Applicants will be required to work with OIAS to develop and execute training sessions for community groups, providers, and others so that these entities understand the new requirements and can direct clients or patients to technical assistance resources. This will augment OIAS efforts and make it more likely the State can help those who need additional assistance.

Consumer advocates and provider groups will also serve as key collaborators in identifying highly vulnerable individuals who might be eligible for direct financial assistance from OIAS to procure the necessary citizenship documentation.

Applicants funded under this initiative will be contractually obligated to meet every two months during the grant period as an *ad hoc advisory committee* to key staff from OIAS. The purpose of these meetings will be to discuss implementation issues, identify barriers and emerging issues that prevent MaineCare applicants from successfully meeting the verification requirements, frame mid-course corrections, and expand successful strategies.

MeHAF does not expect all grantees to propose comparable work plans and thus does not anticipate that all applicants will be funded at similar levels. Further, MeHAF does not expect to fund each organization that submits a proposal.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: Grant applicants must be:**

- 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charities, governmental or other public, non-profit entities. Individuals, fiscal sponsorships, organizations with pending 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, and private foundations are ineligible.
  - **NOTE:** Due to the provisions of the Federal Pension Protection Act of 2006, organizations that are **509(a)(3)** supporting organizations will be required to submit additional documentation. Please contact Senior Program Officer David Steven Rappoport at (207) 620-8266, ext 102 if your applicant organization is a 509(a)(3) supporting organization.
  - Joint applications from collaborating organizations are encouraged, and may include a mix of eligible and ineligible institutions. However, an eligible organization must serve as the lead agency and designated project applicant.
- Preference will be given to applicant organizations with well-established broad-based or state-wide consumer or provider membership.

## **APPLYING FOR A GRANT**

### **A. Format Requirements**

- The proposal may not exceed five pages (exclusive of the mandatory grant summary form, budget page and required attachments).
- Proposal should be submitted on 8 ½ x 11 sheets (single side) with margins of at least ¾ inch on all sides, in a type face no smaller than 11 points.
- Proposals may be single-spaced or double-spaced.
- Each page of the proposal must include a header in the upper right-hand corner with the applying organization's name and the page number.

### **B. Proposal Content**

The proposal should include the following sections. Proposals will be scored based on a scale of 100 points, with the maximum points available in each section of the proposal noted in parentheses below.

1. Grant Summary Form (Unscored).
2. Agency or Organization Description (20 points). Provide a brief description of your agency, including mission statement, history of the organization (including number of years in operation), current programs/activities, population group(s) the agency typically benefits, and any other relevant information. Describe any specific relevant experience in educating and assisting individuals and families with eligibility for publicly funded programs.
3. Population (20 points). State the population(s) who will be the target(s) of your activities.

4. Work Plan (45 points). All proposals must include:
- A rationale for the applicant organization's role in assisting OIAS and MaineCare applicants in meeting these new requirements.
  - An integrated work plan that includes:
    - The specific scope of work and planned activities of each participating organization;
    - Detailed delineation of the nature of any collaborations;
    - How proposed activities will directly complement the efforts of OIAS and other participating organizations;
    - Specific deliverables with a timeline;
    - Specific outcomes and measures for the proposed activities; and
    - A commitment to the every other month strategy meeting with OIAS.
5. Budget & Budget Justification (15 Points).
- A project budget using the MeHAF Budget form. *NOTE:* Because MeHAF has provided OIAS specific funding that qualifies for 1-to-1 administrative match for document procurement for highly vulnerable MaineCare applicants, **applicants should NOT include budget request for document procurement costs as part of this application.**
  - Budgets for each participating organization (for collaborative proposals)
  - Specific payment arrangements for any subcontractors should be specified (i.e. payment to one applicant organization serving as a financial administrator to a consortium or direct payments to multiple collaborators)
  - A budget justification (one page maximum). Details of any subcontractor arrangements must be included in the narrative, budget, and budget justification. MeHAF will not make direct payments to subcontractors.

### C. Required Attachments

- Your organization's Board of Directors list with their affiliations.
- A copy of your final determination of 501(c)(3) status or equivalent letter from the IRS. Please note that the Foundation will not fund organizations that are in the process of applying for 501(c)(3) status or equivalent.
- A copy of your non-discrimination policy, which must verify that the organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, political affiliation or religious belief. Please note that this is a more stringent standard than that currently required by the federal government; and
- If the application is collaborative, detailed letters of commitment from each organization collaborating on your project. Letters of commitment should explain the specific participation of each collaborator, such as the resources each commit to the project, and the funding each collaborator will receive.

#### **D. Submission Requirements**

Submit four sets (one original and three copies) of the proposal and attachments (*please clip the original to make it easier for making extra copies*).

Each set should include the following documents in this order:

- Grant summary form
- Proposal narrative
- Project budget
- Budget justification
- Board list
- 501(c)(3) letter
- Non-discrimination policy
- Letters of commitment

Submit by regular mail, overnight courier, or by hand to:

Catherine Luce  
Grants Associate  
Maine Health Access Foundation  
150 Capitol Street, Suite 4  
Augusta, ME 04330

All proposals and related documents must be received on or before December 1, 2006. Deliveries by hand must be received in person by a Foundation staff member no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 1, 2006. Submissions will not be accepted electronically or by fax.

#### **E. Applicant Notification**

Applicants will be notified of MeHAF's decision on or about December 21, 2006.

#### **F. Project Dates**

Projects begin January 1, 2007 and end June 30, 2008.

## GRANT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Grantees will be required to sign the Foundation's standard grants contract. Under some circumstances, the Foundation will consider modifying contract terms to meet grantee requirements.

MeHAF is interested in keeping its reporting and funding requirements to a minimum:

- Grantees will be required to submit one interim narrative and financial report at the nine month mid-point of the project (due November 16, 2007).
- At the conclusion of the project, grantees must submit a final narrative and financial report. These are due August 15, 2008.
- The project director for the grant is required to attend every other month advisory group meetings with OIAS.
- In some cases, the Foundation may make additional requirements of grantees.
- The Foundation may offer or sponsor other activities of interest to grantees. Participation in these events will generally be optional.

## PROPOSAL DECISION-MAKING

Funding decisions for this RFP will be made by the Board of Trustees on the basis of proposal review and scoring by members of the Foundation's Grants Committee and MeHAF program staff. Each proposal will be scored by three independent reviewers. The Grants Committee will review cumulative rankings and the proposal evaluation results to develop the recommended slate for Board review and approval.

## RFP REVIEW & QUESTIONS

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in one of the informational teleconferences on:

- **November 14, 2006: 10:30 am to 11:30 am**
- **November 15, 2006: 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm**
- **November 17, 2006: 9:00 am to 10:00 am**

To access the call, dial 1-866-779-0774 and enter the access code \*9742612\*.

Dr. Wolf will review the RFP, discuss MeHAF's expectations, and answer questions. For other questions or concerns, MeHAF staff are always available to provide assistance:

- **Technical or Logistical Questions:** please contact Catherine Luce, Grants Associate, (207) 620-8266, ext. 104, [cluce@mehaf.org](mailto:cluce@mehaf.org)
- **Project Content or Related Questions:** Please contact Dr. Wendy Wolf, MeHAF's President & CEO, (207) 620-8266, ext. 101, [wwolf@mehaf.org](mailto:wwolf@mehaf.org)

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Received by MeHAF on or before December 1, 2006.
- Four sets (one original and three copies). Please securely clip the original and staple the copies.
- Each set contains in order:
  - Grant summary form
  - Proposal
  - Project budget
  - Budget justification
  - Board of Trustees list
  - 501(c)(3) letter
  - Non-discrimination policy
  - Letters of commitment (if any)
- Submit by regular mail, overnight courier, or by hand.
  - Deliveries by hand must be received in person by a Foundation staff member no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 1, 2006.
  - Submissions will not be accepted electronically or by fax.
- Submit to:  
Catherine Luce  
Grants Associate  
Maine Health Access Foundation  
150 Capitol Street, Suite 4  
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## **ATTACHMENT A**

### Department of Health & Human Services Office of Integrated Access & Services Grant Application to the Maine Health Access Foundation

#### Background

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 establishes a new citizenship verification requirement for most Medicaid applicants and recipients, dramatically changing the way in which states verify U.S. citizenship for this group of people. Prior to July 1, 2006, Medicaid applicants and recipients, who are citizens, were asked to self-declare their status on the application under penalty of perjury. States are now responsible for collecting documentation from most Medicaid applicants and recipients that verifies both their U.S. citizenship and identity.

This new requirement will be burdensome for MaineCare recipients and applicants and will be difficult for many to meet. Many recipients and applicants will require help beyond the current support provided by eligibility specialists who assist with the MaineCare application and recertification process. We expect that many will need additional assistance to understand the documentation needed to meet this new requirement and the necessary steps they must take to collect the narrow set of documents allowed by the federal government to verify citizenship and identity. If people are unable to secure this documentation in a reasonable period of time, they will lose access to health care coverage through MaineCare. While the state is committed to ensuring that people have a reasonable opportunity to collect the appropriate citizenship documentation, the state runs the risk of losing federal matching funds for individuals who are unable to provide appropriate citizenship and identity verification. For that reason, it is critical that the state provide additional assistance for those MaineCare applicants and recipients who need help with collecting the required documentation.

#### **Implementation efforts of the Office of Integrated Access and Support**

The Office of Integrated Access and Support (OIAS) at the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) are in the process of implementing this new requirement. OIAS plans to collect as much documentation from internal searches of other databases in the DHHS system as possible. It has started this process by culling exempt populations (97,718 Medicare and SSI recipients) from the current list of Medicaid recipients. The names of the remaining 172,000 recipients are being sent to the Bureau of Vital Records in batches to be matched with birth certificate files. This match will verify citizenship for individuals born in Maine. For purposes of verifying identity, we are in the process of matching names of recipients with other government programs requiring identity identification. Those individuals for whom we are unable to successfully complete an internal match will receive a letter clearly laying out the documentation that we need from them to fulfill this requirement.

OIAS must also verify citizenship at the time of application for new applicants, in addition to collecting the information on current recipients. OIAS receives approximately 9,000 MaineCare applications per month. The MaineCare application and the ACES system have been updated to allow eligibility specialists to capture applicants' maiden names and place of birth at the time of application. This will simplify the process for matching individual names with birth certificate

records at the Bureau of Vital Records. OIAS will send names of new applicants born in Maine to Vital Records for a match. For applicants born outside of Maine, OIAS will send them information about what documentation is required to verify citizenship and identity.

OIAS has updated their computer systems to capture information as to which form of documentation an individual provided for verification of citizenship and identity. Attached is an example of the drop down file in the state's ACES computer system, showing how the state will verify the kind of documentation provided by each MaineCare participant.

### Target Population

The target populations for this initiative are those Medicaid eligibility groups that are impacted by the new federal requirement. As described in the work plan below, the staffing of a dedicated 1-800 phone line, and ASPIRE participants placed in the DHHS regional offices will provide assistance to those individuals who need help in conforming to the new requirement and securing documentation.

We expect, however, that – within this larger population – individuals born outside of Maine and more vulnerable populations, such as people with mental illness and those who are homeless, will need extra help with this new requirement. Many of these individuals may be enrolled in MaineCare as a 'noncategorical'; an eligibility group whose household income, on average, is well below the federal poverty level and who are particularly transient. All will face considerable obstacles in gathering both citizenship and identity documentation.

There are over 306,000 individuals receiving some form of medical assistant through the Department of Health and Human Services. Through electronic matching and current verifications for other programs, 186,350 individuals have been verified for citizenship.

The remaining 115,000 to 120,000 individuals will be electronically sent to Maine's vital records division. For individuals born in Maine under the age of 10, electronic records are available. We estimated 80,000 individuals will be matched through vital records and other data base matches such as Child Support Paternity electronic records. In addition to the electronic match, OIAS is training and providing Vital Records staffing resources to manually search the paper files for other individual record verification. From these initiatives, OIAS estimates that all but 1,630 Family Related Medicaid individuals and approximately 3,000 Medicaid waiver individuals will be verified.

Over the next twelve month period (the current planned verification time period standard), OIAS estimates 150 – 200 "new" applicants will need additional assistance to obtain citizenship verification documentation or approximately 2,000 individuals in total will need additional assistance.

### Workplan

#### **Staffing**

The Office of Integrated Access and Support will hire four new citizenship aides whose sole responsibility will be to help MaineCare applicants and recipients to collect the necessary documentation. Through staffing of dedicated phone lines, these citizenship aides will allow the agency to better support individuals who have additional questions about this new requirement

and need assistance in collecting necessary documentation. Current OIAS eligibility workers already have caseloads of over 800 people. Because of the size of their current caseload, eligibility workers do not have the capacity to assist individuals who have numerous questions and/or need help securing necessary verification documentation.

These four dedicated staff lines will ensure that there is a central location that MaineCare recipients and applicants can call to get information about the new requirement, including detailed and up-to-date information about the documents that are needed to meet the requirement and steps for securing necessary documentation. These citizenship aides will not only provide critical assistance to MaineCare participants, but will serve as a resource for community groups and health care providers whose clients may ask them for assistance with this new requirement. Community groups and health care providers will be able to refer clients to this central number when they are unable to answer specific questions or help their clients gather necessary documentation.

We have determined that 1 of these positions will have responsibility for following up on any in-state electronic match problems; two others will be responsible for answering issues that arise from regional offices or community providers; one staff will be primarily assigned to ensuring eligibility for additional financial help and for contacting other states.

Funding from MEHAF will ensure that the state can fill two of the four positions needed to staff the dedicated phone lines. The money provided for staff will be matched at a rate of 50% by the federal government. The state hopes to provide funds for the other two staff positions. DHHS has submitted a request for additional staffing to the Governor, but will not receive final word on availability of funding for these new positions until November.

Because of the multiple components of this new requirement, some MaineCare participants may benefit from face-to-face meetings with representatives from OIAS who can cover the details of this new requirement and help participants fill out necessary paper work. DHHS will station citizenship assistants at each regional office to meet face-to-face with applicants and recipients. These assistants will be recipients of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program who are participating in ASPIRE, the state's training and education program for TANF recipients. The ASPIRE program will identify ASPIRE participants who are interested in developing social work skills and invite them to participate in the state's outreach efforts. OIAS will treat the time spent in this activity as "field training", which will provide each recipient \$2/hour for their work and allow them to count their time assisting in this project as work in the TANF program. The small compensation received by ASPIRE recipients will be funded through that TANF program.

These ASPIRE participants will be trained on how to assist individuals with the citizenship verification requirement. They will be available for walk-in and scheduled appointments during established hours at each of the DHHS regional offices. Both citizenship aides staffing the designated lines and community agencies will be able to refer their clients to the ASPIRE participants for more 'hands-on' assistance. DHHS regional staff will provide supervision to the ASPIRE participants.

#### **Financial Assistance for Out-of-State Documentation**

For many low-income MaineCare recipients born outside of Maine, the cost of obtaining out-of-state documentation will create a significant barrier and could prevent some from securing needed

documentation. We estimate the cost per individual could range from \$15 to \$40 depending upon the state, based on initial research conducted by OIAS staff. These estimated costs include the actual cost of the birth certificate and the cost for shipping and handling. The Department has begun discussions with other New England states about establishing a reciprocal agreement that would allow us to match names of MaineCare recipients and applicants with their databases at no cost and vice versa. While we are hopeful that we may be able to reach some agreement, we expect that the cost of out-of-state documentation will remain a considerable obstacle and burden for thousands of applicants and recipients.

OIAS will establish a citizenship verification fund for this group to assist them in purchasing birth certificates from out of state. Potential recipients of this fund will be identified by eligibility workers, citizenship aides, ASPIRE participants, and community groups. Clearly, we will be unable to help all people in need. Those applying for assistance will have to meet one of two criteria: the individual must show a financial inability to comply with the requirement and/or the individual must be unable to comply with the requirement because of incapacity of mind or body. Citizenship aides who will have access to income information for each participant will be able to determine whether or not an individual is unable to pay for documentation. Financial inability will include consideration of homeless status and the person's income relative to the federal poverty line.

We estimate that the funding request in this grant will allow OIAS to provide financial assistance to approximately 6,000 applicants and recipients. This will provide help for those most in need including the homeless and the mentally ill.

#### Timing for this project

This project will last one year. Once we have collected documentation for all new applicants and current recipients in the first year of implementation, the numbers of people needing additional assistance to meet this new requirement will drop dramatically. We expect that we will be able to continue to help those in need without additional money from MEHAF after the first year. Efforts in future years to help new applicants to gather the necessary documentation will be incorporated into the on-going work of OIAS.

#### Collaborators

Consumer advocacy groups and health care providers will be important collaborators in this project. Key collaborators at the state level include Maine Equal Justice, Maine Association of Mental Health Services and the Maine Primary Care Association. At the local level, we plan to collaborate with a number of community groups throughout the state. We have connected with Preble Street Resource Center, Bread of Life, and the Southern Kennebec Child Development Center, for example. These three groups emphasized the importance of a fund to help those most in need pay for documentation.

Our coordination with all of these groups will help spread the word about the resources available to educate recipients and applicants about the new requirement and assist them in collecting the necessary documents. Community groups will be key collaborators in identifying individuals eligible for financial assistance from the citizenship documentation fund.

We look to our statewide partners to conduct training for community groups, providers, and others so that these entities can help their clients or patients meet this new requirement. This will

augment our efforts and make it more likely that we will be able to help everyone who needs additional assistance with this new requirement.

While documentation of citizenship and verification of identity has become an on-going part of the eligibility process, this effort to document is a new process. In an effort to ensure as much coordination as possible the Department will invite key collaborators to join an advisory committee in order to monitor progress and provide feedback.

**Evaluation:**

In addition to discussions with the Advisory group mentioned above, OIAS has enhanced ACES to capture both the items used for verification and whether the verification was requested and received or/not received, with dates. In addition, if an application is denied for non-citizenship verification, this is recorded in the system. OIAS intends to use this data to determine the impact of the citizenship verification requirement and the methods used most effectively to obtain or not obtain the documentation.

**Funding:**

All of the funds requested in this proposal can be matched by the federal government at a 50% match rate.