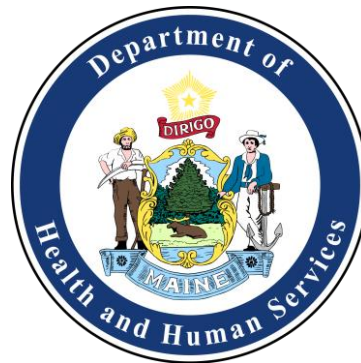


Division of Population Health Equity Statewide Coordinating Council for Public Health

Eden Hale, MPH

Associate Director, Division of Population Health Equity

Thursday, June 18th, 2026

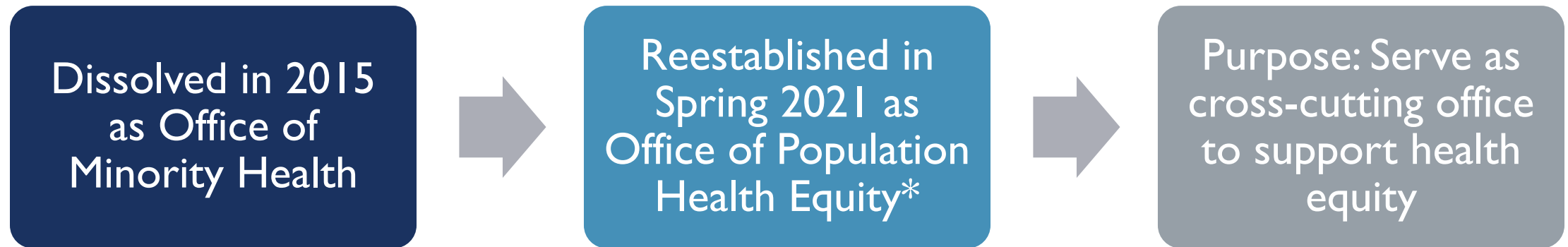


Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Agenda

- **Division of Population Health Equity** – *Background & Purpose*
- **DPHE Current Operations** – *Health Disparities, Community Care Program, Health Equity Advisory Council*
- **Save the Date!** – *Maine State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Virtual Community Conversation*
- **Looking Ahead** – *Emerging Priorities*
- **Working with DPHE** – *How to Connect*

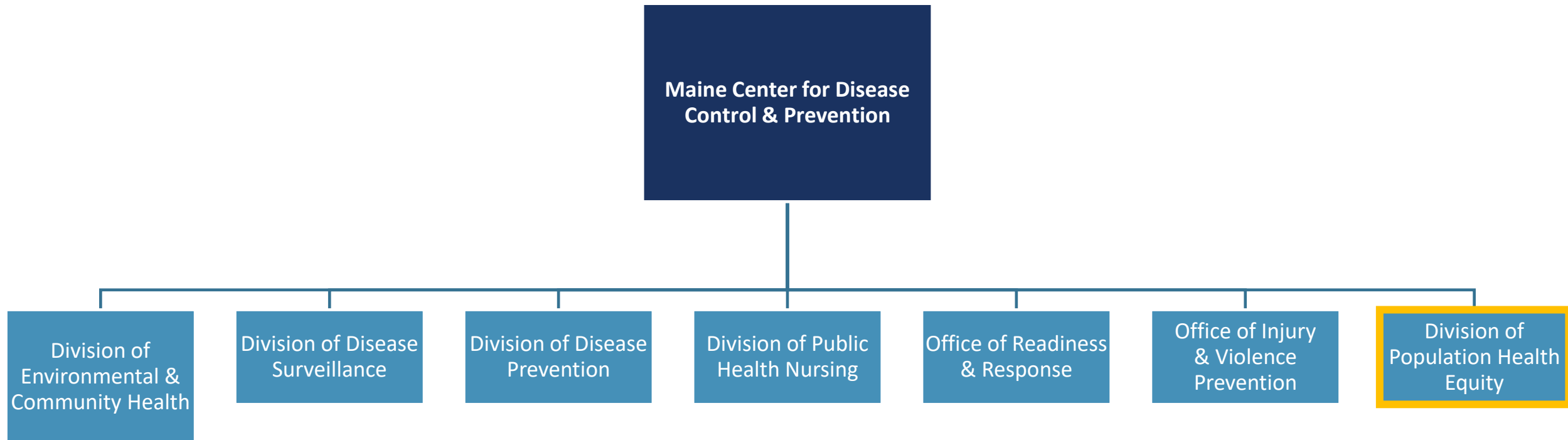
DPHE – Background & Purpose



“The Office of Population Health Equity is critical to our goal of advancing the health of all Maine people and to work toward a more inclusive and participatory relationship with communities throughout Maine,” said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. ***“We are committed to making progress on reducing inequities in Maine’s health care and public health systems by taking action to address underlying problems that contribute to these disparities.”***

**Office of Population Health Equity was renamed Division of Population Health Equity in 2025. This was a change in name only.*

DPHE Within Maine CDC



What is Health Equity?

“Health equity is the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.”

- U.S. CDC (2024)

EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same – regardless if it’s needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



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DPHE – Our Work

Stewarded \$32.1M U.S. CDC Health Disparities grant to address root causes of COVID-19 disparities among priority populations in Maine.

Operate the Community Care Program to support people in Maine with accessing social services.

Convene the Health Equity Advisory Council to ensure work is guided by community needs and perspectives.

Manage the Tribal District Liaison contract to support the health and wellness of the four Wabanaki Tribal Nations in Maine.

Host Community Care Partners Meetings, publish DPHE Newsletter, and collaborate with internal and external partners on projects related to data equity, language access, and public health emergency preparedness.

U.S. CDC Health Disparities Grant – Collaborative Efforts

Data & Reporting

- Evaluation of Health Disparities Grant Impacts
- Evaluation of Perinatal Disparities
- Community-led Needs Assessment

Infrastructure Support

- Rural Health Networks and Workforce Development
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Community Paramedicine
- Health Equity Infrastructure

Partner Mobilization

- Rural School Based Health Centers (SBHCs)
- District Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)
- COVID-19 Community Resilience

Community Care Program & Referral System

Goals:

- Increase access to social services for people in Maine.
- Enable community partners to collaborate to better meet the diverse needs they encounter.
- Provide ME CDC & ME DHHS with insight into services provided by community-based organizations (CBOs) statewide and the needs of communities served.

Process:

- Person seeking services submits online referral form for themselves or someone else in need.
- DPHE receives copy of referral form via email and assesses needs expressed.
- DPHE facilitates a “warm handoff” to one or more partner organizations to connect with the person seeking services and begin meeting expressed needs.

Healthy Living	Community Care Program
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition	The Division of Population Health Equity operates the Community Care Program to help connect Maine people with health programs, social services, and other resources.
Oral Health	The program can provide anyone with access a variety of supports, including:
Maternal and Child Health	• Culturally and linguistically appropriate services • Resources for mothers, babies, and children • Assistance navigating the health care system • Health and wellness education • Food, heating, and transportation resources • Stress and anxiety support
Substance Use and Behavioral Health	Program staff review the referral form to determine one or more community organizations equipped to meet their needs. Generally, community organizations contact the person seeking services within a few days. Each organization providing services through this program has its own eligibility requirements and resources may differ by region.
Health and Safety	This program does NOT provide access to emergency services. If you have an urgent medical need or situation, call your health care provider, dial 911, or dial 988 in the event of a mental health emergency.
Healthy Communities	To learn more about the Community Care Program, email cdc-communityreferrals@maine.gov .
Public Health Districts	Community Care Referral Form
Local Health Officers	
Rural Health and Primary Care	
Health Equity	
Community Care Program	

Health Equity Advisory Council

- Launched as a 2-year pilot initiative in August 2022 and has become a permanent fixture within DPHE.
- Council members represent a broad cross-section of personal and professional experience including community leaders, medical professionals, social workers, public health professionals, health care administrators, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) experts.
- Provides DPHE and Maine CDC more broadly with connection to communities facing health inequities and ensures that DPHE and Maine CDC programming and strategy are responsive to community needs.
- Has worked collaboratively since 2025 to develop and integrate a distinct goal and priority area into the Maine State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) that addresses health concerns for communities of color in Maine, and that includes S.M.A.R.T. objectives and strategies related to data equity, culturally responsive healthcare, healthcare workforce diversity, and health planning and policymaking.

Maine SHIP *Virtual Community Conversation*

Save the Date!

Maine State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)
Virtual Community Conversation

JULY
22
2026

Wednesday, July 22nd, 2026
1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time

VIRTUAL EVENT

WE'LL DISCUSS

- Progress across SHIP priority areas
- Maine CDC Health Equity Advisory Council – SHIP Goal 5
- SHIP improvements and next steps

Additional details to follow, including an agenda and link to register.



The Maine 2024–2029 SHIP is a collaborative framework for ensuring all people in Maine have a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health. The SHIP was developed by members of the Maine SHIP Planning Team, comprised of health experts, stakeholders, and residents from throughout the state, and led by the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Looking Ahead

DPHE's Emerging Priorities Include:

- Rural Health Transformation Program & Community Health Workers
- Staff Trainings
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Community Engagement
- Language accessibility
- Advocacy

Working with DPHE – How to Connect

Get in Touch! Contact DPHE staff via **email**, **Teams Chat**, or **phone**.

Attend a Community Care Partners Meeting and **present to our partners!**

Sign up for DPHE's Monthly Newsletter and **send us information** you want to see included in an upcoming issue!

Coordinate a regular **check-in with our team** to **collaborate and brainstorm** around health equity.

Questions?

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