



Fight Discrimination. Become A Fair Housing Tester

A 2003 HUD study of rentals in metropolitan housing markets found that the level of discrimination faced by Native Americans is greater than that faced by other minorities. Have you ever wondered why you were not called back by a landlord when you were looking for an apartment? Have you ever heard those words: "This apartment won't be big enough for your family." "We don't take section 8." "I think the apartment is already rented. I'll call you back." Pine Tree Legal's Fair Housing Testing Program is designed to get to the heart of landlord discrimination by investigating the rental housing market from the point of view of the apartment seeker.

Pine Tree Legal Assistance received a Fair Housing Enforcement Grant from HUD beginning in October 2004. This grant allowed Pine Tree to create a Fair Housing Testing Program. The Testing Program operates by training ordinary people to seek rental housing and report back on how they were treated. The units to be tested are chosen mostly at random from local newspapers. The testers are assigned to a particular advertisement in pairs. Each pair includes a tester who is a member of a protected class because of race, ancestry, national origin, disability, familial status, religion, gender, receipt of public assistance, or sexual orientation. The other tester is not a member of the protected class and is the "control" tester. They work separately to try to get an appointment to see available units. The testers bring back information about what questions were asked of them and what information they received from the landlord or agent with whom they dealt. The results have been very eye opening.

The first year of the grant focused on the Southern Maine counties. Parents with children were turned away in the greatest numbers because...children cause too much damage, or children would bother the other tenants, or this apartment, although a two bedroom, was too small, or the apartment might have lead paint or dangerous stairs. In nineteen Fair Housing tests based on familial status Pine Tree Legal had seven testers turned away or given false information. In other words, over one third of the landlords refused to rent to families with children in violation of state and federal Fair Housing laws. These

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Kids Law Conference Addresses Diversity Issues Affecting Maine Youth and Included Sessions on Native American Youth

The third annual KIDS Law Conference, held by KIDS LEGAL on June 6, was attended by over 150 participants, including professionals from the fields of medicine, social work and law. The theme was *Children & Youth at the Margins*, recognizing the various ways that Maine's children are subject to prejudice and bias. The conference focused on three areas: children with disabilities, children from different cultures, and children who experience a social stigma. Native American youth were one focus of the day. Attendees found the conference extremely helpful and well done.

The Conference opened with a video created by a formerly homeless youth from Brewer who captured the voices of youth and community members experiencing bias and discrimination. One segment focused on Native American youth in Maine and interviewed children and adult members of the Penobscot Nation. A panel discussion followed. Esther Attean, of the Muskie School's Youth Development Unit and a member of the Passamaquoddy Nation, and Jon Bradley, Director of the Preble Street Resource Center, sat on the panel. Ms. Attean discussed the general experience of Native American Youth living on Tribal lands and attending Indian schools who then must learn to deal with non-Native schools and participate in white culture. Issues of school mascots at Scarborough and Old Town High Schools were also addressed.

The conference then continued with smaller breakout panels. One of the first panels was designed to improve understanding of the effect on Native American youth of being removed from their communities. It also focused on the role of the Indian Child Welfare Act. The panel members were Esther Attean; Alivia Moore (a student at Bowdoin College whose goal is to become a psychologist and work with youth at risk and who is a member of the Penobscot Nation); Gregory Dorr, Esq. (an attorney who represents the Houlton Band of Maliseets and the Aroostook Band of Micmacs); and was moderated by Paul Thibeault, an attorney with the Native American Unit at Pine Tree Legal Assistance.



Pine Tree Case Summaries



The following are summaries of some of the cases Pine Tree Native American Unit Attorneys have handled over the last six months. You can call the Native American Unit at 1-800-879-7463.

A member of the Micmac Nation applied for Social Security disability benefits. He was denied because he had not worked long enough in the 10-year period prior to being disabled. Pine Tree submitted medical evidence to establish an earlier date for the onset of his disability.

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Federal Magistrate Says Maine Employment Laws Do Not Apply To Aroostook Band Of Micmacs

By Paul Thibeault, Esq

The Aroostook Band of Micmacs recently won a significant victory in front of the U.S. Magistrate in Bangor. But how significant remains to be seen. In the case of *Aroostook Band of Micmacs v. Patricia E. Ryan, et al.* Magistrate Judge Margaret Kravchuk ruled that the Maine Human Rights Commission had no jurisdiction to enforce the Maine Human Rights Act on behalf of three former employees of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs.

This case was heard for the second time. The Micmacs originally asked for an injunction to stop the Commission from pursuing employee claims against the Band. The Band claimed that allowing the Commission to enforce State laws would violate both its inherent Tribal sovereignty and its federal statutory right to self-govern without state interference.

In her earlier decision, the Magistrate had thrown out the Micmac claims because of a complicated procedural rule that appeared to prevent plaintiffs (including Indian tribes) from bringing affirmative federal claims against state agencies in federal courts if those claims could be raised as defenses in state court. If that ruling had stood up on appeal, the Band and other Tribes in Maine could have been forced to litigate critical issues of federal Indian law as defendants in Maine state courts that historically have been less supportive of Tribal sovereignty than federal courts.

On appeal, the First Circuit ruled in the Band's favor. The Circuit Court stated that the procedural rule does not apply to Indian tribes when they bring an affirmative legal action in federal court to stop a state agency from interfering with federal common law and statutory rights of sovereignty and self-governance. This ruling not only required the case to be returned for a new hearing, it could prove to be one of the most important court victories by Indians in Maine.

When the case was returned, the Magistrate examined the merits of the Band's claims. She reviewed the Band's status under both the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act and the 1991 Aroostook Band of Micmacs Settlement Act. She found that Congress, the Band, and the State intended to treat the Band in basically the same way as the Houlton Band of Maliseets were treated under MICSA. That Act applied state law to the Maliseets to a much greater extent than to the Passamaquoddys and the Penobscots. However, the Magistrate found that that intention was frustrated by a defect in the enactment of the state settlement act.

The first question the Magistrate addressed was whether state employment laws apply to the Band under the Micmac Settlement Act (MMSA). The Band argued that MMSA never became law because it was not certified by the Band. An amendment to the state legislation in 1989 stated that the law could become effective **only** if the Band sent written certification of acceptance within sixty

days of the adjournment of the Maine Legislature. In fact, the Band did not send the certification and was not even aware of the requirement until 1997.

The attorneys for the State argued that the Band originally **intended** the law to become effective and would have certified it if it had been aware of the requirement. The Magistrate ruled that the reason why there was no certification did not matter- the important thing was that there was no certification. Thus, the state law portion of the negotiated settlement never took effect. The Magistrate based her decision on a legal opinion written by the Maine Attorney General in a similar case concerning the Penobscot Nation. In that case the State believed that the legislation was ineffective without timely certification. In this case, the State has been symbolically impaled on its own legal spear.

The Magistrate rejected the State's other attempts to try to breathe life into the MMSA, including that Congress must have implicitly ratified the MMSA when it passed the federal Aroostook Band of Micmacs Settlement Act (ABMSA) in 1991. The Magistrate found that Congress had no authority to make the MMSA effective **as a state law**. However, the Magistrate did point out that, under principles of federal Indian law giving Congress full authority in Indian affairs, Congress could convert the terms of the ill-fated state law into federal law if it chooses to do so. That leaves open the possibility that Congress could, in the future, impose the same restrictions on Tribal jurisdiction and the same expansion of state authority on the band which were intended as part of the original settlement back in 1989.

Discussing possible Congressional action, the Magistrate pointed out a very important distinction between the 1991 ABMSA and the 1980 MICSA. In MICSA, Congress expressly incorporated the terms of the related state statute into federal law. There is no similar language in the ABMSA. As a result, the terms of the compromise in the state law defining the relationship between the Band and the State of Maine, unlike the status of the other tribes, are not part of federal law. This finding has potentially far-reaching implications for future cases involving the Band's efforts to pursue economic development without state interference.

Having held that the Maine Micmac Settlement Act never took effect the Magistrate next looked at whether the two federal settlement acts in Maine subject the Band to state employment laws. The Magistrate pointed to three key provisions of the ABMSA:

1. The self-governance provision which recognizes the Band's authority to control its own governmental affairs;
2. The provision which subjects the Band to federal law on the same terms as the other Maine tribes, but does not, unlike the earlier provisions in MICSA, subject the band to state law; and
3. The provision which says that, when there is a conflict with the terms of other federal or state statutes, the language of the federal ABMSA will control.

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("Tester" continued from front page)

tests were conducted in Portland, South Portland, Lewiston, and Augusta, discrimination was found in each city.

In October 2005, Pine Tree Legal received another Fair Housing Enforcement Grant to continue its testing program and to expand it to other counties in Maine. Since October 2005, testing has now taken place in Presque Isle, Biddeford/Saco, Bangor, Machias and Eastport. In every city and town, strong evidence of discrimination by landlords has been found.

Testing in the Northern counties of Maine has revealed discrimination in mostly two areas: race / national origin and receipt of public assistance. In Presque Isle a tester from South America was steered to a run down trailer by the landlord while the white tester was offered three units including a house and a downtown apartment. In Bangor a Native American tester was not called back after leaving two messages where he spelled his first and last name. The white tester was called back and shown the available apartment. In Eastport, a landlord missed the appointment with a Native American tester and never called back when the tester left a message about being stood up. The white tester was met on time and shown three available units. All of these cases are under investigation or have been filed as Complaints with the Maine Human Rights Commission and HUD.

Pine Tree has conducted thirteen tests based upon national origin in the Portland and Lewiston areas. Four of those tests revealed evidence of discrimination. Calls from testers with accents were not returned, while calls from testers without accents were returned. Landlords also asked testers from foreign countries to pay more money up front.

In the area of disabilities, Pine Tree Legal has performed over 20 tests and found evidence of discrimination in four of them. Two of the tests revealed discrimination against deaf testers. Like the Native American testers in Penobscot and Washington counties, the deaf testers in Cumberland County were stood up for appointments and given the run around about available units.

Maine law also prohibits refusing to accept public assistance for a rental unit. However, testing has revealed that landlords throughout the state of Maine refuse public assistance regularly. Just since October 2005, ten landlords have refused to accept section 8 when testers have asked about it. Most of these cases have been filed with the Maine Human Rights Commission or are under investigation in anticipation of filing.

When a test reveals strong evidence of discrimination, a Pine Tree attorney will file a Fair Housing Complaint on the tester's behalf. Pine Tree conducted 72 Fair Housing tests in the first year of the grant, and filed 11 tester-based Complaints with HUD or with the Maine Human Rights Commission based upon housing discrimination. These cases were 15% of total tests. For 2005-2006, the number of Complaints filed should well surpass last year.



Pine Tree Legal Assistance is a non-profit organization that gives free legal help to poor people with civil (non-criminal) legal problems.

Due to federal budget cuts, Pine Tree has lost some staff. As a result, Pine Tree has had to limit the types of cases that it handles. We have given high priorities to the following kinds of case:

- ☒ Eviction from public housing
- ☒ Home foreclosures
- ☒ Housing Discrimination
- ☒ Domestic violence
- ☒ Problems with Medicare or Medicaid
- ☒ Loss, reduction or denial of government benefits (food stamps, TANF, Social Security, etc.)

If you are low-income and need legal help in one of these areas, call the nearest Pine Tree office. If you are a farmworker with employment problems, call the Farmworker Unit at 1-800-879-7463.

Pine Tree also has a Native American Unit in Bangor. The number is 1-800-879-7463. Call the Unit if you are a low-income Native American with civil legal problems.

Pine Tree's testing program has clearly demonstrated that housing discrimination exists in Maine. Put yourself in the shoes of a new immigrant, a Native American, a deaf person, or a family with a Section 8 voucher. Now picture yourself trying to find an apartment. The words, "nothing available", "kids cause too much damage", "might drive away other tenants", "might trash the place", "pay \$1600.00 to apply" sound more and more like so many doors slamming.

Pine Tree Plans on Returning to Aroostook, Washington and Penobscot Counties to Conduct More Testing. Please Contact Rachelle Parise to Find Out How to Participate in the Testing Program. Testers Are Paid A Stipend Of \$25.00 For The Training And \$30.00 For Each Test. Anyone Can Be A Tester. Thank You For Joining Us! **Call: 207-774-8211 Ext. 1265.**

Pine Tree Seeking Stories of Discrimination For Theater Project

One of the priorities of the Native American Unit of Pine Tree Legal Assistance (NAU) is advising and representing Native Americans who feel they have been discriminated against. Sometimes discrimination is so hidden and subtle it is hard to identify. The Native

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American Unit is currently working on a theater project. This project will use skits to help us break the barriers that are formed when people suffer discriminatory treatment and don't know what to do to stop it.



The idea for the theater project came about recently when we traveled to Sipayik to meet with members of the tribe and hear their stories about discriminatory treatment. Once some of the tribal members started sharing their stories, others were encouraged to talk. They told about bad treatment they had suffered but forgotten. The time we spent there gave us a chance to tell everyone about the work we do to help tribal members if they've been discriminated against.

In order to help us develop the skits, we are asking you to share with us any story about being discriminated against because of your Native American heritage and let us possibly include it as part of the storytelling.

Discrimination many times is not as obvious as it was 40 years ago, but it still happens. We want to help explain what forms discrimination takes and what your legal remedies are through stories told using theater skits as a medium.

If you are willing to talk to us please contact Danny Mills at our toll-free number at 1-800-879-7463.



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The Magistrate then examined the federal recognition of the Band that was affirmed by the ABMSA and made a finding that may have enormous future impact on the sovereignty of the Band. The Magistrate said that the ABMSA "tethers" the Band's federal recognition to the MICSA because ABMSA states that, for the purposes of federal law, the Band shall have the same status as tribes accorded federal recognition under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act. The Magistrate did not accept that the Band's sovereign status is completely separate from the compromise agreed to by the Passamaquoddies and Penobscots in 1980. The implications of that connection will play out in a variety of ways depending on the details of future legal disputes.

Nevertheless, the Magistrate then determined that, in matters that affect the Tribal right of self-governance guaranteed by ABMSA, the Band's exposure to state employment law suits is **not** controlled by the restrictive terms of MICSA but instead is controlled by ABMSA as interpreted according to the general concepts of federal Indian common law. The Band urged the Magistrate to hold that the self-governance provision in ABMSA means that the Band retained the full scope of inherent sovereignty historically recognized under federal law. The Magistrate did not go that far. She limited her holding to say that, even if the statutory self-governance provision is viewed narrowly, it is enough to protect the Band from lawsuits under state employment laws. She did not answer the bigger question of the full scope of the Tribal governance right under ABMSA.

The Magistrate based her reasoning on a group of federal cases that have held that Tribes are not subject to federal employment laws unless Congress expressly says so—because such laws are likely to interfere with Tribal self-governance and the federal policy that supports it. The Magistrate in this case concluded that she should reach the same result regarding state employment laws when a Tribe has either a federal common law or equivalent statutory right to self-governance.

This case is a victory for the Band— but the rationale for that victory is somewhat shaky. The Magistrate's analogy to cases involving federal employment laws is troubling. While claiming to base her decision on federal common law, the Magistrate actually ignored the fundamental principle of federal Indian law that states generally have no authority over Tribal activity in Indian Country unless Congress expressly grants that authority. Congress certainly has the **power** to apply its employment laws to Indian Tribes if it **chooses** to do so. The issue in the federal cases cited by the Magistrate was whether the courts should apply **federal** employment laws to tribes **by implication** even when Congress did not expressly state its intent to apply the laws to the Tribes. That is a completely different question than the authority of **states** to impose laws on Tribes.

The Magistrate's failure to notice that critical distinction raises serious questions about how to approach future cases involving the Band. It leaves open the possibility that federal courts in Maine will follow the lead of the state courts, allowing state interference with Tribal activity when that interference may not be as obvious as in this case. In this case, the former Tribal employees had held important Tribal positions that clearly involved core aspects of Tribal self-governance. A future court decision might find that many Tribal employment positions, especially those that relate to Tribal businesses rather than to Tribal government, are subject to state employment laws because they do not involve Tribal policy or the core functions of Tribal self-government. A very recent decision by the First Circuit Court of Appeals concerning State Police arrests of employees in a Tribal smoke shop operated by the Narragansetts seems to point in that direction. That makes it critically important that the federal courts in Maine remember the basic principles of federal Indian law such as the time-honored rule that statutes should be construed liberally in favor of Indians.

This case has been appealed by the Maine Human Rights Commission to the First Circuit Court of Appeals.

Maine Court Upholds Pleasant Point Reservation Denial of Access to Tribal Meetings and Documents Concerning LNG Lease by Maine Newspapers

By Paul Thibeault, Esq

In an important recent court decision the Maine Supreme Judicial Court decided that non-Tribal newspapers did not have a right under the Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) to attend meetings of the Pleasant Point Reservation Governor and Council or to obtain Tribal documents concerning the lease of Tribal land for a proposed liquid natural gas (LNG) facility at

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Sipayik. The state court based its decision on a distinction between Tribal governmental (municipal) activities and Tribal business activities. The court said the Tribe is not subject to the state FOAA when acting as a business entity, and that the negotiation of a commercial land lease for LNG development was a private business activity, not a municipal function. The court did not address the question whether Tribal meetings and documents concerning LNG development are exempt from state law as internal tribal matters under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA). Under the court's reasoning, the internal Tribal matters exception to state jurisdiction under MICSA does not come into play when the Tribe acts as a business entity.

The *Quoddy Tides* and *Bangor Daily News* filed a complaint in the Washington County Superior Court in September 2005 to get access to Tribal meetings and to see Tribal documents concerning the LNG lease. In January, the Superior Court ruled in favor of the Reservation on both issues. The newspapers appealed. In its May 8 decision in this case, *Winifred B. French Corp. et al. v. Pleasant Point Passamaquoddy Reservation*, the Maine Supreme Court relied on an earlier case, *Great Northern Paper v. Penobscot Nation*, to decide whether the FOAA applies to the Pleasant Point Reservation. In that case the court created a four-question test: (1) to what entities does the statute at issue apply; (2) are the Tribes acting in the capacity of such entities; (3) if so, does the Maine Implementing Act expressly prohibit the application of the statute to the Tribes generally; (4) if not, does the Maine Implementing Act prohibit or limit the application of the statute in the circumstances before the court.

In this decision, the court stated that the FOAA applies to all public records and proceedings, including those of municipalities. Municipal documents are generally public records and meetings of a municipality are generally open to the public. However, the court then decided that the Reservation was acting in a **business** capacity, not as a municipality, when it negotiated the LNG lease. As a result, the meetings and records were not open to the general Maine public. (For Tribal members who are affected by all decisions of the Tribal Council, the legal hair-splitting between the different "hats" worn by the Council may seem meaningless. The distinctions are critical, however, with respect to the Reservation's legal relationships with the outside world.)

In this case, the Court refined the test set out in *Great Northern Paper*. The Court defined the basic actions of governing such as taxation, regulation or permitting, and lawmaking or law enforcement. The court held that none of these basic governmental actions were present in the LNG lease negotiations.

One of the most important aspects of the decision is that the court rejected several arguments made by the newspapers. The court stated that the fact that the lease included provisions about environmental impacts did not mean that the Tribe was involved in governmental

regulation. The Court stated that the provisions were similar to conditions and contractual obligations that might be required by any commercial or industrial landlord. The court also rejected the claim that the 2004 Tribal referendum on the LNG deal was a governmental action. The court noted that business corporations often require shareholder votes on important decisions.

Maybe the most important part of the decision in terms of future cases was the court's statement that some of the factors raised by the newspapers were "of little or no importance" in deciding whether the Reservation was acting as a government or a business. The newspapers had emphasized the amount of public interest, controversy and newsworthiness of the LNG issue. The court found, however, that a Tribe's private business actions are not transformed into public governmental actions just because they generate public controversy or news. The court noted that **any** private business dealings can have very substantial impact on surrounding communities. In other words, the court basically said that the "public" that is relevant to Tribal business decisions (and by implication, to Tribal government decisions that involve internal tribal matters) for the purpose of any legal right to public access and disclosure is the **Tribal community**, not the general non-Indian public. That distinction is critical and has the potential for far-reaching impact in future situations involving controversial Tribal decisions and actions.

This decision is important to Tribal communities because, in combination with the earlier *Great Northern* case, it makes it clear that non-Tribal newspapers and other media cannot use state access laws to force their way into the private business dealings and internal matters of the tribes. The ability of a Tribe to control the media can be critical during times of community crisis, as demonstrated at the Red Lake Reservation immediately after the high school shootings in March 2005. That rural tribal community was almost inundated by news people from all over the country who had little regard for the traditions of mourning in a closely-knit Tribal community where virtually every family had lost a child. If the Tribe had not had the authority to limit the activity of the media, the results would have been catastrophic for the community long after the reporters had extracted their stories and left the Reservation.

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This allowed the client to meet the work requirements for being insured. As a result, he received retroactive benefits and is now receiving monthly disability benefits.

The Native American Unit represented a tenant in an eviction dispute in the Indian Township Tribal Court. The tenant was locked out of her rental unit and her personal property was placed in storage without any court process. The Indian Housing Authority claimed that the tenant had abandoned the unit because she was absent for more than 14 days. The tenant maintained that she did not intend to abandon the unit, but was forced to be temporarily absent from the Reservation to find a job,

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which she could not find at Indian Township. Pine Tree Legal argued that the Housing Authority does not follow clear written policies for eviction as required under federal housing law and the Indian Civil Rights Act. Just prior to publication of this newsletter, the Tribal Court Judge dismissed the eviction on the grounds that the Housing Authority failed to give the tenant a proper notice of termination as required by its own Policies and Procedures Manual.

Two Passamaquoddy men have filed employment discrimination claims with the Maine Human Rights Commission alleging that they were subjected to racial insults by the supervisor/owner while they were working at a non-Tribal business in Hancock County. We helped the workers prepare and file the complaints and we will be submitting additional evidence to support the workers claims for the Commission investigation.

Attorneys from the Native American Unit have been working closely with the Sipayik Criminal Justice Commission on a number of issues including mistreatment of Native people in state prisons and county jails. The Commission hosted a well-attended community meeting with a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union to learn more about race discrimination in the state law enforcement and correctional systems. More recently the Commission met with an attorney from the Maine Disability Rights Center to discuss the legal rights and explore the potential legal claims of Tribal members with physical and psychological disabilities in state facilities and foster care. As a result of its on-going involvement with the Commission, the Native American Unit has been able to identify numerous Indian people with legal claims of discrimination and will be working on those cases in the coming months.

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We Want To Hear From You!

If you have comments, articles or ideas on how this Newsletter can be helpful to you, please let us know.

Please send articles or letters to:

Wabanaki Legal News, Pine Tree Legal Assistance,
 Coe Building, 61 Main Street, Room 41, Bangor, ME
 04401.

Or you can send e-mail to iplano@ptla.org.

The articles in this paper are meant to give information, NOT to give legal advice. No one should interpret any law without the help of an attorney who has been told all the facts



INDEX of COMMUNITY RESOURCES



CRISIS

(available 24 hours a day)



☒ Child Abuse/Neglect	1-800-452-1999
☒ Adult Abuse/Neglect	1-800-624-8404
☒ Domestic Violence:	
Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians	764-1972
Houlton Band of Maliseets	532-6401
Pleasant Point	853-2613
Indian Township	1-877-796-2020
Penobscot Nation	817-7491
	or 1-800-863-9909
Penobscot County	1-800-863-9909
Aroostook County	1-800-439-2323
Washington County	1-888-604-8692
☒ Mental Health	1-888-568-1112
☒ Poison Control Center	1-800-222-1222
☒ Rape Crisis:	
Penobscot County	1-800-310-0000
Aroostook County	1-800-550-3304
Washington County	1-800-228-2470
☒ Youth Crisis Stabilization	1-800-499-9130



LEGAL SERVICES (Other Than Pine Tree)



Tel-Law:

Tel-Law has a number of different recorded messages to answer your basic questions about the law. It operates 24 hours a day. There is no fee other than the fact that it is a toll call outside the Augusta calling area.

Telephone: 622-1470

www.mainebar.org/public_tellaw.asp



The Volunteer Lawyer's Project:

If you meet the Pine Tree eligibility requirements, the Volunteer Lawyer's Project can give you legal advice or informational materials for free, or will refer you to a private lawyer who may handle your case without charge. Normal intake hours are Mon.-Thurs.: 8:45-12:00 and 1:00-4:00 and Fri.: 8:45-12:00.

Telephone: 774-4348 or 1-800-442-4293

www.vlp.org/



Maine Lawyer Referral and Information Service:

For a \$20.00 fee, you can be referred to a lawyer in your area for a one half hour consultation or review of your paperwork.

Telephone: 622-1460 or 1-800-860-1460

www.mainebar.org/lawyer_need.asp



Legal Services for the Elderly:

If you are age 60 or over, Legal Services for the Elderly can give you free legal advice or limited representation.
Telephone: **1-800-750-5353 or 623-1797**
www.maineelse.org/



Penquis Law Project:

This group gives legal representation to low and moderate income residents of Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties in cases involving domestic relations, including divorce, protection from abuse, child support and visitation. Priority is given to people who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. Services are provided at no cost.

Telephone: **973-3671**

www.penquiscap.org/penquis.nsf/webpages/Law+Project



Courthouse Assistance Projects:

If you meet the Pine Tree Legal Assistance income limits, a volunteer may be able to help you fill out court forms, serve forms, calculate child support, and answer questions. You may meet with a volunteer at the Bangor District Court once a month. To get dates, call Holly Jarvis at the Bangor District Court during normal business hours or click on their website.

Telephone: **941-3040**

www.ptla.org/ptlasite/cliented/family/pclsa.htm



SOCIAL SECURITY

Statewide: ssa.gov/reach.htm

Bangor Area

Presque Isle Area

1-800-772-1213

990-4530; TTY: 941-8698

764-3771; TTY: 764-2925



DISCRIMINATION

Housing Discrimination:

HUD:

www.hud.gov/complaints/housediscrim.cfm

or call Pine Tree Legal

1-800-827-5005

Assistance Native American Unit:

www.ptla.org/ptlasite/native/native.htm

Maine Human Rights Commission:

www.state.me.us/mhrc/index.shtml

ME Civil Liberties Union:

www.mclu.org/

1-800-879-7463

624-6050

774-5444



DISABILITIES

Disability Rights Center:

www.drcme.org/

1-800-452-1948



CONSUMER RESOURCES

☐ Maine Attorney General's Consumer Law Guide:

This Guide offers valuable and comprehensive information on many consumer topics.

www.maine.gov/ag/?r=clg

☐ Consumer Mediation Service:

The Attorney General's Office gives this service free of charge. If you want to file a consumer complaint against a business call between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. weekdays. Or write to Attorney General's Consumer Information and Mediation Service, 6 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333.

Telephone: **626-8849**

www.maine.gov/ag/index.php?r=protection&s=complaints&t=

☐ Lemon Law Arbitration:

If you buy a car that has serious defects, the Attorney General's Lemon Law Arbitration Program can help you.

Telephone: **626-8848**

www.maine.gov/ag/index.php?r=protection&s=lemon_law&t=

☐ Utility Complaints:

The Consumer Assistance Division of the Maine Public Utilities Commission can help you settle problems with any utility in the State.

Telephone: **1-800-452-4699**

www.state.me.us/mpuc/consumer/cad.html

☐ Low Income Telephone Service Help:

If you qualify for Food Stamps, MaineCare, TANF, SSI or Fuel Assistance, call your local telephone company to see if you qualify for a reduction on your monthly telephone bill.

☐ Employment/Labor Information:

Career Centers:

www.maineecareercenter.com/

Bangor

Calais

Houlton

Machias

Presque Isle

561-4050

454-7551

532-5300

255-1900

760-6300

State Bureau of Labor Standards:

(wage or child labor complaints)

www.maine.gov/labor/labor_laws/wagehour.html

624-6400

US Dept. of Labor: (Wage and Hour Division)

www.dol.gov/esa/whd/

1-866-4USWAGE

☐ Housing:

Maine State Housing Authority

www.mainehousing.org/

1-800-452-4668

☐ Insurance:

Bureau of Insurance:

www.mainehousing.org/

624-8475

or **1-800-300-5000**

☐ Mobile Homes:

Manufactured Housing Board:

www.state.me.us/pfr/olr/categories/cat25.htm

624-8678

Manufactured Housing Association:

(mediation for mobile home residents).

623-2204

Maine State Housing Authority:

TTY

www.mainehousing.org/rentalhousing.html

1-800-452-4668

1-800-452-4603



COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS (CAPS)

These agencies give information, outreach, job training, educational programs, day care, housing information and referral, fuel/energy assistance, insulation and furnace repair, surplus food, transportation and Emergency Crisis Intervention Program benefits. Not all services are given by all agencies.

Arroostook County Action

Program: www.acap-me.org/

771 Main Street

Presque Isle, ME 04769

1-800-432-7881

or **764-3721**

91 Military St.

Houlton, ME 04730

532-5311

Washington-Hancock

Community Agency:

www.whcacap.org/

2 Maple Street

PO Box 64

Milbridge, ME 04643

546-7544 or 664-2424



**Penquis Community
Action Program:**
www.penquiscap.org/
262 Harlow Street,
Bangor, ME 04402-1162
1-800-215-4942
or 973-3500



TRIBAL GOVERNMENT and AGENCIES

**Aroostook Band of Micmac
Indians:** www.micmac-nsn.gov/ **764-1972**

532-4273

**Houlton Band of Maliseet
Indians:** www.maliseets.com/ (In State) **1-800-564-8524**
(Out of State) **1-800-545-8524**

Penobscot Indian Nation: **827-7776**
www.penobscotnation.org/

**Passamaquoddy Tribe:
Indian Township:** **796-2301**
www.passamaquoddy.com/

Pleasant Point: **853-2600**
www.wabanaki.com/index.html



PENOBSCOT TRIBAL COURT SYSTEM

**Director of Tribal Court (George
Torner)** **817-7342**

Clerk of Courts (Sheila Sapiel) **817-7329**

Tribal Prosecutor (C. Peter Bos) **945-5502**

Probation Officer (George Torner) **817-7342**

**Juvenile Intake Officer (George
Torner)** **817-7342**

*Regular Sessions: Usually first Wednesday of the month. Special
Sessions as needed.*



PASSAMAQUODDY TRIBAL COURT SYSTEM

www.wabanaki.com/tribal_court.htm

Indian Township Division: (Hours: Mon-Fri 7:30-4:00)

Clerk of Courts (Jennifer Sockabasin) **796-5600**

Probation Officer (Darlene Donahue) **796-5600**

Pleasant Point Division:

Clerk of Courts (Rachel Nicholas) **853-2600 ext 252**

**Probation Officer (Edward J.
Nicholas)** **853-2600 ext 249**

*Regular Sessions: One Friday per month at each division. Special
Sessions as needed.*

OTHER TRIBAL AGENCIES

**Pleasant Point Tribal Victim Outreach
Advocate Program** **853-2600**
ext 280

Viola Francis **Emergency:**
Tribal Victim Outreach Advocate **853-2551**
PO Box 343 Ask for the
Perry Maine 04667 TVOA

Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission **622-4815**



HEALTH SERVICES

Ruth Attean Davis Health Center:
(Penobscot Nation) **827-6101**
www.penobscotnation.org/IHS/index.html

Maliseet Health Department: **532-2240**
www.maliseets.com/health%20_department.htm

Micmac Health Department: **1-800-750-1972**
www.micmac-nsn.gov/html/micmac_health.html or **764-7219**

Pleasant Point Health Center: **853-0644**
<http://www.wabanaki.com/health.htm> ext 290
853-2551
or **853-4811**
796-2321

Emergency Services:

Indian Township Health Center:



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Native American Services:

Peaceful Relations **853-2600** (office
(Pleasant Point): number)
www.wabanaki.com/Peaceful%20Relations.htm e-mail:
nancy@wabanaki.com

Toll-Free Hotline: **853-2613**

Emergency 24 Hour Help Line: **853-2551**

Indian Township Health Center **796-2321**

(Indian Township): **Toll-free: 1-**

877-796-2020

Aroostook Band of Micmacs: **1-800-355-1435**

(Ask for Sarah Dewitt) **764-1972**

Houlton Band of Maliseets: **532-6401**

During Office Hours (M-F 8-4): **694-1353**

After hours:

Penobscot Indian Nation: **817-7491**

(Ask for Clarice Chavaree) **1-800-863-9909**

or call Spruce Run

Other Domestic Violence Services:

Penobscot County: **947-0496**

Spruce Run: www.sprucerun.net/ **1-800-863-9909**

Washington County:

The Next Step: **1-888-604-8692**

www.nextstepdvproject.org/

Aroostook County:

Battered Women's Project **1-800-439-2323**



MENTAL HEALTH and SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Wabanaki Mental Health Association, **990-0605**

NPC:

Penobscot Health Department: **827-6101**

www.penobscotnation.org/IHS/index.html

Micmac Health Department: **764-7219**

www.micmac-nsn.gov/html/behavioral_health.html or (toll-free)

1-800-750-1972

Wolipomawsu Program: **853-0644**

(Pleasant Point) or (emergency)

www.wabanaki.com/mental_health.htm **853-4811**



HELPFUL NATIVE AMERICAN WEB SITES

Pine Tree Legal Assistance www.ptla.org

Wabanaki Legal News

www.ptla.org/ptlasite/wabanaki/wabanaki.htm

Quinnehtukqut Legal News

www.ptla.org/ptlasite/quinnehtukqut/qlegal.htm

National Association of Indian Legal Services

www.judicare.org/nails.html

Index of Native American Resources on the Internet

www.hanksville.org/NAResources/

Native Links www.johnco.com/native/

Aboriginal Links www.bloorstreet.com/300block/aborcan.htm