

F R A N N I E
P E A B O D Y
C E N T E R
comprehensive HIV & AIDS services

Client Services Handbook

FRANNIE PEABODY CENTER

MISSION: To prevent the spread of HIV and provide support for those living with HIV/AIDS in Maine.

VISION: Through continued innovation and a dedicated client-centered approach, we envision an End to AIDS in Maine by 2030.

VALUES: Frannie Peabody Center's programs are driven by a long, extensive history of providing compassionate care to those impacted by HIV/AIDS. Drawing from its early years as The AIDS Project and Peabody House, the organization remains resilient, courageous, and steadfast in its goals to support sustained health for clients and the community as a whole.

Contact Frannie Peabody Center:
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Portland, ME, 04101

Main office: 207-774-6877
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peabodycenter.org



Introduction

Frannie Peabody Center is a private, non-profit organization that works to provide assistance to people living with HIV/AIDS and to help prevent the spread of HIV in the community. This handbook was created as a guide for clients and friends of Frannie Peabody Center.

If you are living with or know someone living with HIV/AIDS, we encourage you to contact us. Please call or stop by to discuss your situation or to learn more about getting involved with Frannie Peabody Center.

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What is Case Management?

The case managers at Frannie Peabody Center are caring professionals who are trained to help you **manage your care** so you can live well with HIV/AIDS. Case managers are not trained to do things for clients. Rather, they are trained to assist clients in finding sustainable ways to do things on their own. The ultimate goal of case management is to help you understand and navigate the complex systems of healthcare so that you can manage care on your own when you are ready.

In order to be eligible for case management, you must be a Maine resident and you must provide proof of HIV+ status. You must also provide proof of your income. If your income is over 500% of the Federal Poverty Level, you are not eligible for case management services.

You or your medical provider can contact the Case Management Coordinator to arrange an initial conversation about our services. If you and the Coordinator determine that you could benefit from case management services, you will complete an initial intake with the Coordinator and then you will be assigned to a case manager based on the level of services that you need. In some cases, HIV case management may not be the most effective tool to meet your needs. In these situations, the Coordinator will work with you to find other supportive resources or case management opportunities in the community.

When you complete an intake, you'll be asked several questions about your health, your history, and what services might be helpful for you. You are not required to answer any of these questions, but any information that you are able to share with us will help us prioritize our work together.

The intake assessment includes questions about:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Insurance or other benefits
- Nutrition/Food
- Education
- Employment
- Finances
- Medical care
- Dental care
- Mental health
- Substance use
- Relationships and sexual history
- Legal issues

Once you are assigned to a case manager, you will create a plan and gain access to services based on your eligibility and need. Your case manager can work with you to:

- Coordinate access to healthcare
- Get appropriate medications
- Understand housing resources in the community
- Provide education and safer sex supplies to prevent the transmission of HIV
- Get access to interpreter services
- Assist with paperwork and applications

Case managers can assist with a wide range of services, however there are some things that case managers *cannot* do. These include:

- Transport clients
- Give medical, financial, or legal advice
- Perform personal care tasks for clients
- Assist with moving/packing/storing items for clients

Please note that Frannie Peabody Center can accommodate drop-ins on a limited basis. We strongly encourage clients to schedule appointments whenever possible.

Your case management services at Frannie Peabody Center are always **free** and **confidential**.

Our agency is funded by an assortment of state and federal contracts, grant funding, United Way agencies, and MaineCare reimbursement.

We are also very grateful for the support of many corporate and individual donors and sponsors.

If you would like more information about our funding, or to make a donation, you can visit our website: peabodycenter.org or call the main office to speak to our Director of Development.

THE HIV CARE CONTINUUM:

The series of steps a person with HIV takes from initial diagnosis through their successful treatment with HIV medication.



Your Health

Staying healthy, or getting better again, can sometimes seem like a challenge when you're living with HIV/AIDS. Your case manager is available to listen to you and discuss any concerns that you may have regarding your health.

Healthcare

Paying close attention to your health can help you stay well while living with HIV/AIDS. Your case manager is not a medical professional and cannot offer medical advice, but they can make referrals and work with your medical providers to make sure that your questions are answered. Your case manager can connect you to resources such as:

- Insurance coverage
- Prescription drug coverage
- Mental health treatment
- Dental care
- Medical providers
- Substance use treatment

Benefits Navigation

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention offers a resource called the AIDS Drug Assistance Program. Your case manager works closely with this program and can assist you in connecting to benefits based on your eligibility, including:

- Premium assistance for private insurance for those not eligible for MaineCare
- Prescription medication coverage
- Financial assistance for dental care
- Financial assistance for housing expenses
- Financial assistance for food

Medication Adherence

It's important to take your medications in the correct dosage at the correct times, as directed by your medical provider. Your case manager can help you find ways to remember what medications to take, and when, or if you're having trouble taking them as prescribed.



VIRAL LOAD SUPPRESSION

Sustained adherence to HIV medications drastically lowers the level of HIV in the body, resulting in 'viral load suppression'. As long as viral load remains suppressed, a person living with HIV cannot transmit HIV to others.

A person living with HIV is considered 'undetectable' when HIV treatment brings levels of HIV in the body to such low levels that tests cannot detect it.

For more information on viral load suppression, talk to your healthcare provider.

Food and Exercise

If you are having difficulty paying for food, your case manager can work with you to find access to a food pantry or other community resource. If you have questions about diet or exercise, your case manager can refer you to a healthcare provider.

Stigma, Discrimination, and HIV/AIDS

Living with HIV/AIDS is a different experience for every person. Frannie Peabody Center acknowledges that every person is unique and that their interests, needs, and concerns differ. However, one common area of concern is stigma. People living with HIV/AIDS are sometimes stigmatized by others who don't understand the disease.

What is stigma?

- A stigma is an imagined mark of disgrace or reproach attached to a person by other people. A person who is stigmatized often faces judgement, prejudice, or discrimination.
- People with HIV/AIDS are sometimes stigmatized because HIV/AIDS can be transmitted through sexual contact or shared drug equipment, leading some people to assume that being HIV positive is the result of making dangerous or careless choices.

How might stigma affect our community?

- Stigma associated with HIV/AIDS can make combating HIV transmission more difficult. This is because people who are at risk for HIV can be so fearful that they don't feel safe to take the necessary steps to access care.
- Stigma can make people fearful about and unwilling to get an HIV test. This can lead HIV-positive people to infect others unknowingly.
- Lastly, stigma can cause people who are living with HIV/AIDS to face isolation instead of getting the love and support that they need.

How might stigma affect you?

- Feeling stigmatized because of your HIV/AIDS diagnosis can lead to depression, anger, and low self-esteem.
- You might encounter prejudice or discrimination because of your status. Some people are discriminated against at work. Others have been rejected by their family, friends, or community because they are living with HIV/AIDS.
- Stigma can make you feel reluctant to disclose your status to people because you fear that they will react negatively. This can make it challenging to form new relationships.

How do we combat stigma?

- At Frannie Peabody Center, we believe that everyone is worthy of love and respect. We work with you to make sure you get the best services possible in order to help you lead a productive, healthy life.
- Frannie Peabody Center safeguards your privacy and the confidentiality of your personal health information. We are bound to this practice by federal law (HIPAA), and protecting your privacy is a priority for us. We will not disclose your information to anyone without your permission. This helps ensure that you can decide for yourself how and whether to disclose your status to others.
- When requested, we work to educate the families and friends of our HIV-positive clients. We also educate the greater community through workshops, advocacy, and discussions.
- We provide people an opportunity to get tested confidentially and a safe place to talk about risks associated with certain behaviors.
- For more than 30 years, Frannie Peabody Center has represented the interests of the HIV-affected community

and served as a resource for the State of Maine.

- It's important to remember that HIV is a virus. It is not a moral judgement about who you are or what you've done. If you've experienced stigma or discrimination because of HIV, speak to your case manager about it and they can help connect you to supportive resources.

Privacy practices

For more information about how your clinical information may be used and disclosed for all programming at Frannie Peabody Center, and how you can access this information, please see our agency's Notice of Privacy Practices. Your case manager or counselor will go over this information with you, and you can take a copy home if you'd like.



HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, establishes national standards to protect individuals' medical records and other personal health information and applies to health plans, health care clearinghouses, and those health care providers that conduct certain health care transactions electronically.

The Rule requires appropriate safeguards to protect the privacy of personal health information, and sets limits and conditions on the uses and disclosures that may be made of such information without patient authorization. The Rule also gives patients rights over their health information, including rights to examine and obtain a copy of their health records, and to request corrections.

Housing

Staying healthy can be easier when you're in a safe, stable living situation. Your case manager can help you understand what housing resources might be available to you in the community. Frannie Peabody Center has a program called Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS (HOPWA) that is funded by federal government contracts and operates throughout the State of Maine. There are different types of assistance available through this program which is designed to prevent homelessness. Your case manager can provide more information regarding applications and existing waitlists.

Please note that case managers can assist with navigating housing resources, but they cannot obtain housing units on behalf of clients.

Rental assistance: If you are unable to pay your rent or mortgage due to an emergency, your case manager can put you in touch with programs that may be able to help.

Heat, electricity, and gas: If you are having trouble paying for utilities, your case manager can help you find resources that may be able to help.

Landlord issues: If you are having difficulty negotiating with your landlord, your case manager may be able to help you advocate for yourself and get connected to other supportive resources.



HOPWA
Housing Opportunities
for Persons With AIDS

Legal and Financial Assistance

It can be stressful to deal with legal and financial issues. Your case manager may be able to connect you to resources in the community that can help, such as:

General Assistance: GA programs are run by counties or cities to help eligible adults who don't have enough money to pay their basic living costs.

Disability Income: If your medical provider has said that you are unable to work, you might qualify for disability income. Your case manager can refer you to local agencies that can help you with enrollment in these benefits.

TANF and SNAP: If you have a low income and you have children, you may be eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Your case manager can help you navigate the application process.

Legal resources: Frannie Peabody Center is not a legal resource and cannot give legal advice. However, your case manager can work with you to access supportive resources in the community.

Immigration: Frannie Peabody Center does not require US citizenship in order for you to access our services. If you have questions about your immigration status or process, your case manager may be able to connect you to resources in the community that can help.

Budgeting: Frannie Peabody Center is not a financial advisor and we cannot give financial advice. However, we can help you find ways to better understand your budget and access assistance based on your eligibility.

Medical costs: Your case manager can connect you to programs that may be able to assist with medical bills.

Prevention

Keeping you and your partner(s) safe is important. People with HIV have an increased risk of contracting other sexually transmitted infections.

Frannie Peabody Center case managers and prevention staff can help by supplying you with safer-sex education and materials. Even if you are not sexually active, it is important to stay informed.

- **Free rapid HIV testing:** We provide free rapid HIV and Hepatitis C testing in Cumberland and York counties. We also offer walk-in testing at our main office every Wednesday from 2-6. We use a quick and pain-free oral swab test. Stop by our walk-in hours, or make an appointment by phone or on our website.
- **Education:** Becoming educated about HIV/AIDS can keep you and your partner(s) healthy. We can provide you with information and refer you to educational opportunities in the community.
- **PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis):** Medication is available for people who are at risk for contracting HIV. We can give you information about how to prevent transmitting HIV to your partner(s) using PrEP.
- **PEP (Post-exposure Prophylaxis):** We can refer you to emergency resources for PEP. PEP involves taking antiretroviral medicines (ART) after being potentially exposed to HIV to prevent becoming infected. PEP must be started within 72 hours after a recent possible exposure to HIV, but the sooner you start PEP, the better. (www.cdc.gov)
- **Needle exchange programs:** If you are a person who injects drugs, we can connect you to local needle exchange programs.
- **Safer sex products:** Our office provides free condoms, lubricants, dental dams, female condoms, and information about using safer sex products.

Behavioral Health

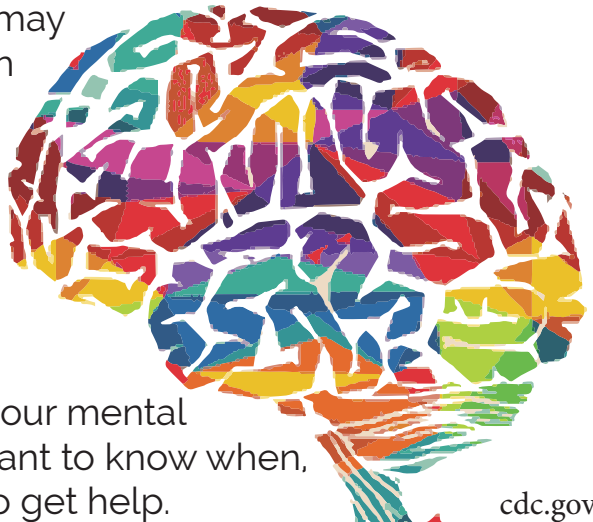
Accessing mental health support can be very helpful to learn coping mechanisms and have an opportunity to talk with a professional about your concerns. Frannie Peabody Center is a licensed mental health treatment provider. We accept MaineCare, Medicare, and a number of private insurances.

Our behavioral health counselor is a LCSW and is available to meet with clients whether they are HIV-positive or not. If you are interested in accessing behavioral health services, contact our main office to request more information.

Almost every person faces mental health challenges at some point. Major stresses—like the death of a loved one, divorce, loss of a job, or moving—can have a major impact on mental health. Having a serious illness, like HIV, can be another source of major stress. You may find that living with HIV challenges your sense of well-being or complicates existing mental health conditions.

To help manage your mental health, it is important to know when, how, and where to get help.

[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



Support and Involvement

Getting involved with the HIV-positive community can help you connect to others, find support, and combat the feelings of isolation that sometimes come with an HIV/AIDS diagnosis. Frannie Peabody Center works with clients and case managers to find a variety of ways for people to get involved such as:

- **Peer Support Group:** Facilitated by a Frannie Peabody Center employee, this small group meets on the third Thursday of each month. For more information, contact the main office.
- **Friends of Frannie:** All kinds of social events are organized by Frannie Peabody Center and our community partners. Friends of Frannie is a mailing list that you can join to be notified of these events and volunteer opportunities. See our website for more information.
- **General volunteer opportunities:** Your help and skill are always welcome at Frannie Peabody Center. Contact us if you'd like to get involved.
- **State-level advisory boards:** These groups include HIV Advisory Committee, Integrated Planning Committee, and state-run focus groups.
- **Other advocacy opportunities:** If you'd like to get involved as an advocate for HIV-positive people in Maine and beyond, there are plenty of opportunities: write to your legislators, keep yourself informed, and talk with people in your community about issues that are important for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

If you want to receive HIV Medical Case Management or Behavioral Health services, you have rights and responsibilities.

As a client of Frannie Peabody Center, I have the following Rights:

1. I will be treated with dignity and respect.
2. My information will be protected. My rights are explained in the "Notice of Privacy Practices."
3. I will be treated equal with others. My services will not change because of who I am – my race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.
4. I will not be abused or threatened.
5. I will get services for which I am eligible. I will be told about services I can use, any costs, and the time it will take to get services.
6. I will get quality care.
7. I can help plan my services. I will be part of making decisions.
8. I can stop my services. I can stop services at any time by telling my case manager or counselor.
9. I can file a complaint. I can give a complaint about services without losing my services. The "Grievance Policy" explains how to file a complaint, and what to expect.

As a client of Frannie Peabody Center, I have the following Responsibilities:

1. I will treat others with respect – clients, staff, and volunteers.
2. I will protect other people's information. I will not share

- information about other clients. I will respect their privacy.
3. I will not abuse or threaten others. I may lose my services if I threaten or abuse others.
 4. I will give correct information. My case manager or counselor needs good information in order to help me receive the right services. I will be honest when I give information.
 5. I will tell my case manager or counselor about changes. I will tell my case manager or counselor about changes in my life, like changes in address or telephone number, income, or medical or insurance status. My case manager or counselor needs to know about any changes to help me receive the right services.
 6. I will keep appointments. I will do my best to keep the meetings I make with my case manager or counselor. I will call to change meetings if I am unable to attend.
 7. I will be a part of my services. I will work with my case manager or counselor to make a plan. I will work to reach my goals and complete the tasks I agree to. I will tell my case manager or counselor if I want to stop services

Grievances

Frannie Peabody Center strives to ensure that our services are high-quality and efficient. If you should encounter a problem with your services, you have the right to file a grievance. A grievance is defined as a client complaint or expression of dissatisfaction regarding service delivery, or any expression of dissatisfaction by a service provider.

We take your concerns very seriously and will work quickly to address your needs. If you need to file a grievance, please contact your case manager or our main office for more information about the written grievance procedure.

Glossary of Terms

ADAP: The AIDS Drug Assistance Program – a US federal program that provides FDA-approved drugs to low-income people living with HIV/AIDS who have limited or no health insurance.

Adherence: Routine, prescribed use of treatment or regimen as recommended by medical provider. Also called compliance.

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome – a set of symptoms and infections resulting from damage to the body's immune system. It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

ASO: AIDS service organization – any of numerous organizations like Frannie Peabody Center that provide medical or support services to people affected by HIV/AIDS. Confidentiality: The assurance that private information will be kept private.

CD4 count: The number of CD4 lymphocytes per cubic millimeter of blood. It is a measure of the strength of the immune system and of how far an HIV infection has advanced. It can also be used to help predict the risk of HIV complications. Healthy CD4 counts in adults range from 500 to 1,500.

CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – a US federal agency charged with tracking and investigating public health trends. The CDC is part of the Health Resources and Services Administration of DHHS (HRSA). Client Financial Assistance: At Frannie Peabody Center, these are funds allocated for client use for medical expenses that are not reimbursable. Specific criteria apply.

DHHS: Department of Health and Human Services – the US federal department that administers federal programs dealing with human health and welfare.

Epidemic: A widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time.

Food stamps: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a resource issued by the government to people with low income that can be used to purchase food at designated locations.

Grievance: A verbal or written complaint over something believed to be wrong or fair. Speak to a case manager if you would like to learn more about Frannie Peabody Center's Grievance Policy.

HIPAA: Health Information Portability and Accountability Act – a US federal law passed in 1996 to help ensure the privacy of patient health information.

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus – a virus spread through contact with bodily fluids that affects the immune system's ability to fight infections. HIV is the cause of AIDS.

HOPWA: Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS – a US federal program that provides funding to help support people living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

HRSA: Health Resources and Services Administration – a US federal agency that helps provide health resources for medically underserved populations. For people living with HIV/AIDS, it provides services through Ryan White CARE Act program.

LCSW: Licensed Clinical Social Worker – a mental health professional with a Masters Degree in Social Work and two years of supervised clinical training.

LGBTQ: An acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer

MaineCare: Also known as Medicaid. A federal/state program that provides funding for health insurance for people with low income. MaineCare also has a Special Benefit Waiver specifically for people living with HIV/AIDS.

MSM: Men who have sex with men. A term coined by the CDC to encompass gay men, bisexual men, and men who have sex with other men but do not identify themselves as gay or bisexual.

Opportunistic infections: Conditions that arise from a weakened immune system. These can include pneumonia, tuberculosis, weight loss and wasting, meningitis, syphilis, lymphoma, and Kaposi's sarcoma.

PEP: PEP stands for post-exposure prophylaxis. It means taking antiretroviral medicines (ART) after being potentially exposed to HIV to prevent becoming infected.

PLWHA: People Living With HIV/AIDS.

PrEP: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis is the use of anti-HIV medications to keep HIV negative people from becoming infected. PrEP is approved by the FDA and has been shown to be safe and effective at preventing HIV infection.

Ryan White CARE Act: A 1990 Act of Congress that funds primary care and support services for low income people living with HIV/AIDS who have no health insurance.

Serodiscordant: A term used to describe a couple in which one partner is HIV-positive and the other is not. Also called mixed status.

SSDI: Social Security Disability Insurance – a US federal program that provides cash benefits to eligible workers who are unable to work for a year or more because of a disability.

SSI: Supplemental Security Income – a US federal program for low-income disabled people that provides cash benefits for food, clothing, and shelter.

STI/STD: Sexually Transmitted Infections/Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Used interchangeably.

STRMU: Short Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Assistance – a program funded by HOPWA that helps prevent homelessness by providing short term housing funds for eligible people living with HIV/AIDS.

T-cell: A type of white blood cell that plays an important role in the body's immune system and fights against invading organisms.

TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – the US government's chief federal assistance program. It provides temporary cash assistance to low-income families with dependent children.

Viral load: A measure of the amount of HIV or other virus in blood and of the intensity of a viral infection. When copies of HIV cannot be detected by standard viral load tests, an HIV-positive person is said to have an undetectable viral load.

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