

Maine is one of the “oldest” states in the nation. Our state’s median age is the highest in the country, and we rank third in the share of the population that is age 65 and over. We are at the forefront of a demographic shift that is occurring across the country. At the same time, many of Maine’s seniors are economically disadvantaged. Our rapidly aging population presents challenges as well as opportunities to support our most vulnerable elders.

The John T. Gorman Foundation believes that Maine seniors should be able to maintain stability in their lives and remain in their homes as long as they can, free from exploitation and the negative effects of poverty. We believe that meeting the needs of elderly Mainers is critical to our state’s economic and social health.

### Where we are and where we need to be

Significant numbers of Maine’s seniors face especially difficult circumstances.

#### Consider:

- Nearly one-third (29%) live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, a rate that is higher than the national average
- Fifty-six percent of senior Mainers reside in rural areas, making transportation a challenge
- Half of low-income Maine seniors live alone, lacking the social support that can keep them in their homes longer
- Maine ranks 15th in the nation in terms of senior food insecurity, an important indicator, since research tells us that seniors who experience hunger are at greater risk for serious health problems



*“The John T. Gorman Foundation was an early champion of our idea to help seniors age safely in their own homes by making high quality safety improvements. That encouragement and support was pivotal in the start-up and success of our Community Aging in Place program. We’ve already seen strong results, and are now working to expand the program and to help other communities replicate this idea.”*

Deb Keller,  
Executive Director,  
Bath Housing Authority



## Seniors

One of Our Four Priority Areas

The John T. Gorman Foundation invests in ideas and strategies that help older people age safely in the environment of their choosing.

Too many seniors are struggling to make ends meet on a fixed income. Older people shouldn't have to worry about whether they can afford to heat their homes or keep food on the table. In our large, rural state, many Maine seniors also face social isolation and transportation challenges that prevent them from successfully aging in their homes. Seniors who live in low-income households are at greater risk of having to move out of their communities before they are ready.

### How we do our work

We have learned that the most effective means of improving the lives of older people in Maine is by partnering with organizations with successful track records of helping seniors to live comfortably and independently. We have focused our grantmaking on the following issues related to seniors' well-being:

- **Food Insecurity:** Ensuring no seniors go hungry by supporting food delivery and other services.
- **Transportation:** Connecting older Mainers with rides to important services that can keep them healthy and independent.
- **Housing and Home Repair:** Providing safety checks and modifications so that seniors can safely age in their homes.
- **Connection to community supports:** Linking older Mainers with social companions and other activities to combat isolation.

We also recognize that issues facing our aging society are complex, and will require change at the systems level. To make the greatest impact, we also fund organizations that advocate for policies and practices that help older Mainers receive the services they need to age successfully.

*The John T. Gorman Foundation advances and invests in innovative ideas and opportunities that improve the lives of Maine's most vulnerable people. The independent, statewide Foundation focuses on four key areas: Improving educational achievement for children, promoting successful transitions to adulthood for vulnerable older youth, helping struggling families succeed and enabling low-income seniors to remain in their homes as long as possible. The Foundation's work is guided by data, evaluation, national best practices and lessons from the initiatives in which we invest. We also seek to inform and influence practice and policy on issues affecting disadvantaged children, youth, families and seniors.*



### Recent John T. Gorman Foundation Grants Supporting Seniors

\$900,000 over two years to organizations directly meeting the needs of low-income seniors in the areas of housing, transportation, food insecurity, and socialization.

**Bath Housing Development Corporation:** \$156,375 over one year to support the Community Aging in Place Program to increase housing stability for low-income, disabled and elderly homeowners.

**Legal Services for the Elderly:** \$539,000 over three years for a statewide public awareness and education campaign focused on elder maltreatment, and to support a full-time elder abuse staff attorney.



50%

Percentage of low-income Maine seniors who live alone

To learn more about us and our work, please visit [www.jtgfoundation.org](http://www.jtgfoundation.org)

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