

Letter from the Outgoing President of MWDA

June 1, 2011

Dear MWDA Members,

I would like to thank everyone for your support of the past three years of my Presidency for the Maine Welfare Directors Association. It has been with great pleasure and honor to have served such a fine group of people, who do a very difficult job, day in and day out, not only serving the neediest of your communities, but also being responsible to your community tax payers and town managers. Maine Welfare Directors Association is an organization of volunteers, who believe in the organization and help to educate all GA administrators in the administration consistency of General Assistance. During the past three years, many things have happened. Some of them have been very time consuming as well as exciting, and some of them have been disappointing. I would like to reflect a bit on some of the accomplishments the organization offered:

- GA Basic is offered twice a year and is very well attended. This class is for the new administrator or someone who has been in that position for a while but does not do much GA. We usually have a waiting list of people wanting to have this class in their area.
- GA Advance has been offered once a year for the past 2 years. These have been overwhelmingly well attended and have had great reviews. This class is geared towards a more experienced GA administrator. Currently, 4 topics are thoroughly covered.
- The Board and Legislation Committee have met with the Governor twice to discuss the future of GA. One of the meetings also included his new Commissioner of DHHS, Mary Mayhew, as well as Barbara VanBurgel.
- The Legislation Committee has worked closely with MMA and has testified in front of the Legislature and committees on a number of times regarding pending bills presently affecting the General Assistance program.
- The Finance Committee is working on getting our organization's tax exempt status. This had been an oversight for a number of years and has reached the point of needing an attorney to help us get the exemption without paying out the possibility of fines.
- We have participated yearly in the MMA Convention and provided workshops on things affecting GA.
- We have put on a yearly Spring Seminar, which includes pertinent speakers for our administration of GA and helps to increase our knowledge base of resources.
- We have also provided yearly winter training to discuss winter issues and emergencies.

We understand not all of you are able to attend some or all these pertinent trainings and would welcome suggestions on helping to spread the word when we have changes in the program. Please keep in mind we have scholarships for our Spring Seminars which you are welcome to take advantage of.

With the absence of a GA Program Manager out of DHHS for over 18 months, it has been difficult to get some things out. All of us on the Board volunteer our time and energy to this organization. It has

been very challenging in the past 3 years with the downfall of the economy and the increase of clients we have all experienced in our offices. Being a GA administrator and serving our clients is our first priority.

On June 30th, I will hand over the Presidency for the MWDA to Stacey Parra. This will be her second term at this office. We also will have some new board members who are eager to get to work and hopefully see some new and exciting things. Stacey will need all our help and support. If you have any idea about classes, speakers, programs, locations, etc., please don't hesitate to let someone on the board know. Your voices are important to us and we are always looking for someone to get involved.

Best regards,

Dorothy Meagher