



Envisioning a community in which everyone is given the opportunity to thrive and live with dignity.

Resource Connection & Support

Centralized Helping Fund

Addie's Attic Clothing Bank

Basic Essentials Hygiene Pantry

What to expect when you ask for support from Bridging the Gap's Resource Department and Centralized Helping Fund (CHeF)

Please note:

Bridging the Gap is not set up to handle crisis situations that need an *immediate* response.

Is there a geographic region that Bridging the Gap serves?

Yes. Bridging the Gap (BTG) is in Augusta, Maine and prioritizes people within the greater Augusta area. However, BTG does take requests for assistance *from all over Kennebec County*. BTG will likely direct you to a more local resource **first** so that communities share the responsibilities. This does not mean BTG is not able to assist, just that we try to make our resources last.

Bridging the Gap's Resource Department helps with the following:

- Staff can point you in the right direction for case management, food, substance use support, employment, emergency shelter, pet food, household goods....and many other things
- Assisting financially with specific needs through the Centralized Helping Fund (CHeF). Our primary focus areas are
 - Keeping people housed who are at risk of eviction by helping with rent
 - Getting people housed by helping with security deposits and rent
 - Assisting with heat
 - Assisting with electric
- On occasion and as funds permit, BTG may financially support repairs to cars, fees to procure forms of identification and other expenses that address barriers to moving forward.

Contacting the Bridging the Gap Resource Department and CHeF

- Preferred: Call the Resource Department and CHeF on the message line **(207-530-0184)**
- E-mail requests are also acceptable (sam.bridgingthegap@gmail.com)
- Walk-ins will fill out a brief form and the form will be given to the Resource Department
- Regardless of how you contact Bridging the Gap, your request for support will be tended to in the order in which it was received
- Please share your name, contact information and a detailed description of why you are reaching out.

Hearing back from Bridging the Gap

- A staff person will respond within 48 business hours.
- *Please make sure you have a voicemail that is set up and not full.* You can also provide an alternative way to get a hold of you (a friend or family member's phone for examples)

Then what?

- When you and Bridging the Gap connect on the phone (or in person), you will be asked questions that everyone is asked so we can better understand your situation and how we might support you.

- If your request is to get connected to a different support such as case management, substance use disorder support or a local food pantry, we will do our best to provide that information during this first phone conversation.
- If you are requesting financial assistance, the answers to the questions will be reviewed and a staff person will reach out to you to discuss your request.
- We may need to make calls and talk with others (your landlord, case manager, etc.) and this sometimes can take a few days.

When asking for financial help, what kind of information should I be ready to share?

- A breakdown of your income and expenses
- What caused you to get behind in payments
- Whether you have a case manager
- Where else you have asked for assistance
- What is your plan moving forward

What does Bridging the Gap look at when considering a financial request?

- Whether you are working with a case manager (Bridging the Gap finds it easier to support your request when you are working with a case manager)
- How your income matches up with your expenses (Bridging the Gap rarely supports requests when a person's expenses are consistently much higher than their income)
- Your long-term plan and any goals (Bridging the Gap takes a team approach and you are expected to help figure out and work toward a solution!)

Does Bridging the Gap support all requests for financial assistance?

No. Everything is case-by-case and the CHEF has limited funds

Does Bridging the Gap ever give money to the person asking for assistance?

No. Bridging the Gap pays directly to vendors (ie: landlords, fuel companies, utility companies, etc.)

Doing the following will NOT get a faster response to your request

- Calling repeatedly
- Calling all the staff extensions
- Leaving multiple messages
- Dropping by in-person

Are there case managers at Bridging the Gap?

No. The staff at Bridging the Gap are not case managers. They are appropriately trained and most have their own lived experience. They do not work one-on-one long-term with individuals.

We at Bridging the Gap believe in helping people help themselves. We believe you are worthy. We believe you are capable. We believe you can make choices that help you become healthier and more stable. We may say things you don't like hearing and encourage you to keep putting one foot in front of the other. Because we believe you can.