

MSF Job Description 2026

Maine Service Fellow: Town of Castine, Maine

About the position

Castine's Service Fellow will gain experience, insight and skills relevant to range of municipal functions and initiatives, providing an ideal launching point for a career in municipal leadership. Castine's small size necessitates that its employees are involved in many facets of town services, governance and various activities/initiatives. The Fellow will have the opportunity to both support and lead activities that will be sufficiently focused to make a real impact on Town capacity to address specific challenges and launch new initiatives related to climate resilience, tourism and economic development and grant development/management. While working most closely with the Community and Economic Development Director, the Fellow will engage with the full team of municipal staff and selectboard, as well as town residents, business owners and volunteer/non-profit organizations. We also anticipate the Fellow will exchange experiences and collaborate periodically with other Fellows Program cohorts in Ellsworth and Deer Isle/Stonington.

Living in Castine

Castine is a charming small town that has retained its classic "New England" historic architecture and layout, benefiting by its location at the end of a peninsula at the confluence of the Bagaduce River and Penobscot Bay. Its history as the earliest permanent European presence in New England, Castine was established as a trading settlement, and was fought over by the French, Dutch, English and Americans. Its geography is also included in Wabanaki cultural history, with important wayfinding features, and woven into ancient origin tales.

Today, Castine has an unusual number and quality of activity offerings from its non-profit organizations and town committees –summer residents and tourists flock to a range of arts, water-based activities, and outdoor music events. Summer celebrations and events around 4th July, Bastille Day, and outdoor concerts/arts shows bring in people from the wider Blue Hill Peninsula and beyond. Castine's many trails and conserved properties are open to all for hiking. The mixed sand/stone "backshore beach" is a short walk from the village center, and renowned for sunsets. The Wilson Museum and Historic Society offer museum quality exhibits and events. The Golf/Yacht/Tennis Club facilities are open to the public on a fee basis. While Castine's inns and restaurants are closed for a period over winter, an exceptional bookstore and library along with various clubs that put on a community events for winter residents, create a vibrant exchange that crosses generations.

The Maine Maritime Academy provides a hub of activities/sporting events in the center of town, and offers public (fee-based) access to their gym/pool and dining facilities, and topical lectures by professors/teaching staff. Year-round commercial fixtures include Danny Murphy's Pub/Restaurant – down at the town dock - a casual year-round gathering point for students and residents alike. Last-minute groceries can be found in two small town markets, while Tilth and Timber's farm stand provides seasonal access to outstanding organic produce. For more substantial shopping and a wider array of entertainment and cultural events, the commercial centers of both Blue Hill and Bucksport are a winding and scenic 20 minutes drive from Castine, while Belfast and Ellsworth can be reached in about 45 minutes. Castine is less than an hour from Bangor's airport.

Position duties:

Responsibilities will fall within three categories:

Housing (at least 50% time)

- Support Castine Housing sub-committee to facilitate discussion and exploration of
 - Housing needs: entry level, senior, seasonal workers, young families, MMA staff and students.
 - Housing strategies and approaches - cross organizational and town partnerships; private sector initiative/incentives; homeowner support/incentives for ADUs/repairs; potential state programs.
 - Challenges to be overcome - land availability/cost; construction methods/cost; and financing models/costs.
- Carry out follow-up tasks emanating from a consultancy report emanating from a multi-town effort that includes partnership with the Hancock County Planning Commission. Focus may include housing issues and solutions across the Blue Hill peninsula as determined by the report outcomes.
- Engage/support regional collaboration on housing initiatives and networks, in concert with the Hancock County Planning Commission.
- Explore and potentially support implementation of a program to support older/less well-off persons to make modest safety, accessibility, and simple energy-efficiency improvements to their homes.
- Support other initiatives as developed through this sub-committee related to the defined work plan.

Resilience, Climate and Natural Resources

- Support working groups and town staff implement initiatives that will result in more resilient infrastructure, natural spaces, and residential awareness and safety, as well as energy efficiency and respect for the environment. This will include work on grant proposals and implementation related to infrastructure and the waterfront, natural spaces, and community conversations and events. Support would also include working with the climate and natural resources working group on outreach and an invasives initiative, and coordinating development of an emergency management plan and fire department reporting responsibilities. Many of these activities will be aligned with the Maine Won't Wait climate actions, especially around improving Castine's waterfront (which is linked with Maine Maritime Academy dock expansion for its training ship), as well as repair and improvement of municipal infrastructure in the town.

Economic Development, Tourism and Municipal Administration

- Support the Community and Economic Development director in coordinating a range of initiatives, proposal (funding) development, and tourism initiatives, with an emphasis on town historic assets, small business support, and engaging local non-profit actors in events and initiatives coordination. Examples for the coming summer include, launching a new process for events coordination across town and volunteer entities; increased openings of Dyce Head Lighthouse to tourists; and developing a simple economic data monitoring system for business activities in town.

Minimum requirements: (you can add to this if you have requirements – these are the MSF minimum requirements)

- Must be at least 20 years of age.

- Within the last 5 years, have completed a college degree (associates, bachelors, or graduate).
- Be eligible to work in the United States and pass a background check that includes a criminal history record check.
- Commit to devoting full-time effort to the assignment (1700 hours total over 43 weeks).
- Agree to live in the community impacted by the project.

Strong applicants will enjoy and have relevant experience in:

- Digging both deep and wide into various municipal areas of focus
- Synthesizing issues, analyses and recommendations in concise form
- Leading/supporting consultative and informational meetings with individuals and groups
- Organizing public engagement and events
- Handling administrative documentation and reporting
- Working collaboratively as well as independently
- Developing and/or reviewing budgets
- Using technology incorporating GIS, other tools

About Us:

Maine Service Fellows is a statewide service program designed to help rural communities tackle their most critical needs, with a focus on building climate resilience. The program increases the opportunities for recent college graduates to devote a year of service, use their skills to make a difference, and strengthen civic engagement and community resilience through engaging community residents in volunteer-based solutions. Maine Service Fellows recruits individuals who completed a post-secondary degree within the last 5 years.

Compensation and benefits:

- Living allowance of approximately \$27,100 per term (10 months)
- Educational award for student loans of ~\$5,420
- Full health care coverage
- Paid time off
- Town staff will assist Fellow to locate reasonable cost housing
- Fellow will have opportunity to participate in a range of learning opportunities through workshops, seminars, consultations, etc. relevant to functional focus and key topics
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Start Date: mid-May to mid-June, 2026