



Jeff Evangelos Public Policy & Justice Reform Fellowship Application

The Jeff Evangelos Public Policy & Justice Reform Fellowship is grounded in the belief that people with lived experience of incarceration and reentry hold essential knowledge about how systems function—and how they fail. This fellowship honors ethical leadership, moral courage, and the conviction that public policy should be shaped by those most impacted by it. We value dignity over extraction, mentorship over gatekeeping, and collective care over individual performance. Scholars are supported not to “prove” themselves, but to grow, learn, and contribute in ways that align with their values, capacity, and aspirations.

The fellowship is awarded to one justice-impacted woman for each Maine legislative session. The inaugural fellowship period will run from September 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, allowing time for preparation prior to the start of the 133rd Maine Legislature.

The fellow will work alongside Reentry Sisters leadership and community partners to deepen her understanding of public policy, systems advocacy, and legislative engagement through a trauma-informed and mentorship-based model.

The fellowship is designed to balance learning, female leadership, and sustainability. Fellows should expect to commit approximately 10–15 hours per month, recognizing that some months during the legislative session may require additional participation depending on hearings, testimony, or advocacy priorities.

Activities may include:

- Participating in weekly legislative advocacy meetings
- Attending either parole reform or Clean Slate coalition meetings
- Researching proposed legislation and policy issues impacting women and families
- Assisting with drafting testimony, public comments, or educational materials
- Traveling to Augusta to observe or testify on legislation when appropriate
- Engaging in mentorship and leadership development opportunities
- Participating in Lunch & Learn sessions, coalition meetings, and advocacy trainings
- Contributing lived expertise to policy conversations shaping justice reform in Maine

The fellowship is not based on academic credentials or prior advocacy experience. We recognize that leadership takes many forms, and we welcome applicants who are passionate about systems change, community care, and amplifying the voices of directly impacted people.

What the Scholar Can Expect

- Relational mentorship based on care and connection
- Skill-building and learning opportunities such as:
 - Providing training in understanding the legislative process, crafting testimony and editorials for oral or written delivery
 - Empowering Scholars to Navigate advocacy spaces with confidence and grounding
- Political and advocacy engagement: Opportunities to:
 - Attend policy meetings, hearings, or advocacy convenings aligned with Reentry Sisters' priorities
 - Participate in a *Lunch & Learn* or policy-focused gathering in Augusta (or virtually)
- Financial support to reduce barriers to participation (travel, registration, time)

Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Guiding principle: This application is meant to invite reflection, not require disclosure. Finalists will attend a Zoom interview with Reentry Sisters staff.

Application Questions

Use as much space as you need below each question. Please return your application to reentrysistersmaine@gmail.com by August 10, 2026. You may also print and mail your application to: Reentry Sisters, 158 North Street, Suite 312, Portland, Maine 04101.

Questions? We are happy to answer questions about the Fellowship or assist applicants with completing the application. Please contact us at reentrysistersmaine@gmail.com.

1. What draws you to public policy or justice reform? ?

You might share what issues matter most to you, what you've noticed from your lived experience, or what change you hope to be part of.

2. What do you hope to learn or accomplish through this Fellowship?

3. How can Reentry Sisters best support your growth as a leader?

(There is no "right" answer—this helps us meet you where you are.)

4. Optional: Is there anything else you would like the selection committee to know about you?

Note to applicants: You are not required to share personal or traumatic details. Your lived experience is respected without explanation.