**CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY CENTER OF KENNEBEC AND SOMERSET COUNTIES**

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT**

1. **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Children’s Advocacy Center of Kennebec and Somerset Counties (CACKSC) provides a safe, neutral and child-centered place for coordinated evaluations of children following an allegation of sexual abuse. Using evidence-based best practices, the CACKSC multi-disciplinary team members are committed to the minimization of trauma thought a streamlined, non-repetitious and timely evaluation process. Accessible, on-going support for children and their non-offending family members/legal guardians will always be of paramount importance to the CACKSC team.

1. **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This agreement is made by and between the Children’s Advocacy Center of Kennebec and Somerset Counties and the undersigned agencies/organizations. The CACKSC will utilize a multidisciplinary approach committed to:

* Sharing information and resources, including training and experience, for the appropriate disposition of cases of child sexual abuse; responding to all child protection issues of mutual concern, including, but not limited to, behavior outlined in MRSA Title 22§4011-A.
* Collaborating and cooperating with the undersigned organizations and agencies on community based efforts to prevent child maltreatment.
* Following a CAC modeled approach to child sexual abuse investigations.
1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Interagency Agreement is to provide and promote closer coordination, communication and collaboration among participating agencies in order to better serve children, their families and the community. Specifically, we agree to commit resources necessary to effectuate our common goal, to work to resolve any differences that might arise between or among agencies, to support the further development of the CAC, and to place the welfare of children at the center of our efforts.

1. **INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT**

Recognizing the importance for a comprehensive and collaborative approach, we have come together to create an interagency approach to child sexual abuse which utilizes the CAC. We, the undersigned, agree to support the philosophy, principles and procedures outlined in this document so that we may better serve the needs of children and their families. We also agree to support the creation, development and implementation of a multidisciplinary approach to achieve the objectives outlined in Section II.

We agree to use the CAC multidisciplinary team as one of our primary entities through which our joint efforts are combined in response to children reporting incidences of child abuse.

Each agency has specific responsibilities imposed by law & policy and will continue to perform those functions. Each agency, however, agrees to work with the others to take agreed-upon actions to protect children, strengthen families, and support the appropriate disposition of cases of child sexual abuse outlined within the CAC Guidelines, Protocols and Procedures.

Specifically, we agree

* to develop, achieve and maintain interagency and inter-professional cooperation and coordination in case management and handling of cases of child sexual abuse;
* to provide initial case screening and assessment procedures;
* to provide a multi-disciplinary team and case management approach focused on the needs of the child victim and family whose interests are consistent with the best interests of the child;
* to reduce the number of interviews and physical exams, which includes encouraging expert medical consultation;
* to use research-based best practice interview techniques while advancing the therapeutic needs of sexually abused children and their families;
* to participate in monthly scheduled case management and review meetings and to share pertinent information;
* to provide, at minimum, one representative from the agency to serve a two year term on the CACKSC Advisory Committee;
* to share training and education opportunities for the CACKSC and other professionals and volunteers in the community who work with children who have been sexually abused;
* to serve as a source of information, education, and referral for the community on issues surrounding sexual abuse of children; and
* when possible, participate in revision of guidelines, policies, protocols and procedures.

 Individual agencies reserve the right to terminate their partnership with the CACKSC.

1. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The undersigned agencies and their representatives agree that information pertaining to children and families will be held in the strictest confidence. Members are bound by confidentiality provisions of our collaborative guidelines. Each agency shall follow its own regulations, policies and procedures addressing confidentiality; this agreement does not alter or change those regulations, policies or procedures.

Except for this limitation, the agencies are full members, whose participation and counsel is essential for protecting children and their supportive family members and for guiding the sound functioning of the CACKSC.

**Maeghan Maloney** - District Attorney for Kennebec & Somerset Counties in Maine

**Therese Kahill Low –** Director, Office of Child and Family Services, Maine Department of Health and Human Services

**Dr.Larry Ricci** – Spurwink Child Abuse Program

**Chief Robert Gregoire**- Augusta Police Department

**Chief Craig Johnson** – Clinton Police Department

**Chief James Toman** – Gardiner Police Department

**Chief Eric Nason** – Hallowell Police Department

**Acting Chief Kingston Paul** – Fairfield Police Department

**Sheriff Randall Liberty** – Kennebec County Sheriff’s Office

**Chief Barry Moores** – Madison Police Department

**Colonel Robert Williams** – Maine State Police

**Chief Kevin Mulherin** – Monmouth Police Department

**Chief Michael Tracy** – Oakland Police Department

**Chief Stephen Emery** – Pittsfield Police Department

**Deputy Chief Daniel Summers** – Skowhegan Police Department

**Chief Deputy Dale P. Lancaster** – Somerset County Sheriff’s Office

**Chief Joseph Massey** – Waterville Police Department

**Chief Jeffery Fenlason** – Winslow Police Department

**Chief Joseph Young** – Winthrop Police Department

**Chuck Hayes** – President MaineGeneral Medical Center

**Thomas J. McAdams** - CEO Kennebec Behavioral Health

**Lynn Duby** – Crisis and Counseling

**Jody Breton**- Associate Commissioner, Maine Department of Corrections

**Pat Kosma** – Kennebec Valley Community Action Program

**Deborah Shepherd** – Family Violence Project

**Donna Strickler** – Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center