This template will provide a consistent and professional format for sharing information about various workshops, courses, and events offered by UMaine Extension. By using the template, Extension aims to streamline the process of creating and distributing press releases, ensuring that important details are included, the information is presented in a clear and concise manner, and follows AP style.

**When drafting your announcement, please remember to keep it brief and direct. Releases are sent to media via email, as text in the body of the email, with a photo attachment and caption as appropriate. Please include names of any people in the photo as well as what the photo demonstrates, and have photo releases on file.**

Media Release

Month, Day, Year

Contact: Name Here, 207.XXX.XXXX, name@maine.edu

If you have photo(s), include this line: *Photo courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.*

Remember, Remsberg and stock photos can’t be used with press releases. All photos sent to the media should be owned by Extension or UMaine. If they include people, everyone should be identified in some way, preferably by name, but if you don’t have the names, providing generic details also helps - “members of the gardening club in Knox County…”. Signed photo releases do need to be on file for any photos that contain identifiable people (faces, nametags…).

**Title should include reference to Extension and 3 to 5 word description of event**

TOWN, Maine – Start with the event name, date, time span, and location (address of in-person event). Sponsoring organization(s) can be listed here as well. This first paragraph should be no more than 2-3 sentences and list essential information.

Some helpful tips to remember:

* AP style time format is 4 p.m.; 4:15 p.m.; noon; midnight (not 12 noon or 12 p.m., not 4:00 p.m., not pm or PM).
* AP style says no comma before the “and” in a simple series. Numbers one through nine spelled out; 10 and higher as numbers; use a comma with 4+ digits (1,500).
* Don’t forget to include the location if it’s an in-person event - street address and town
* Our full name, “University of Maine Cooperative Extension” should be included in the first paragraph. After this first mention, shorten the second mention to “UMaine Extension” and any subsequent mentions to “Extension”.
* Style nerds can dig into [UMaine’s style guide here](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fFb6LmtaDvFaznUkZPQNJT9WWG0aC7fI6VtwfAo4z0g/edit?usp=sharing).

The second paragraph can be used to say more about what and who the event is for, including activities or topics to be covered; what participants might receive (certificate, product to take home, etc); and any additional restrictions or benefits. Instructors and/or presenters can be listed here.

More helpful tips:

* Feel free to include a couple of sentences aimed at engaging the reader – why should they want to participate? What’s in it for them?
* But keep it in third person (avoid “you” and “we”) and don’t use subjective adjectives (great, wonderful, exciting)
* Remember, this release is going to a very general audience. Don’t assume they know anything about your program or event.

The third paragraph can list the cost, what’s included with the cost, and if there is any financial assistance available. How to register, and what the registration deadline is, goes here too. An online registration link is highly recommended (ex. visit the program webpage for more information).

**The following statement is required when inviting the public to any event:** For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact XXX.XXX.XXXX; name.name@maine.edu.

This section needs to be included at the end of every announcement (updated 2023)

**About University of Maine Cooperative Extension**

As a trusted resource for over 100 years, Extension has supported UMaine's land and sea grant public education role by conducting community-driven, research-based programs in every Maine county. UMaine Extension seeks to build thriving communities and grow the food-based economy, focusing on aspects from production and processing to nutrition, food safety and food security. Extension also conducts the most successful out-of-school youth educational program in Maine through 4-H which offers hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and civic engagement and creates a positive environment where participants are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles.

Use this one for 4-H specific releases (updated 2023)

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Common AP style tips:

* AP Style discourages the use of ampersands in place of "and" unless in an official title
* AP Style dictates that there should not be spaces bookending the hyphens that are used to indicate spans of time and/or dates
* The UMaine brand style guide requires phone numbers to be written with periods, not dashes. More info here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fFb6LmtaDvFaznUkZPQNJT9WWG0aC7fI6VtwfAo4z0g/edit>
* Instead of writing "our website" at the end of releases, opt for "the program webpage" or "the event website" or something similarly general. It makes it easier for the newspapers that pick it up.
* "Dr." as a prefix is not used in AP Style except for medical doctors (and even then, only on first reference)
* Academic titles – When you use it to address the person (Dean Hannah Carter, Associate Extension Professor Colt Knight) it's capitalized. But when it comes after the name it's not (Hannah Carter, dean of Extension or Colt Knight, associate Extension professor). Extension is always capitalized. More here on page 4: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fFb6LmtaDvFaznUkZPQNJT9WWG0aC7fI6VtwfAo4z0g/edit?usp=sharing>