

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 294

H.P. 194

House of Representatives, February 3, 2025

**An Act to Expand Municipal Volunteer Program Eligibility
Requirements in the Municipal Property Tax Assistance Laws**

Received by the Clerk of the House on January 30, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Taxation pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BUNKER of Farmington.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 36 MRSA §6232, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 159, §2, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **1. Conditions of program.** Except as provided in subsection 1-A and 1-B, a program
5 adopted under this section must:

6 A. Require that the claimant has maintained a homestead in the municipality for a
7 certain period of time, as determined by the municipality;

8 B. Provide benefits for both owners and renters of homesteads; and

9 C. Calculate benefits in a way that provides greater benefits proportionally to claimants
10 with lower incomes in relation to their property taxes accrued or rent constituting
11 property taxes accrued.

12 A program adopted under this section may impose additional standards of eligibility and
13 procedures, as long as those standards are established by the municipality by ordinance.

14 **Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §6232, sub-§1-B** is enacted to read:

15 **1-B. Expanded municipal volunteer program.** Beginning January 1, 2026, a
16 municipality may by ordinance adopt a program that permits claimants who are eligible
17 volunteers to earn benefits up to an annual maximum of \$1,000 or 100 times the state
18 minimum hourly wage under Title 26, section 664, subsection 1, whichever is greater, by
19 volunteering to provide services to the municipality. A program adopted under this
20 subsection does not need to meet the requirements of subsection 1, paragraph B or C.
21 Benefits provided under this subsection must be related to the amount of volunteer service
22 provided. Benefits received under this subsection may not be considered income for
23 purposes of Part 8. A municipality may by ordinance establish procedures and additional
24 standards of eligibility for a program adopted under this subsection.

25 Notwithstanding the age requirements under this section, for the purposes of this
26 subsection, "eligible volunteer" means a person who is at least 60 years of age or a person
27 who is a volunteer firefighter as defined in Title 30-A, section 3151, subsection 4, a
28 volunteer municipal firefighter as defined in Title 30-A, section 3151, subsection 5 or a
29 volunteer emergency medical services person. For the purposes of this subsection,
30 "volunteer emergency medical services person" means an emergency medical services
31 person as defined in Title 32, section 83, subsection 12 who is licensed pursuant to Title
32 32, chapter 2-B, who receives up to 20% of the compensation of a full-time emergency
33 medical services person and who may receive injury and death benefits.

34 Receiving benefits from a municipal program established pursuant to this subsection does
35 not make a person ineligible to participate in the program as an eligible volunteer.

36 **SUMMARY**

37 This bill allows a municipality, beginning January 1, 2026, to adopt a program to
38 provide benefits to residents of the municipality who are at least 60 years of age or
39 volunteer firefighters, volunteer municipal firefighters or volunteer emergency medical
40 services persons. It also clarifies that receiving compensation through a program
41 established by a municipality does not make an eligible volunteer ineligible for
42 participation in that program.