

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 358

S.P. 144

In Senate, February 3, 2025

An Act to Increase Fees Paid to Registers of Deeds

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on January 30, 2025. Referred to the Committee on State and Local Government pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BENNETT of Oxford.

Cosponsored by Senators: BAILEY of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, MARTIN of Oxford.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 370, §1, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **1. Instruments generally.** Receiving, recording and indexing any instrument that
5 may be recorded and for which a specific fee is not set forth in this section or in any other
6 section, ~~the sum of \$19 for the first record page and \$2 for each additional record page or~~
7 ~~portion of an additional record page~~ \$45 per instrument recorded. ~~In addition, if more than~~
8 ~~4 names are to be indexed, a fee of \$1 must be paid for each additional name, counting all~~
9 ~~grantors and grantees;~~

10 **Sec. 2. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§9**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 370, §2, is further
11 amended to read:

12 **9. Plans.** Recording, indexing and preserving plans, the sum of ~~\$21~~ \$45;

13 **Sec. 3. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§13-A**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 246, §3, is
14 repealed.

15 **Sec. 4. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§14-B, ¶A**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 370, §3, is
16 further amended to read:

17 A. ~~Five Ten~~ dollars per page for paper copies of plans; and

18 **Sec. 5. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§14-D**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 370, §4, is amended
19 to read:

20 **14-D. Downloads of 1,000 or more consecutive electronic images or electronic**
21 **abstracts from a county registry of deeds.** Acquiring downloads of 1,000 or more
22 consecutive electronic images or electronic abstracts from a county registry of deeds
23 equipped to provide downloads of images or electronic abstracts, ~~5¢~~ 50¢ per image or
24 electronic abstract. A person acquiring downloads of 1,000 or more consecutive electronic
25 images or abstracts from a county registry of deeds may not sell such images or abstracts
26 to another person;

27 **Sec. 6. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§14-E**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 370, §5, is amended
28 to read:

29 **14-E. Electronic images, printed images or electronic abstracts from a county**
30 **registry of deeds website.** Acquiring electronic images, printed images or electronic
31 abstracts from a county registry of deeds website as follows:

32 A. No charge for the first ~~500~~ 100 images or electronic abstracts, or a combination of
33 the first ~~500~~ 100 images and electronic abstracts, acquired by a person in a calendar
34 year; and

35 B. Fifty cents per image or electronic abstract for each subsequent image or electronic
36 abstract after ~~500~~ 100 acquired in the same calendar year; and

37 **Sec. 7. 33 MRSA §752, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 116, §1, is further
38 amended to read:

39 **1. Surcharge.** In addition to any other fees required by law, a register of deeds may
40 collect a surcharge of ~~\$3~~ \$5 per document for all records that are recorded in the registry
41 of deeds, except those recorded by agencies of State Government, including quasi-

1 independent state entities as defined in Title 5, section 12021, subsection 5, and
2 municipalities.

3 **Sec. 8. 33 MRSA §752, sub-§5**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 294, §3, is amended to
4 read:

5 **5. Annual report.** The register of deeds for each county shall report annually to the
6 joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local
7 government matters on the amount of surcharge funds raised and expended and the use of
8 those funds if requested to do so by the committee. The registers of deeds may jointly
9 prepare and submit the report required under this subsection, as long as the required
10 information is separately described for each county.

11 **Sec. 9. Effective date.** This Act takes effect January 1, 2026.

12 SUMMARY

13 This bill increases fees paid to a county register of deeds for certain services. It
14 implements a flat fee of \$45 for receiving, recording and indexing instruments that do not
15 already have a specific fee set forth in statute and changes the fee for recording, indexing
16 and preserving plans to \$45. The bill also increases fees applicable to electronic or printed
17 images and electronic abstracts from a county registry of deeds website and increases the
18 surcharge a register of deeds may collect per document. It also increases the fees associated
19 with downloads of 1,000 or more consecutive electronic images or abstracts from a county
20 registry of deeds and prohibits the buyer from selling such images or abstracts to another
21 person. The bill also repeals a \$13 fee for requests for more than one previously recorded
22 instrument. In current law, an annual report is required from the register of deeds for each
23 county to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and
24 local government matters on the amount of surcharge funds raised and expended and the
25 use of those funds; the bill makes the report required only if requested by the committee.